Pennsylvania Mennonite

Heritage

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John C. Freed

John C. Freed caught the genealogy bug from his aunt June Freed Wilcox and her daughter Joyce W. Graff, co-authors of *A Freed Family History*. In a thirty-two-year career as an editor at *The New York Times*, his jobs included being the first database editor, responsible for computer-assisted investigative projects. As such, he taught computerized research techniques to hundreds of reporters. He continues to use that skill, through contacts on his website JohnFreed.com, to help others tracking their family lines.

He is especially indebted to his aunt, June Freed Wilcox, and her daughter, Joyce Wilcox Graff, who he says gave him "the bug" and encouraged his research. Others who provided information, either through letters, email or interviews, include (in alphabetical order): Joel Alderfer, R.W. Davis, Dorothy E. Einhorn, Bruce Fosnocht, Allen C. Fredrickson, Jim Freed, Ryan Freed, Alice Friedt, Tyrone G. Goodart, Don Havlicek, Hanspeter Jecker, Al Kernz, Sharon Kleinstuber, Stanford L. Landis, Joan Landreth, Bev Larson, Daniel Ross Little, Professor A.P.J. Plak, Geri Smith, Jack Trauth, Alan Weyl, Jim Wilcox, and Stacy B.C. Wood Jr.

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IN THIS ISSUE

ON THE COVER

Lydia Freed (1811–1889), daughter of Abraham Freed (1785–1840) and Catherine Eckert Freed (1775–1854), created this sampler on homespun linen with silk thread while a student in the needlework school of Martha R. Wilson. She was thirteen years old when she produced the sampler dated 1824. The text on the sampler places the family in "Saullsbury" or Salisbury Township in eastern Lancaster County near Chester County. *(Credit: Mennonite Life Collections)*

Four Mennonite men surnamed Freed, apparently closely related, appear in tax records of Skippack Township in 1734. How and when did they come to America, and how are they connected?

Mennonite Freeds

By John C. Freed

The earliest tax records in and near Skippack Township,[1] thirty miles northwest of Philadelphia in what was then colonial Pennsylvania, show four men named Freed: John, Paul, Paul Jr., and Hans. These men appear closely related and were Mennonites. In this article, I will use the scientific method, original records, and DNA tracing to look at these four men and to connect them to the standard Freed family histories.[2]

To understand the history of the Freed[3] immigrants who came to America three centuries ago, one needs to understand something about their community, its culture, and the legal systems they encountered. Before leaving Europe, the Freeds lived in the upper Rhine Valley in what is now Germany. Many of the records from that era were destroyed during World War II, so we know little about their European life or how they came to America.

It seems they traveled in the company of two families, the Wismers and the Stauffers. We know that Paul Freed was married to Elizabeth Hiestandt Stauffer and set off for America with his wife, daughter, and father-in-law, Hans Stauffer, along with the rest of the Stauffer family. As they left Worms, their ultimate goal may have been America, but since it was a British colony, they needed the monarch's permission (Queen Anne at the time), who required all immigrants to pass through England en route. Therefore, they arrived in London.

About the same time, Jacob Wismer also headed to London. He was married to Maria Freed, living outside Bruchsal, upriver from Worms. Jacob and his wife (possibly a second wife—some accounts say Maria died in Germany) were in London in 1709[4] and in New Bern, Carolina, by 1711.[5] If they traveled with the Stauffers, it seems likely that they were one of the "Poor Palatine" families aboard the *Maria Hope*, which stopped in Philadelphia on its way to New Bern.

Paul Freed first appears in the land records of Pennsylvania in 1714, when he bought land in Skippack, then known as Van Bebber's Township. It is possible that beforehand, he was a squatter.

To buy land, however, posed a huge risk for these immigrants because, by law, only British subjects were permitted to bequeath real estate to their heirs. They had a strong motivation to become naturalized and a strong aversion to owning land until then, as Allan A. Garber explained in 2019 in an article in *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage*.[6]

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1. Landholders of Philadelphia County, 1734, reprinted in the *Publications of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania*, Dec. 1898, Miscellany No. 2. The roll for PARKIOMEN & SKIPPAKE township lists "Paul Fried, John Fried, and Paul Fried, junr." The roll for SULFORD township lists "Hance Freet."

2. The three principal books on the family are: Charles Heiberger, *The Fried/Freed Family: Descendents of Johannes Friedt (1682-1744)* (self-published, 1984); Joyce Wilcox Graff and June Freed Wilcox, *A Freed Family History* (1981); and Isaac G. Freed, *History of the Freed Family* (1919). Another book, by Jacob A. Freed, *Partial History of the Freed Family and Connecting Families* (1923), largely copies Isaac Freed's book with a few additions.

3. Variant spellings include Fried, Friedt (especially in Europe), Frid, Freit, and Fritt. The families in Switzerland used the name Fridli or Friedli. I have normalized the surname of the most important family members using the spelling Freed.

4. Jacob Wismer is in the "First London List," an effort to make a census of the flood of Palatines arriving in the city. Taken May 6, 1709, in St. Catherine's Parish, it shows him as a tailor, fifty years old, accompanied by his wife, a son age twenty-two, and a daughter age twenty. That puts the year of birth of Jacob Jr. as 1688 or 1689. That means he was ninety-eight, not 103, when he died on Feb. 4, 1787. I believe that the wife listed in the census was Maria Fried, mother of the two children, and that she died in the New Bern Massacre along with her daughter. *Lists of Germans from the Palatinate Who Came to England in 1709: Board of Trade Miscellaneous*. Vol. 2 D. 57, *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* (January 1909): 49. Henry Z. Jones Jr. and Lewis Bunker Rohrback, *Even More Palatine Families: 18th Century Immigrants to the American Colonies and their German, Swiss and Austrian Origins* (Rockport, ME: Picton Press, 2002). Heinrich Kolb and Gerhard Clemens, future neighbors of Paul Freed Sr. and John Freed, are on the list.

