

Conestoga Church

History of Lanc Co., Biographical Sketches
by Ellis + Evans
p. 341

"The Conestoga Church at its organization embraced the settlements within the present territory of Lancaster, Dauphin, Lebanon, and Berks Counties, over all of which Peter Becker had charge until the arrival of Alexander Mack, who then assumed the office of Bishop, with Becker as his assistant. Becker served until his death in 1734. Mack died the following year."

"Conestoga township originally embraced all that part of Chester county which now is Lancaster county. The township of Conestoga, or as it was originally named Conestogoe, was erected in 1718"

Lancaster Co. PA - A History
by E. Melvin Williams pp. 54 -

In 1742 were added: Jacob Schautz; Matthes Gish and wife; Brother Dielman, Sr.; Jacob Baer; Ludwig Bender and wife from the Ephratites; Henry Weiss (Weith); Hannes Adam Schneider and wife; George Hog (Hoch); Walter Vonderburg; Hannes Lautermilch and wife; Henry Miller; Hannes Mader and wife; Jacob Biderly and wife and two daughters; Jacob Benedig; Jacob Mohler and wife; Sisters Schwartz; Judid Becker; and Liechtis (Lichty) of the Ephratites.

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LITTLE SWATARA CONGREGATION

In 1770 their names were: (There were 45 members taken in - John N. Gerst and wife being the fourth family taken in). Peter Heckman, Minister, and wife; John Heckman and wife; Michael Frantz Jr. and wife; John Nicholas Gerst and wife (buried Union Cem near Frederickburg, Penn); Jacob Moyer and wife; George Basher; David Marge and wife; Simon Merrich and wife; John Frantz and wife; Christian Frantz and wife; Rose Schnables; Jacob Smith and wife; Eliza Kentzel; Adam Henrich; Mrs. Cryder; Philip Zeigler and wife; Jacob Breneisen and wife; David Kleine and wife; Widow Benedict; Elizabeth Benedict; Sophy Kish; Leonard Sebalt and wife; John Grove and wife; Hans Stohner and wife; Jacob Beashor and wife.

ZINZENDORF AND THE "BREThERN"

On 24 Dec 1741 (Dec. 13 old style), Count Zinzendorf, the head of the Moravian Church arrived from Europe and called a meeting to hold a Synod in Germantown on 12 Jan 1742.

Gladys Royer says
"Notes from History of the Brethren"

Source: *Encyclopedia of Brethren*
Vol. 1, p. 101
Michael according to
Encyclopedia of Brethren
Vol. 1, p. 101
at Conestoga

John Nicholas Gerst
buried near Batetown
C
V

John Nicholas Garst

History of the German Baptist Brethren
by Falkenstein (1900) p. ~~9~~ 95

"~~John~~ Nicholas Garst & wife" are
listed as members of Little
Swatara Church, in 1770.

Our Garst Family p. 16 says settled
on Little Swatara Creek.

- Clk To see if was Lanc Co and
then Berks County.

p. 95 also lists Michael Frantz & wife
as members. That puts the two
families in the same church!

Also Christian Frantz & wife as
members and I have Christian III
w/ 1790 census in Tulpehocken Twp.

Also "John Frantz & wife"

History of German Baptists

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History of the Brethren.

them for many years. This church was greatly reduced in numbers by removals to the Conococheague. Especially in 1743, a large number of the Oley members removed to the latter place.

At the Little Swartara meeting, August 12, 1780, Martin Gaby was ordained elder of this congregation by Elders Christopher Sower⁽¹⁾ and Martin Urner. At the same time and place Brother Daniel Kintzy was ordained to the office of deacon in the Oley congregation.

In 1770 about twelve families were identified with the Oley congregation. Twenty persons were in communion, as follows: Martin Gaby, minister, and wife, John Joder, minister, and wife, Conrad Price and wife, David Price and wife, David Kinsey and wife, Christian Kinsey and wife, Peter Kleine, Elizabeth Ellis, Margaret Harpine, Catherine Plank, Daniel Kleine and wife.

Conestoga Congregation.