5. Carolina was divided into North Carolina and South Carolina in 1712. New Bern was in what is now North Carolina.

6. For a fuller discussion of this legal difficulty, Allan A. Garber

The influx from Germany[7] led the governor of Pennsylvania to order records of all ships arriving from Europe beginning in 1727, so we know the Freeds arrived before that. The early Philadelphia Archives record a "John Fred" who got permission to try to buy five hundred acres of land in 1714.[8]

The "Poor Palatines," as the British press dubbed them, were not necessarily poor at all.[9] The Whigs, who supported immigration, decided to play the sympathy card for political reasons and painted the immigrants as freedom-loving Europeans fleeing oppression by the hated French.[10]

In my early research, I knew that John Freed owned an average farm in Skippack—123 acres, slightly larger than most (which were sixty to one hundred acres) but smaller than the biggest (which were four hundred to five hundred acres). He also owned an adjoining tract of one hundred acres. I didn't know until later that he owned an additional four hundred acres of land in Perkasie,[11] about fifteen miles northeast of Skippack,

making him one of the wealthiest individuals in the region, with 623 acres. It makes sense that he would seek to buy five hundred acres when he arrived in 1711, only to suspend his purchase when he learned about the inheritance laws.

Paul Freed took the plunge in 1714 and bought fifty acres from Gerhard Clemens, an in-law.

Paul Freed "Senior"

The search for Paul Freed should be simple. His departure from the Rhine Valley in 1709 is well documented; he left with his wife, infant daughter, and his wife's family.[12] They arrived in Pennsylvania sometime before 1714. Since his in-laws, the Stauffers, were established in the Valley Forge area by 1711, presumably, he was in America by then, too.

It seems likely, that the Freeds and the Stauffers came to America on the *Maria Hope*, which went to New Bern, Carolina, by way of Philadelphia in 1710.[13] This ship was perhaps the only one to have visited both cities, and several Mennonite families were aboard.

The New Bern connection is significant in the story of Jacob Wismer, whose wife was Maria Freed. While we don't know much about Maria, we know that Jacob Wismer and his son survived the New Bern Massacre of 1711. Family tradition states that Jacob and his son walked and ran ninety miles by foot in one day on their way to the Philadelphia area, where the younger Jacob helped found the Deep Run Mennonite Church. The timing, then, dovetails perfectly with the rest of the Freeds coming over on this ship, along with the Stauffers, in either 1710 or 1711.[14]

"Who for Conscience Sake Cannot Swear at All: The Quest of the Lancaster County Mennonites for Naturalization," *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage* (July 2019). Garber focuses on the struggle to pass the Naturalization Act of Feb. 14, 1730, giving rights to a number of Lancaster Mennonites. A nearly identical law, which he mentions only in passing, was approved the following year, and the bulk of those approved were Mennonites in or near Skippack, including John Freed and Paul Freed Sr. *Pennsylvania Archives*, Series 2 Vol. 7, 119.

7. Thousands of Palatine immigrants flooded London starting in 1709 and continued into 1710. Many of them apparently believed rumors that Great Britain would provide free passage to America and land when they arrived. The rumors, no doubt, were based on the real promise made by Christoph van Graffenried to the New Bern settlers.

8. *Penn's Minute Book H*: 577 (Mar. 27, 1714). John Fred obtained a warrant for five hundred acres in Chester Co., price ten pounds p. C., quit rent 1 p. C. This is apparently the same transaction in the *Philadelphia County Old Rights Index*, D65, p. 196, where John Fred obtains a warrant for five hundred acres on Jan. 27, 1714. [In the calendar in use in 1714, the first month was March. If the transaction was recorded as being in the first month, a later transcriber might easily reach the wrong conclusion that this was in January.] According to county history, the warrant went to a John Fredd and the purchase was never completed because he returned to Ireland, leaving behind his sons Benjamin and Eli. John Fredd remained behind in Chester Co.; it was Benjamin who returned home. Valley Forge, where Hans Stauffer settled, is in Chester Co., about five miles southwest of Skippack. Maria Fried, daughter of John Fried, married Peter Roth and settled in Vincent Twp., Chester Co.

9. The writer Daniel Defoe (of *Robinson Crusoe* fame) was among those favoring immigration from the Continent. Pro-immigration forces coined the term "Poor Palatines" to describe the Germans, to contrast them with the hated French. Most of the Mennonites in the Palatinate were of German-Swiss origin. As pacifists, they had to contend with the constant warfare of the French and the Prussians over the land they farmed. Philip Otterness, *Becoming German: The 1709 Palatine Migration to New York* (Cornell University Press, 2006).

10. The floodgates opened when the Whig-dominated Parliament passed a bill to encourage immigration by foreign Protestants, reducing the naturalization fee to just one shilling. That bill went into effect when it received royal assent from Queen Anne on Mar. 23, 1709. "The Poor Palatines and the Parties" by H. T. Dickinson, *The English Historical Review,* Vol. 82, No. 324 (July 1967), 464-485.

11. Philadelphia County Deed F.8-318, Johannes Fried from Thomas Freame. This is four hundred acres in Rockhill Twp., Bucks Co., omitted from his will but included in the inventory of his estate.

Purchased for 180 pounds on Sept. 3, 1735. Original indenture issued Aug. 6, 1735. Heiberger, 31. Also in Bucks County Deeds, Vol. 23, 279-283. Passed to John Freed, youngest son of the immigrant, after release from other heirs. Full deed in Heiberger book from sale of two hundred acres of land to Jacob Kinzig on May 11, 1748, for one hundred pounds. Land is adjacent to Henry Freed and Anthony Haynes(?) Funk(?). Recorded Mar. 26(?), 1787, in Norristown. Resold by John Kinzig and Mary Kinzig Kraut in Mar. 1787 upon the death of their father, Jacob Kinzig, husband of Catherina Freed, who was a daughter of Johannes Fried. The agreement by the heirs provides crucial evidence of what happened to the children of Johannes Freed.

12. Hans Stauffer's notebook. "In the year 1709, I, Hans Stauffer, removed on the 5th of November my wife and children: Jacob 13 years; Daniel 12 years, Henry 9 years; Elizabeth with her husband, Paulus Friedt, and one child, Maria by name, with myself, eight." The notebook details the journey up the Rhine. The last entry made by Hans records that the family arrived in London on Jan. 26, 1710. http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ggracie/library/stover/hans.html

13. One source says the *Maria Hope* made a second trip in 1711, but I have not seen any confirmation of this.

14. Christoph von Graffenried of Switzerland sailed to the Carolinas in 1710 with 650 emigrants from Bern and the Palatinate; each family was promised three hundred acres, free clothing, ocean fare, one cow, and two pigs. He founded New Bern, which was destroyed in September 1711 while he was a prisoner of the Tuscarora tribe, and he recounted stories of women impaled on stakes, more than eighty

After Paul Freed was naturalized in 1731, he could bequeath land. He died in 1743. His will[15] names his widow and his only child, Maria, married to Jacob Grater. He had no sons.

Although he left no descendants named Freed, thousands of people trace their Freed lineage back to Paul Freed. If they have the surname Grater, fine. Any Freed who thinks his immigrant ancestor is Paul Sr. of Skippack should think again. The immigrant ancestor is probably Paul Jr. of Allen Township, though it could be someone else—just not Paul "Sr."

On June 1, 1714, Paul purchased fifty acres from Gerhard Clemens (Paul's wife and Gerhard's wife were daughters of Elizabeth Hiestand by different husbands) in Van Bebber's Township. He added another fifty acres bought from Matthias Van Bebber on May 3, 1721. Matthias Van Bebber, the founder of the township, had purchased 6,600 acres in 1703 as a land speculator, promoter, and developer. Among the early purchasers were the Kolbs (see lot 2 on the township map). Van Bebber bought back the land from dissatisfied customers in several cases. In 1727, he left for Maryland, leaving his primary land agent, Henry Pannebacker, in charge, and the township is known today as Skippack Township.

John Freed settled in the area shortly after Paul. They seem to have been competitive brothers.[16] John bought one hundred acres, initially sold by Matthias Van Bebber to John Kolb on February 1, 1722. Paul apparently was not satisfied, and he bought two small triangles of land to bring his total to 122 acres.[17] John bought another 100 acres, this time from Matthias Van Bebber, on April 1, 1723.[18] He added a sliver of land to bring his total to 223 acres. Paul later bought another 120 acres, finishing with 242 acres.

The Freeds may have been friendly rivals, but they also were influential men in the community, as seen by the construction of new roads in the area. The Court of Quarter Sessions at Philadelphia had approved a petition[19] seeking confirmation of the boundaries of Skippack Township, after which the major road from Philadelphia, Skippack Pike, was to be extended. But which route to follow: through the land of Heinrich Kolb or that of John Freed? The final layout, still there today, exactly split the difference, running along the boundary of the Kolb and Freed farms.

Meanwhile, the main north-south road, now called Bridge Road, was extended toward the Perkiomen Creek. And again, no Freed was going to permit a road to cut off part of his land. Bridge Road, for several decades, made a zig-zag around the land Paul had bought.[20]

Because Paul had no sons, his name is not found on any local landmarks. However, a ford across Perkiomen Creek was named after his son-in-law Jacob Grater, and the town of Graterford owes its name to him. For generations, the name Graterford was associated with the Graterford State Correctional Institution (SCI Graterford) that just recently closed. A brand new high-security prison, SCI Phoenix, was built next door on the 223 acres once owned by John Freed. An aerial photograph of the old and new prisons superimposed on the outline of John Freed's farm shows they match almost perfectly (Lots No. 7 and 8 on the map).

Paul and John were signers of the so-called Colebrookdale Petition,[21] created by residents of the

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infants slaughtered, and more than 130 settlers killed. Because Jacob Wismer (b. ca. 1659, probably in or near Bruchsal) and his son were outside the settlement during the attack, they survived. (His daughter and wife did not.) According to *Deep Run Mennonite Church East—A 250-Year Pilgrimage, 1746–1996*, father and son walked and ran ninety miles in one day. They eventually reached the Quaker community of Byeberry on the northeastern edge of Philadelphia. A Wismer family story recounts that the people who brought them from Byeberry to Bedminster by 1726 left Jacob Wismer, his son, and their possessions under a large tree in the woods and advised, "Now, Wismer, work or die." The Wismers were among the earliest members of the Deep Run church, and Jacob Jr. (1684–1787) is buried there. A. J. Fretz and Eli Wismer, *A Brief History of Jacob Wismer and a Complete Genealogical Family Register With Biographies of His Descendants from the Earliest Available Records to the Present Time.*

15. Philadelphia Co., G.42. Named wife, Elizabeth. Named son-in-law Jacob Grater. Executor Jacob Grater. Witnesses Michael Ziegler and Robert Jones. Jan. 9, 1742–43, Will proved "Skepack" and "Perkyomi" Twp., Co. of Philadelphia, May 1, 1743.

16. There is no way to be certain they were brothers, but the Freed DNA Project indicates that John of Skippack and Paul of Allen Township were almost certainly first cousins, perhaps once removed. Applying Occam's Razor, then, the simplest explanation of the known facts is that Paul and John, neighbors in Skippack, were, in fact, brothers.

17. Paul recorded four land purchases in Skippack: fifty acres from Gerhard Clemens on June 1, 1714; fifty acres from Matthias Van Bebber on May 3, 1721; ten acres from Michael Ziegler on Dec. 24, 1722; twelve acres from Matthias Van Bebber on Dec. 10, 1723. (This adds up to 122 acres; *History of Lower Salford Township, in Sketches* said he owned 120; this checks.) He also made an unrecorded purchase of 120 acres from Paul Freed "Jr."

18. This purchase was never recorded. However, the original deed is in the collection of Pennypacker Mills, a historic site in Schwenksville, PA. It came into the possession of Samuel W. Pennypacker (1843–1916), governor of Pennsylvania from 1903 to 1907, who had a keen interest in genealogy. The deed was of particular interest to him because his direct ancestor, Hendrick Pannebecker, wrote it.

19. The extension of the Skippack Pike came after the township of Skippack and Perkiomen was regularly laid out and surveyed in 1725 by Hendrick Pannebecker, who "circulated and secured the signatures to a petition setting forth the difficulties under which the constables, collectors, supervisors of the highways, and other officers had previously labored, and asking that the boundaries be confirmed." The signatures included those of Paulus Frid, Johannes Friedt, and Paul Friedt. Samuel W. Pennypacker, *Hendrick Pannebecker, surveyor of lands for the Penns, 1674–1754, Flomborn, Germantown and Skippach* (1894), 44–45.

20. The zig-zag is still clearly visible on the map of 1893, 150 years after Paul's death. I believe the road was not straightened until the second half of the twentieth century.

21. The petition, dated May 10, 1728, asks Gov. Patrick Gordon for

Skippack area, not Colebrookdale, several miles northwest. The petition urged the legislature to protect the settlers from Indian raids in 1728. Another signer, the last to sign, was Paul Freed Jr.