The history of this congregation is full of interest. It was organized November 12, 1724, by Elder Peter Becker. Conrad Beissel was chosen minister. The membership was as follows: Conrad Beissel, Joseph Shaffer, John Moyer and wife, Henry Höhn and wife, and Veronica Frederick. The congregation was soon reinforced by the baptism of Sigmund Landert and

(1) Record of this is found in the MS. diary of Elder Christopher Sower.

Colonial Congregations.

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wife. The first meetings were held on the Mill Creek. They soon removed to the house of Rudolph Nägele in Earl township where they worshiped for seven years. During these seven years Beissel developed his strange ideas, and in 1728 withdrew from the Brotherhood. Many of the members followed him. This group in 1732 removed to Ephrata.

The members who did not follow Beissel were ministered to by Elder Peter Becker until 1734, when on September 29, they formed an independent congregation, with Elder Michael Frantz as their leader. He was ordained in 1735. In this original group of Conestoga members were Michael Pfautz, Rant Woolf, John Frantz, Emick Reyer [Royer], George Reyer, John Landis, Samuel Good, Henry Sneider, Philip Rowland and others. Elder Frantz died in 1748⁽¹⁾ and Elder Michael Pfautz was his successor until 1763 when Jacob Sontag was ordained elder.

On the authority of Abraham H. Cassel, the following somewhat remarkable method was used September 29, 1734, to determine the loyalty of the members. A great meeting or council of the congregation was held and Michael Frantz placed a rail on the floor of the barn in which the meeting was held. He then requested all who wished to join the new congregation to step to the right side, he leading the way. He also requested all those who desired to fol-

(1) This is the date given by the official records of the congregation in my possession. Morgan Edwards also gives 1748.

M. G. Brumbaugh
History of German Baptists

During this seven years, Bissel developed strange ideas and in 1728 they withdrew from the brotherhood and in 1732 he and his followers went to Ephrata. Those who stayed on were ministered upon as a separate congregation with Elder Michael Frantz as leader. He was ordained in 1735 and had started their independant group 29 Sep 1734. In this original group was Michael Pfautz; Rant Wolf; John Frantz; Emick Reyer (Royer); George Reyer; John Landis; Samuel Goog; Henry Sneider; Philip Rowland; Elder Frantz died in 1748. Before the year of 1734, added the following members: Brother Vogan; Hans George Koch and wife; Joseph Latschan and wife; Ludwig Kalckglasser and wife; Hans Keppinger (Kepplinger) and wife; Brother Luys (Lewis) and wife, Samuel Gut (Good); Hans Hildebrand and wife; Gottfried Geiger and sister Kropf (Krupp). Of these the Kackglassers, Keppingers, Sisters, Latschan and Luys were members elsewhere and moved in the territory.

MICHAEL FRANTZ

Michael I

He was the first minister of the old Conestoga Church and was born in the Canton of St. Jacob near Basle, Switzerland in 1687; came to America in September 1727 and settled in the vicinity of the Cocalico in Lancaster Co., Penn. Consequently he was received in the little flock which had separated from the parent Church in Ephrata and was baptized 29 Sep 1734, the same day that Conestoga was organized into a separate church. In 1735 he took upon himself the care of the church which he served with exemplary zeal and fidelity until the day of his death, December 1747. His remains are buried in the old graveyard near the Cocalico.

Members who joined the church under the Eldership of Michael Frantz: Hanes Stamply and wife; Bartlesig Christ and wife; Sister Eter; Basler Franta and wife; Emick Reyer and wife; Hanes Fogely; Philip Roland; Hannes Landis; Hannes Miller and wife, who removed; Hannes Longenecker who died in 1764; Christian Stander; Hans George Honig; George Basler Reuer; Anton Dorn Bach; Emanuel Bralert; Hannes Schmit; Susan Schwartz; George Reyer and wife; Sister Bolinger. Sister Landis (who was formerly an Ephratite); George Adam Martin, of whom an account is given in the Bermudian and Stony Creek congregations; Jacob Schweiger (Sweigert) and wife; Hannes Lehr and wife.