Paul Freed "Junior"

Paul Jr. is a difficult nut to crack. He was the last person to sign the petition to the Pennsylvania governor. He also signed the petition seeking confirmation of the boundaries of Skippack Township in 1725. There is a reference to him as Matthias Van Bebber heads off to Maryland. The project, known as Van Bebber's Township, was soon renamed Skippack Township.

The Skippack Pike ended after passing through downtown Skippack at the current Bridge Road (there was no bridge at the time). An extension was duly built and ran between the farm of John Freed and Jacob Kolb in a straight line, up to Mokychic Road, after which it meandered to a ford over the East Branch of the Perkiomen Creek, then a second ford over the Perkiomen Creek, where it joined the Gravel Pike. The land of John's brother, Paul Freed "Sr.," was a couple of hundred yards away from John's, down Cressman Road.

Because not much has been known about Paul Jr., some people have posited that he might have had sons, and those might have included the other Paul Freed. They do not explain how Paul Freed Sr. could be a son of Paul Freed Jr., among other problems.

My research shows that Paul Freed Jr. was neither the father nor the son of Paul Freed. He was, I believe, a son of a first cousin of Paul and John. Why was his name given as "Junior" when he signed? When the German-speaking immigrants of Skippack Township were asked to support the petition in 1728, few of them signed it. Most of the signatures are in the same handwriting as the petition itself, written by John Roberts.[22] At the time, "junior" simply meant "younger." Paul Freed Jr. is Paul Freed the Younger, instead of Paul Freed the Elder.

What more can be said about Paul Jr.? He owned land adjacent to Paul and John Freed. I spent several years researching and mapping old Skippack Township from its beginnings in 1703 until 1727, when the founder, Matthias Van Bebber, left for Maryland and

sold almost all his remaining land to Ludwig Sprogel. He specified that all the land he owned was included, except for 120 acres "sold but not yet conveyed" to Paul Freed Jr.[23]

The next problem was pinpointing the land. Unlike today, when we use satellite measurements that can specify a latitude and longitude to less than an inch, the deeds in the 1700s used what are called "metes and bounds." A typical deed might say something like, "Start at the white oak at a corner of Hans Detweiler's land, then proceed west by southwest for 120 perches [that is, 660 yards], then south by southeast 50 perches, then north by northeast to a beech sapling at the corner of Jacob Kolb's land, then back to the point of beginning." Not easy to track three hundred years later.

I started with the "Detweiler Map," drawn by William Detweiler in the 1990s for an article in the magazine of the Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania.[24] However, while it notes the farms of John and Paul Sr., it omits Paul Jr. entirely.

There were a few gaps in the Detweiler map, one of which ran alongside the farm of Hans Detweiler, a neighbor of John and Paul Freed Sr. One of Hans Detweiler's deeds states that his neighbor to the west is Paul Freed Jr. After tracing the gap in the computer records, it turned out that there was a parcel of exactly 120 acres abutting Hans Detweiler's land to the west.

Now, I had established the location and ownership of Paul Freed Jr.'s farm (Lot No. 15 on the map). But Paul Jr. had two problems. First, he was not a citizen and could not bequeath his land to his heirs. He would need to sell it before he died. Second, there was a large stand of pines in the middle of the farm. Because pine trees render the land unfit for growing crops, Paul's 120 acres effectively yielded maybe eighty acres of arable land. Apparently, he decided to move, but what to do with the land?

He and Paul Sr. worked out a clever subterfuge. Paul Jr. would sell his land to Paul Freed Sr. without recording a deed. Paul Jr. would get his cash, Paul Sr. would expand his land holdings, and everyone

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relief because "we have Suffered and Is like to sufer By the Ingians, they have fell upon ye Back Inhabitors about falkners Swamp, & near Coshapopin." Falkner's Swamp is near Salfordville and the Old Goshenhoppen ("Coshapopin") Church. The Pennsylvania archivists mistakenly filed the petition with documents from Colebrookdale, and ever since, it has been referred to as the Colebrookdale Petition.

22. Samuel W. Pennypacker, "Bebber's Township and the Dutch Patroons of Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 31, no. 1 (1907): 12-13.

23. Samuel W. Pennypacker wrote: "On the 7th of July, 1727, Van Bebber conveyed to Sprogel alone, though with knowledge that it was in the interest of both 'all the remaining part of the s'd six thousand one hundred and sixty six acres of land which was unsold and not conveyed by the s'd Matthias Van Bebber at the date of the s'd Lease and Release together with the appurtenances excepting one hundred and twenty acres of land in the s'd Release reserved.'" Ibid., 15. The reserved land had been sold but not yet conveyed to Paul Freed Jr.

24. "Bebber's Township: Showing the Original Settlers," researched by William Detweiler, September 1992.
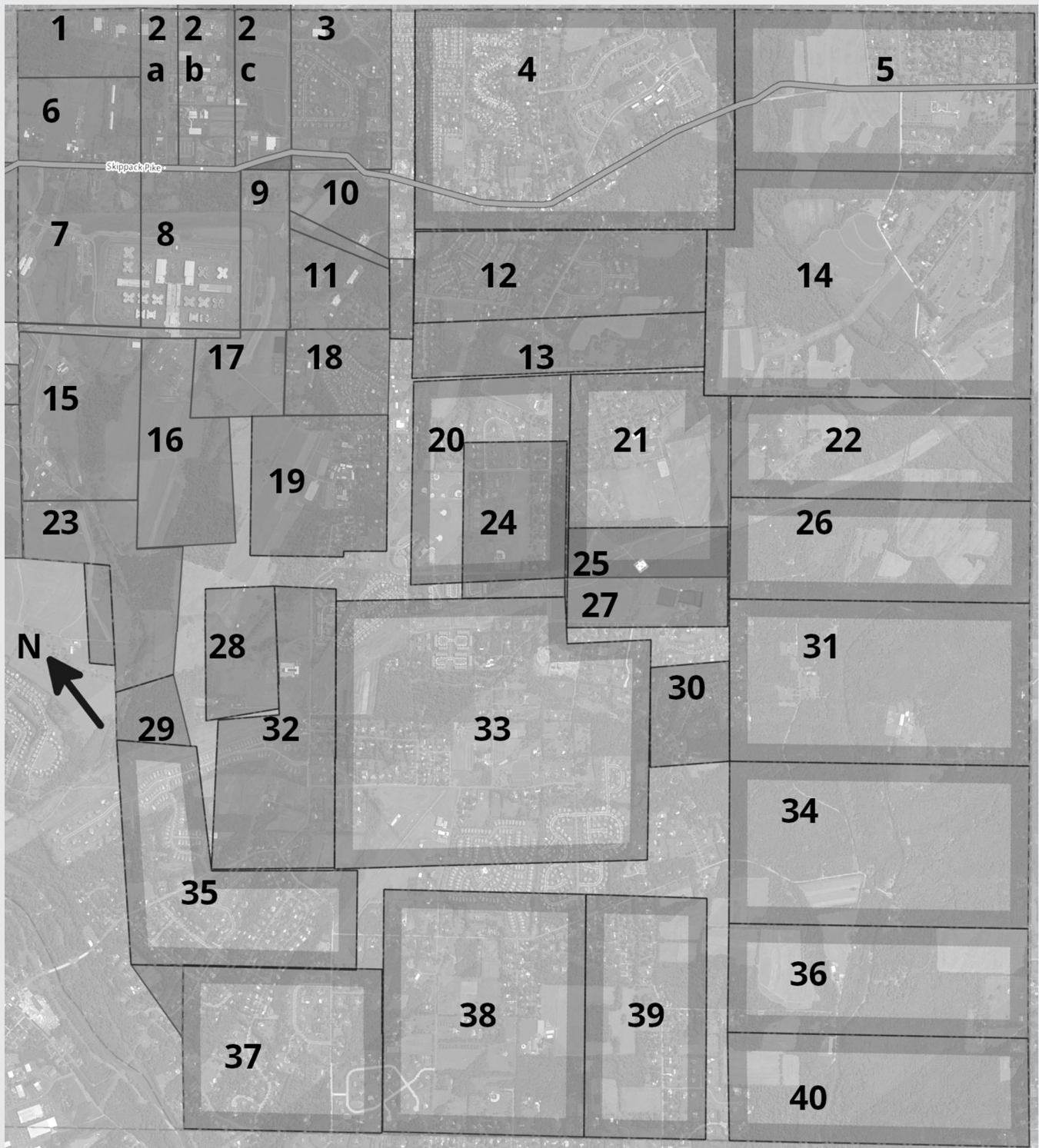
Any historical map of Skippack Township is necessarily a snapshot in time, because the residents were continually buying and selling their land. This map is more or less how the township, recently renamed from Van Bebber's Township, looked in 1727, when Matthias Van Bebber sold his remaining interests to Ludwig Sprogel, "except for 120 acres reserved" to Paul Freed Jr.

Skippack Township Beginnings

1. Jacob Kolb. He purchased this land from Sprogel about 1728, so I included it in the map with him as the owner. Interestingly, this lot, along with all the land in a straight line to the point where Skippack Pike enters the township at the right of the map, was outside the original purchase by Van Bebber. In short, he sold land he did not own. This was later rectified by the Pennsylvania General Assembly, and to this day there is a "notch" visible in maps of the township that takes this error into account.

2. Jacob Kolb's original purchase, Dec. 15, 1709. Lots 2(b) and (c) were inherited by his sons Henry and Dielman in 1748. This Henry Kolb was known as "Henry Kolb, *bludier*." A *bludier*, or blue-dyer, was an expert in dyeing cloth. Henry *bludier* also purchased Lot 2(a) from his father in 1739.

3. Michael Ziegler, Feb. 14, 1718.

4. Gerret Inden Hoofen, 1706.

5. Dirk and William Renberg, Dec. 9, 1706. These men eventually divided this property along the Skippack Pike. I believe that John Renbury, who obtained a warrant on the Allen Township property that Paul Freed Jr. eventually bought, is a close relative of these men.

6. Martin Kolb, 1724.

7. Johannes Friedt, Apr. 1, 1723. This became the Freed homestead, and two generations later the Wismer homestead. John Freed later purchased the small strip of land under Lots 7 and 8, which is now Mokychic Road.

8 and 9. This land was originally purchased by John Kolb. On Feb. 1, 1722, he subdivided the land, selling one hundred acres (Lot 8) to Johannes Friedt and fifty acres (Lot 9) to Henry Kolb (not his son). This other Henry became known as Henry *schreiner*, to contrast with Henry *bludier*. A *schreiner* is a carpenter or joiner; we would probably say cabinetmaker today.

10. Michael Ziegler bought this lot from Gerhard Clemens on Dec. 18, 1722. Later, Paul Freed Sr. bought another ten acres of this land from Michael, the small strip running between the two lots.

11. Paul Freed Sr. bought this lot of fifty acres from Gerhard Clemens on June 1, 1714, becoming the first Freed settler in Skippack. He eventually bought the segment to the east, in the middle of the right-of-way for the planned road to what was later known as Grater's Ford. For centuries, the road made a zig-zag around this lot.

12. Daniel Desmont, June 12, 1708.

13. Christopher Zimmerman, June 12, 1708.

14. John Newbry, Oct. 26, 1706. Here was another case where Van Bebber sold land improperly (I doubt it was intentional—metes and bounds are tricky). Newbry bought 450 acres, supposedly a rectangle 225 perches by 300 perches (a perch, or rod, is five and a half yards). However, when he paced it out one day, he noticed that it was in fact smaller than what he had bought. He sued Van Bebber, who worked out a deal where some land was taken from Lots 12 and 13, which were then pushed slightly west, into the supposed right-of-way for a future road. It was this land, which Paul Freed Sr. later purchased, that led to the zig-zag.

15. Paul Freed Jr., 1727.

16. Hans Detweiler, Apr. 8, 1724. Hans is the father of Susan Detweiler, who later married John Freed, ancestor of Isaac G. Freed.

17. Henry Kolb, *schreiner*, Feb. 1, 1722. He purchased this land the same day he bought Lot 9. The Upper Skippack Menn. Church and cemetery are on part of this lot.

18. Paul Friedt Sr., May 3, 1721.

19. Jacob Updegrave, Apr. 8, 1724.

20 and 24. It is difficult to sort out this property using metes and bounds. Apparently, Lot 24 was purchased by Richard Gabell in Oct. 1706. Lot 20, which overlaps it, was purchased by Johannes Scholl on June 10, 1708. How exactly that was resolved is not clear in any deeds recorded at the time.