In 1739 were added: Paul Siegert and wife; Ludwig Mahler and wife; Michael Pfauz and wife; Hannes Huber; Jacob Martin and wife; Jacob Schwartz; Henry Mohler; George Mohler (who died age 79) and wife; Hannes Bernard Wolf; Sisters Faren Frantz and Bruderly Blas (wife of George Blas); Longenecker and Foglis.

In 1740 were added: Jacob Stucky and wife; Hannes Gehr and wife; Jacob Kissel; George Mohler and wife; and Henry Mohler and wife.

In 1741 were added: Frederick Altdorfer and wife; George Schwartz and wife; Christian Stander, Jr.; Joseph Flory; Ulrich Scherck; Henry Dielman and wife; and Sister George Hog (Hoch).

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V

Michael Frantz I

History of Lanc. Co., Biographical Sketches
by Franklin Ellis & Samuel Evans
p. 341

Michael Frantz II

(I'm guessing!) "Michael Frantz and wife" are listed as members of Localico-Conestoga in 1770. Is this Michael II and Magdalena? "Barbara Frantz" is also a member & "Mary Frantz".
" " " (I don't recognize the other members as "collateral lines." The Harst's / Gerst's are not there, nor Zug. This from History of the German Baptist Brethren Church by George N. Falkenstein (1900) pp 91-92, 94, 95

Q: ~~Where~~ ^{Were} desc. of Christian I, II, III German Baptist Brethren?
Did they live in the Conestoga area? Are the member names those of Christian Frantz I, II, III neighbors? Barbara & Mary may be daughters — or widows of Frantz. Check!

Comment: Little Swatara Church, Ibid p. 94, is Berks County. These may definitely be Christian I, II, III lineage. However, "Nicholas Gerst & wife" are listed p. 95, along w/ John Frantz & wife and Christian Frantz & wife. Notice: George Beshor (Bashor?) and Jacob Beshor (Bashor?).

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Michael Frantz

Michael Frantz (WHO?)

p. 836 Oath of allegiance ... at
Ephrata during Rev. War.

- Hist. of Lanc. Co., PA , p. 836
by Ellis & Evans

a good ship and an agreeable captain.⁵¹ An examination of the ship records for 1732 shows that the majority of the above immigrants arrived on the ship Samuel, August 11. The following Mennonites were included in the list,—Oswald Hostetter, Christian German,^{51a} Michael Dirstein,⁵² Samuel Brandt,⁵³ Jacob Oberholtzer,⁵⁴ Hans Musselman,⁵⁵ Ulrich Burghalter,^{56a}

Hans Musselman, wife and child.

Ulrich Burghalter.

Jacob Gut.

Christian Huber, widower, and 3 children.

Most of these immigrants came from the upper Palatinate, on the east side of the Rhine, in the general region of Heidelberg. The ship lists for the year indicate that other Mennonites from other sections of the Palatinate were also coming to Pennsylvania this year. Of those mentioned in the above list it does not appear from Rupp's Thirty Thousand Names that either Hans Witmer or Hans Behr arrived with their brethren. There were several other Witmers during the year, however, and it is possible that there is a confusion in the given names. Michel Frantz does not appear as an adult either, but as a child under 16. Christ Senior and Junior are found in the group, and if there is no mistake in the names Michel may have died at sea. All the others in the list seemingly landed with the two ships, Samuel and Pink Plaisance, on August 11 and September 21 respectively.

A letter from Hans Burkhalter to the Amsterdam church during this same year says that there were no immigrants from his congregation at that time.

A number of the above names can also be found in Mueller, p. 209, as members of Palatine congregations.

The Pennsylvania land records show that Oswald Hostetter was granted 150 acres on the Cocalico, 1733; Jacob Snively was granted land on Mill Creek, the same year; and Christian Gehman settled in Saucon, 1734. See Taylor Papers.

51a. Should be Gehman. Benedict was an unmarried brother of Christian's.

52. The name appears as a witness to a will of Rev. Henry Funk, 1750, also as a minister in Franconia, 1705. Michael Derstein was a miller and settled in Rock Hill township, Bucks county. He was an elder in the Franconia Meeting as early as 1759, and elected as one of the ministers in 1765. He was naturalized 1743. Was married to Agnes, daughter of Jacob Kolb, of Skippack.—Abram Clemmer.