21. Herman Kuster, June 10, 1708. His initial purchase was two hundred acres, but he sold fifty acres back to Van Bebber, who then deeded it as a gift to the "Mennonist Society" on June 8, 1717. Those fifty acres are marked as Lot 25 on the map.

22. Edward Beer, Dec. 9, 1706. This land was sold to William Dewees in 1708.

23. Peter Reiff, Sept. 4, 1728. This was part of the unsold land that went to Ludwig Sprogel in 1727. The small adjoining lot of sixteen acres was purchased by Isaac Dubois about 1716; it fell right along the township line and might have been outside Van Bebber's Township.

24. Lot 20, above.

25. Mennonist Society land, originally part of Lot 21. Christopher Dock's schoolhouse was approximately in the middle of this land.

26. Thomas Wiseman, Dec. 12, 1706. This land was subdivided, with the part adjoining Lot 22 going to William Dewees in 1708 and the rest retained by Wiseman.

27. Mennonist Society land, deeded as a gift by Van Bebber on June 8, 1717. This lot of fifty acres has the Lower Skippack Menn. Church and cemetery, where the immigrant John Freed is buried.

28. William Weirman, about 1724.

29. John Jacobs Jr., 1724.

30. Claus Johnson, June 12, 1708.

31. Claus Johnson, Dec. 11, 1706.

32. Nicholas Hicks, June 12, 1723. Hicks defaulted on this land, which was sold at auction to John Heizer (or Keizer) and eventually bought by Yellis Kolb.

33. Isaac Dubois, 1716. At five hundred acres, this was the largest single property in Skippack.

34. John Krey, Feb. 25, 1703. Krey was the first person to buy land and remain in Van Bebber's Twp. A couple of others bought lots around the same time but soon sold them back to Van Bebber.

35. John Jacobs Jr., Mar. 8, 1724.

36. Henry Pannebecker, June 12, 1708. Pannebecker eventually succeeded Sprogel as the owner of the unsold Van Bebber land. A small creek runs through this lot, and Peter Bon bought the part of the lot to the west of the creek.

37. John Jacobs Sr., Oct. 31, 1704. He bought the small triangle to the west of this lot the same year. I believe this reflected the limit of arable land before reaching the banks of Perkiomen Creek, which this property adjoins.

38. Derrick Jensen, May 2, 1721.

39. John Umstat, 1717.

40. John Umstat, June 9, 1708. This land went to his sons Herman and Henry upon his death.

would be satisfied.[25] When it came time to execute the will of Paul Sr., his heirs could produce the original deed from Matthias Van Bebber to "Paul Freed," conveniently overlooking the fact that he was not the Paul Freed who had bought the land.

Paul recorded purchases of 122 acres during his lifetime in Skippack Township, but his will allocates 242 acres. The man who inherited the land was Paul Sr.'s son-in-law Jacob Grater. Subsequent generations of Graters lived on the land, apparently without realizing the subterfuge their ancestors had pulled off. Centuries later, the State of Pennsylvania surveyed land to build the Graterford State Prison. It traced the history of the 120-acre tract to Paul Freed Sr., never discovering that the original sale was to his relative Paul Freed Jr.

This sale must have been made about 1740, sometime after the 1734 tax roll and before Paul Sr. died in 1743. In 1750, Paul Jr. witnessed the last will and testament of his neighbor Hans Detweiler. Since Jacob Grater owned the Skippack land, either Paul Jr. moved away and came back to witness the will, or he was simply living as a tenant on the land he had sold. Then Paul Jr. disappears.

In 1752, a man named Paul Freed appears in Allen Township in what is now Northampton County. Paul of Allen Township is a founding member of the Siegfried Mennonite Church. Nothing is known of him beforehand. Could this be the same man?

From the Penns, Paul of Allen Township bought a large tract of land adjacent to the first Indian reservation near the Lehigh River at Kreidersville.[26] He appears to have been on friendly terms with the Indians; when the French and Indian War broke out, nearly all the settlers headed south of the Lehigh River down to the Quakertown area. Paul and his wife, Catherine (whose maiden name is not known), stayed put.

Because they were not citizens and could not bequeath their land to their children, they sold it to them while still alive,[27] with the main transactions occurring in 1767 and 1768, when they sold parts to Jacob, Peter,[28] and Henry.[29] (This is the same Jacob Freed who had married Elizabeth Häffelfinger in 1755 in Allen Township.[30]) Paul and Catherine also had a daughter, Mary, who married Abraham Rieser,[31] who owned a large farm near Quakertown, south of the Lehigh. They may have had another daughter, who married their neighbor Henry Zink. The Zinks were killed by Indians.[32] There was another son, probably the oldest, named John,[33] who may have owned land just north of Paul and Catherine.

The Siegfried Mennonite Church was abandoned in 1802.[34] The burial plots of the Freeds are unknown.

25. This transaction must have been made between 1734 when Paul Freed Jr. appears on the tax rolls of Skippack and Perkiomen Township, and 1743, when Paul Freed Sr. died. Because Paul was naturalized, he left a will. Philadelphia Will G: 42-43, no. 18, City Archives, Philadelphia, PA.

26. This land was part of a tract of five hundred acres originally warranted to John Renbury on June 22, 1738. I believe he is a relative of Dirk and William Renberg, neighbors of the Freeds in Skippack Twp. In 1757, a petition to build a road along the Blue Mountains was signed by Paul Fried (sometimes mistranscribed as "Flick," four names after John Renbery) and Johannes Friedt (probably the eldest son of Paul). Karl Friedrich von Frank zu Döfering and Charles Rhoads Roberts, *Kress Family History* (self-published, 1930), 331. In 1766, Paul Friedt formally received a patent (title) on 366 acres of the 500 Renbury acres (Patent AA.8-100). The survey had been done on Apr. 25, 1752, on behalf of Paul Freed and Henry Zink (Survey A14: 249), at which time Renbury formally forfeited his warrant. I believe Paul Freed bought the land (or started renting it) from Renbury when he sold the Skippack land to Paul Freed Sr., about 1740. We know Paul Jr. sold it to Paul Sr. before he died because it was included in his estate. Northampton Co. was carved out of Bucks Co. in 1752. However, Paul Jr. also witnessed the will of Hans Detweiler in Skippack in 1750. It is possible that he was still on his Skippack land, renting it from Paul Sr.'s son-in-law, who was the legal owner. The Renbury land was part of the Walking Purchase of 1737, through which Thomas Penn greatly expanded the family's holdings, leaving the Indians feeling cheated.

27. Northampton County Deed A3-312, Jan. 19, 1767. Paul & Catharine Freidt of Allen Twp. received £100 from Henry Friedt, son, & Yeoman of Allen Twp., for 92½ acres on the Forks of the Delaware, from an original grant [of 368 acres] from [Thomas] Penn on Oct. 28, 1766 [Note: "Forks of Delaware" refers to the City of Easton, in Northampton County]. Also, on Jan. 19, 1767 (same day as above), Deed H2-493, Northampton County, PA. Paul & Catharine Freidt of Allen Twp. received £100 from Jacob Friedt, son & Yeoman for 127½ acres. Finally, on Feb. 3, 1768 Deed 1-297, Northampton County, PA Paul & Catharine Freidt of Allen Twp., received £100 from Peter Freidt son & Yeoman of Allen Twp., for 148 acres.

28. Peter Freed (ca. 1734–1791) appears open-minded about religion. He sold a small plot of his land to the founders of the Zion Stone Church of Kreidersville, PA, which remains an active congregation more than 240 years after its founding. It is affiliated with the United Church of Christ. Peter himself was an early member of the Siegfried Mennonite Church. On May 10, 1770, he was one of the trustees to whom David Chalmers deeded the land for the church and cemetery. His burial plot is unknown, and the same is true for his parents' plots.

29. Henry Freed became a guardian of Jacob's children. Mar. 8. 1784, Bucks County Orphan's Court. Petition of John Lederach and Elizabeth Fried, late of Richland Twp., to appoint Henry Fried guardian for Jacob's children Elizabeth, Abraham, and Peter.

30. Private correspondence, Allen Frederick. Elizabeth was the daughter of Jacob Häffelfinger or Heffletrager (1700–1786) and Barbara Segler or Ziegler (1705–1786).

31. Mary Freed (ca. 1735–Oct. 15, 1813) married Abraham Rieser (a name with many variant spellings, including Reasor, Reser, and Reeser) in 1754 in Springfield Twp., Bucks Co. They had three known children: David (1755–1818), Abraham (1761–1838), and a girl born about 1758. Mary, Abraham, and Abraham Jr. are buried in the Springfield Menn. Cem., Pleasant Valley. This is the Rieser couple who visited Isaac Freed's grandfather and ate the sour peaches.

32. Private correspondence, Al Kernz.

33. John Freed (ca. 1725–ca. Aug. 1791) was named a guardian to Jacob's children. His wife, Hannah, maiden name unknown, was also involved in settling Jacob's estate. Sept. 14, 1789, Bucks County Orphan's Court. John Freed filed a petition regarding two sons of Jacob, asking that Abraham Freed, above age fourteen, be allowed to choose a guardian and that the court appoint a guardian for Peter, under age fourteen. By September 1799, John's widow, Hannah Friedt, had become the guardian.

34. The land for the Siegfried Cem. was conveyed in 1770 to four

They might all be buried in private plots or the Siegfried Cemetery. Unfortunately, the Siegfried Cemetery, which still exists, was covered over when the adjoining road, West Twenty-first Street in Northampton, was raised by some twenty feet to level it off when a bridge was built over the Lehigh. Only a few headstones were saved, along with a statue dedicated to Col. John Siegfried, a Revolutionary War soldier.

Jacob Freed, it seems, had had enough of the rough life north of the Lehigh, and he soon sold his land to Abraham Freed,[35] most likely a cousin. Jacob moved to the Quakertown area, where he died in 1782 at the age of fifty, leaving a widow and several small children. Because he died intestate, the Orphan's Court handled his estate and much of what we know about his family comes from the court records spanning several years and including appointed guardians for his children under fourteen.[36]

Now, we take a look at the book of Isaac G. Freed. It contains, in two paragraphs, all the genealogical information needed to make the connection.

My uncle Joseph F. Freed left some writings, stating that he gathered from some old documents that his great-grandfather, which would be the father of John and Jacob, that he lived near Bethlehem and that he had other children, and that some of them moved to the western part of Pennsylvania.

There was a sister, married to Abraham Rieser. They visited my grandfather, who had a young peach tree with two peaches on it, which he showed to Mr. Rieser, being proud of the fine fruit, thinking some day to taste its fine flavor, but his guest put out his hand to pluck them. "Stop," said grandfather, "they are not ripe." To which the guest replied, "I guess I won't get them any better," and ate them. This seemed somewhat comical, though mortifying to grandfather.[37]

In hindsight, Uncle Joseph had found the Orphan's Court file. The sister was Mary Freed Rieser, daughter of Paul Freed of Allen Township. One Freed who moved west was Abraham Freed, Paul's nephew, who moved to Jacobs Creek, Pennsylvania, as did some grandchildren of Paul's. Another son who moved west, according to family tradition, was Henry, who moved to Hellam Township, York County. I believe that Paul Freed Jr. is the brother of Hans Freed, who is the great-grandfather of Isaac Freed. If Paul Freed Jr. is the same man as Paul of Allen Township, there should be a DNA match.

Thanks to the Freed DNA Project, we have located a male Freed descendant of Isaac Freed.[38] He is indeed a match with my family. Isaac can rest in peace; we have found his immigrant ancestor Hans.

Hans Freed

Hans Freed appeared on the 1734 tax rolls in the Philadelphia area. Many people think of Hans as a nickname for Johann or Johannes, but, in fact, it could substitute for any name at all. The tax list does not give much of a clue.

There are a few books written about the Freed families of Pennsylvania, and when they mention Hans at all, it is usually in the context of one of the founders of the Deep Run Mennonite Church. The Freed-Wismer family connection is reinforced because we know that Jacob Wismer was also a founder of Deep Run Mennonite Church. But there is a problem. There are no other Freed families associated with Deep Run. That is puzzling because Hans Freed was supposed to be one of the ministers there. While there are many Fretz families associated with Deep Run, there are none named Freed.