53. Likely Martin.

54. Name appears on a Palatine list 1732 as a widower in need of help. It also appears Among a list of Palatine members in 1731.

55. I am not absolutely sure of course about the religious faith of all those who are listed here. All bear characteristic Mennonite names, and it is likely that nearly all are of that faith; but there may be a few wild

Jacob Gut, Christ Frantz, Sr.,⁵⁵ Christ Frantz, Jr., Christian Beudler,⁵⁷ Benedict German,⁵⁸ Jacob Gochen-

guesses. Most of the names of course have been identified through family histories, local chronicles and a few church lists in the Palatinate and America. All the names which are not identified in the footnotes, or otherwise claimed as Mennonites, are placed with them because their counterparts are found in Palatine and Swiss membership lists, or because, bearing typical Mennonite names they are found in the ship lists in the company of those whom we know for a certainty to be Mennonites. The fact that these are all of Swiss origin and that the Mennonites were the only Swiss refugees to the Palatinate in the early eighteenth century increases greatly the likelihood that these guesses are correct where they are not based upon better evidence. But it is not claimed that this list is either complete or altogether accurate. No doubt some are here classed as Mennonite who are not of that faith; on the other hand there are likely some whose names ought to be here but who are not included. I believe, however, that the omissions are likely to be more numerous than the cases of mistaken identity. Rupp's lists from which these names are taken are not always reliable either. I shall be glad to hear from any one having definite knowledge of mistakes or omissions.—C. H. S.

56a. Ulrich Burghalter and Jacob Gut, whose names appear together in Rupp's list, were sons-in-law of Hans Scherer, whose name does not appear among the ship passengers, according to Rupp, although that of Jacob does.

55. See note 51 for Michael Franz. The ship list of August 11 records two boys under sixteen as Michael and Johannes. In 1800 there was a Mennonite preacher by the name of Christian Frantz in the Hammer Creek district in Lancaster county, Cassel, 153. A Christian Frantz was a disciple of Hans Herr in the Herrite division in Lancaster county. He carried the division into Franklin county, where the sect is still locally named after him. Christian Frantz also was the name of a member of the Haschof congregation in the Palatinate in 1731. See Mueller, 210.

57. From the Beldler Family History by A. J. Fretz we get the following,—

"Jacob Beldler, born in Germany about 1708 or 1709, emigrated to America in the early part of the eighteenth century. He is said to have been a redemptioner, and served his time in Chester county; for he first lived in that county. He afterward settled with his family in Lower Milford township, in Bucks county, in what was then known as the Great Swamp. He married Anna Meyer, daughter of the pioneer Hans Meyer."

This family seems to be largest of the Mennonite Beldler families.

For the European branch of the family see Christlicher Gemeinde Kalender, 1905.

58. Likely Gaueman, now Gehman. Name given as one of the Swiss refugees in the Palatinate 1710, whose wife was a Strott. Benedict settled in the Skippack region. See chapter Skippack, note 37.

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This
Michael
son of
Christian

tions "foul water full of worms, salted food, biscuits full of worms and spiders, dampness, heat, hunger, lice so thick that they had to be scraped off." Warm food was furnished only three times each week, he said, and children under seven usually died of hunger, thirst and itch. The Provincial Assembly finally passed laws specifying the number of passengers that could be carried on one ship and regulating the quantity of food and sanitary conditions in general. For a long time, too, strict quarantines were maintained to prevent sick passengers from spreading contagious diseases throughout the Province which had been contracted on the ships, due to unsanitary conditions.

The Mennonites could not be scared out, however, by these stories of the hazards and hardships that they might encounter on the way to the new world. A letter to Amsterdam from the Palatinate contains a list of sixty prospective emigrants, most of whom either had sufficient funds to pay their way to America, or were promised support from Pennsylvania, and consequently would not be a great burden to their Dutch brethren. All that the Palatine ministers in the above letter ask is that their fellow countrymen should be provided with

51. This letter was written from Grumbach in the Palatinate and was signed by the ministers Heinrich Kuendig, David Kaufman and Michel Krebil. The complete list of prospective immigrants is as follows,—

- Michel Frantz, wife and 11 children.
- Hans Witmer, wife and 2 children.
- Oswald Hofstetter, wife and 4 children.
- Christian Gehman, wife and unmarried brother.
- Michel Dierstein, unmarried.
- Christian Marty, wife and 2 children.
- Hans Scherer, widower, and 3 children and two sons-in-law.
- Samuel Brand and wife.
- Samuel Mayer, wife and 2 children.
- Martin Mayer, wife and 2 children.
- Hans Huber, widower and 3 children and son-in-law.
- Jacob Scherer, wife and 2 children.
- Hans Behr and 2 daughters.
- Jacob Oberholtzer, widower.

In a letter dated "October 30, 1766, at Coventry⁽¹⁾ in the Schuylkill" Elder Urner writes,

"*My Dear Brother Alexander Mack:*—May God give thee much grace, peace, and blessing, as well as all thy dear ones. Yes; may the Lord greet you with his peace and may he reveal himself to you by putting his strength into your heart. Amen. I send you by this opportunity the letter which has been brought to me and which our brethren have sent from the Great Meeting.⁽²⁾ You will please read it and ponder it well with me.

Further I send you thirty-five bushels of ground corn and three bushels of wheat and ten pounds of butter. . . . I hope to be able to send you the other seventeen bushels of wheat soon. . . . I report to you further that the dear Brother Michael Pfautz was here with me. He has also handed me twenty shillings from Peter Guthman for you, which, as it appears, Guthman once borrowed from you and now he wishes to repay it. . . . Be ye both, dear brother and sister, greeted and kissed from us poor, unworthy worms—who nevertheless live in the hope that He is faithful who has loved us."⁽³⁾

[Signed] *Martin Urner*
BARBARA URNER.

(1) Note that as early as 1766 this place was called Coventry, which is the only proper name for the congregation.

(2) Note reference here to an Annual Meeting in 1766. This letter came by the hand of Elder Michael Frantz. The meeting was probably held at Conestoga.

(3) Original MS. in my possession.

Gladys Royer wrote

? Michael s/o Christian not ordained
until 1780

Christian Frantz

Christian Frantz (WHO?)

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History of Lanc. Co., PA
by Ellis & Evans, p. 342

Aug 1996 and I have a
lot of new questions re:

Frantz

→ Little Swatara Congregation in 1770

- a History of the German Baptist
Brethren in Europe and America

by Martin Grove Brumbaugh (1899)

- History of the German Baptist
Church pp 94-95

by George N. Falkenstein (1901)

It is possible that Michael, John
+ Christian are all sons of Christian I
(members of Little Swatara Congregation).

"Nicholas Gurst and wife" too. So
here is Frantz/Gurst connection.

Also Bashor — and Moyer — and
they are in Christian I lineage, too.

NOTE: Gladys Royer had already
identified this Michael as son
of Christian in the info she sent
in Sept 1991.

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In 1743 were added: Martin Wetzel; Moritz Mullhauss and wife; Christoph Geiss; Jacob Conrad and wife; Abraham Wendel and wife; Jacob Mayer; Jacob Lichty; Jacob Sontag; Jeremiah Wolf and wife; Jacob Lascher, wife and daughter; Mathew Sedler; and Sisters Frana (a widow), Baer, Lehn (wife of Henry Benedict); Wolf; Huber (wife of Huber); Klackglasser.

16 May 1744 were added: Anton Miller and wife; Jacob Mohlers wife, -- Benedict; Michael Pfautz was made Minister, succeeding Michael Frantz.

In 1745 were added: Jacob Dielmans wife; Ernest Stolls daughter, Maria Landes; Catherine Schwartz and six brothers and six sisters who came from the Amwell N.J. and joined the church.

March 23, 1746 were added: Henry Kufers wife; Maria Koch; Catherina Koch; Maria Frantz, daughter of Michael Frantz; Jacob Spanhauer and wife; Catherine Lehman; Sister Christins servant girl, Sister Neuschwangers; George Beashor; Sister Benedict, and a brother Martinisz and wife from the Skippack.

In 1747 were added: Peter Zug; Joseph Kreibel (Greybill) and wife; Anna Baer; and Hannes Flory (Flohra).

LITTLE SWATARA CONGREGATION

In 1770 their names were: (There were 45 members taken in - John N. Gerst and wife being the fourth family taken in). Peter Heckman, Minister, and wife; John Heckman and wife; Michael Frantz Jr. and wife; John Nicholas Gerst and wife (buried Union Cem near Frederickburg, Penn); Jacob Moyer and wife; George Basher; David Marge and wife; Simon Merrich and wife; John Frantz and wife; Christian Frantz and wife; Rose Schnables; Jacob Smith and wife; Eliza Kentzel; Adam Henrich; Mrs. Cryder; Philip Zeigler and wife; Jacob Breneisen and wife; David Kleine and wife; Widow Benedict; Elizabeth Benedict; Sophy Kish; Leonard Sebalt and wife; John Grove and wife; Hans Stohner and wife; Jacob Beashor and wife.

ZINZENDORF AND THE "BREThERN"

On 24 Dec 1741 (Dec. 13 old style), Count Zinzendorf, the head of the Moravian Church arrived from Europe and called a meeting to hold a Synod in Germantown on 12 Jan 1742.

Gladys Royer says
"Notes from History of The Brethren"

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them for many years. This church was greatly reduced in numbers by removals to the Conococheague. Especially in 1743, a large number of the Oley members removed to the latter place.

At the Little Swartara meeting, August 12, 1780, Martin Gaby was ordained elder of this congregation by Elders Christopher Sower⁽¹⁾ and Martin Urner. At the same time and place Brother Daniel Kintzy was ordained to the office of deacon in the Oley congregation.

In 1770 about twelve families were identified with the Oley congregation. Twenty persons were in communion, as follows: Martin Gaby, minister, and wife, John Joder, minister, and wife, Conrad Price and wife, David Price and wife, David Kinsey and wife, Christian Kinsey and wife, Peter Kleine, Elizabeth Ellis, Margaret Harpine, Catherine Plank, Daniel Kleine and wife.

Conestoga Congregation.

The history of this congregation is full of interest. It was organized November 12, 1724, by Elder Peter Becker. Conrad Beissel was chosen minister. The membership was as follows: Conrad Beissel, Joseph Shaffer, John Moyer and wife, Henry Höhn and wife, and Veronica Frederick. The congregation was soon reinforced by the baptism of Sigmund Landert and

(1) Record of this is found in the MS. diary of Elder Christopher Sower.

wife. The first meetings were held on the Mill Creek. They soon removed to the house of Rudolph Nägele in Earl township where they worshiped for seven years. During these seven years Beissel developed his strange ideas, and in 1728 withdrew from the Brotherhood. Many of the members followed him. This group in 1732 removed to Ephrata.

The members who did not follow Beissel were ministered to by Elder Peter Becker until 1734, when on September 29, they formed an independent congregation, with Elder Michael Frantz as their leader. He was ordained in 1735. In this original group of Conestoga members were Michael Pfautz, Rant Woolf, John Frantz, Emick Reyer [Royer], George Reyer, John Landis, Samuel Good, Henry Sneider, Philip Rowland and others. Elder Frantz died in 1748⁽¹⁾ and Elder Michael Pfautz was his successor until 1763 when Jacob Sontag was ordained elder.

On the authority of Abraham H. Cassel, the following somewhat remarkable method was used September 29, 1734, to determine the loyalty of the members. A great meeting or council of the congregation was held and Michael Frantz placed a rail on the floor of the barn in which the meeting was held. He then requested all who wished to join the new congregation to step to the right side, he leading the way. He also requested all those who desired to fol-

(1) This is the date given by the official records of the congregation in my possession. Morgan Edwards also gives 1748.

M. G. Brumbaugh
History of German Baptists

John Harnish

" John Harnish, of Hempfield, was appointed to the ministry about 1822, and subsequently removed to Clark Co., Ohio, where he was soon after appointed bishop, and where he died in 1870."

History of Lanc. Co., PA

by Ellis & Evans, p. 343