Joel D. Alderfer, collections manager at the Mennonite Heritage Center in Harleysville, Pennsylvania, cleared that up for me one day as I visited the museum. "There was no Hans Freed at Deep Run," he told me. "That was a typographical error. It was Hans Fretz."

This may be useful information on the Fretz family, but no help in the hunt for Hans Freed. The book *History of Lower Salford Township, in Sketches, Commencing with a History of Harleysville* has one other reference to him: "Hans Freed owned a farm about a mile west of Salfordville. Beyond that, nothing is known of him."[39]

trustees, including Peter Fried. The Siegfried Mennonite Church was abandoned when the congregation built the Settlement Meeting House, at Mud Road and Howertown Street in Kreidersville. J. C. Wenger, "Siegfried Mennonite Church (Northampton, PA, USA)" in the *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online,* 1959.

35. Bucks County Deed H2-319, Dec. 25, 1769. Jacob and Elizabeth Friedt of Richland Twp., Bucks Co., received £359 from Abraham Friedt of Allen Twp., for 127½ acres.

36. Isaac G. Freed: preface. The title page describes the author as "historian of the Freed family, surveyor, school teacher, business man." The preface, by I. K. Freed, a distant relative, describes Isaac's long genealogical search and contacts with relatives. "After spending fifty years in gathering historical data for the 'Freed Family History,' he called them together in reunion in order to finish the book. However, at the age of eighty-six, he had not completed the work; and it becomes the duty of other hands to take up where he left off." The book contains several errors. One of the most apparent errors identifies Isaac's wife as "Amanda" Seese. Her real name, as noted by Isaac in the section on his own family, was Miranda.

37. Ibid., 14-15.

38. Ty Goodart provided an anonymous sample to the Freed DNA Project.

39. James Y. Heckler, *History of Lower Salford Township, in Sketches, Commencing with a History of Harleysville* (self-published, 1888).

I searched through all the other tax records of Frederick Township and Salford Township, which surround the area in question. Hans Freed shows up for several years, then disappears.

I searched all the land records for sales by the Penns to anyone named Freed. There were some matches in the area. As mentioned in the case of Paul Freed Jr., the problem is that the land is described using metes and bounds. "Start at the pine tree at the corner of Jacob Dinkelfelder's land, then go southwest 220 yards." It's like searching for a needle in a haystack.

One of the deeds, however, offered a clue. It was along the eastern bank of a river that made an S-curve. There are only two or three of those a mile west of Salfordville, along the Perkiomen Creek, which forms the boundary between Salford Township and Frederick Township.

Surprisingly, there was another Freed land record that appeared to be a mirror image of the first. It is along the west bank of an S-curve in a river. And when you superimpose one map on top of the other, they fit perfectly. Who is the owner of this land?

The first title, for land on the east bank, is signed simply, "Hans Freed."[40] So that appears to be his land. But the other is signed, "Johann Jacob Freed." Now I knew the actual name of Hans. Typically, "Johann" at the start of a name was ignored.[41] This man would have been known as Jacob or Hans, not John.

The second piece of land, along the west bank of the Perkiomen, is in Frederick Township.[42] Johann Jacob Freed bought this land about the same time that Hans Freed sold the land on the east bank. I have already noted the difficulty faced by the German settlers of the area: If you did not have citizenship, you could not bequeath your land through a will. That made things difficult enough for Jacob Freed, but he had another problem. Because his land spanned two townships, it could not be sold as one piece. The east bank land was about two-thirds of the total, while the west bank made up the remaining one-third.

That is pretty much the end of Jacob's story. There is no record of a tombstone in the area, although his Salford land is adjacent to the Old Goshenhoppen Church (in fact, Old Church Road in Harleysville runs along its edge).[43] He most likely is buried there. But there are no subsequent records of anyone named Freed living in that area.

As I stated at the outset, the purpose of my article is to link the four Mennonite Freed families of the 1734 records to the Freed family history books. Most of the families can be traced to John Freed or Paul Freed Jr., except for one. That is the family of Isaac Freed, a man who spent much of his adult life trying, with little success, to trace his roots.

Isaac was the genealogist in the family and organized family gatherings regularly. He founded a Freed Family Association, and as postmaster of North Wales, Pennsylvania, he was able to communicate readily with any number of relatives. He gathered bits and pieces of information over the years but died on July 5, 1918, before completing his book, *A Freed Family History*, published in 1919.

Because of his thoroughness, we know of many connections for families after the Civil War. Unfortunately, he was less thorough with older records and often mixed facts with speculation without differentiating the two. Such was the case with his own ancestors.

He vividly recounted stories from his parents' generation and even that of his grandparents. But when it came to his grandfather's ancestors, he was vague. John Freed, his grandfather, married a woman named Susan Detweiler and owned an inn at Franconia. His claim to fame was that he offered to help George Washington's troops after being routed at the Battle of Germantown a few miles down the road in 1777. He died several weeks later.

40. John Jacob Freed apparently had considerable difficulty obtaining rights to this land, and the history shows the difficulty of transcribing the old records. Fried was such an unusual name that it is sometimes transcribed as Fritz, Frock, or Flick. On July 29, 1734, "Jacob Frock" obtained warrant #2, Upper Salford Twp., Philadelphia Co., for 100 acres on the east bank. Hans sold this land on Mar. 10, 1742, to John Fisher. Apparently, the survey came to 123 acres (discrepancies between warrant and survey were relatively common), Book D44-269–270. This is the land that "Hans Fried" paid tax on in 1734. Also, on Sept. 3, 1734, "Hans Fritz" obtained warrant #17 for fifty acres in Perkiomen Twp., but this warrant was later vacated.

41. German family naming conventions would constitute a separate article. They depended on the era and the family. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the firstborn son would often be named after his paternal grandfather. It was popular to give the children their mother's maiden name as a middle name in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In many families, a child had two or more given names (*vornahmen*), which included "saint names" and a single name he was called by (*rufnahme*). A boy, for instance, might be named Johann Georg but would be called Georg. In the same family, you would then see Johann Georg, Johann Adam, Johann Christoph, etc., with the boys actually being called Georg, Adam, and Christoph. A typical saint name for boys was Johann; for girls, it was often Anna or Maria. You will not find Johann Johann, however; that was shortened to simply Johannes.

42. This land was originally warranted to Jacob Fautz, who may or may not be the same person as John Jacob Freed. He obtained two warrants on the same day, Oct. 29, 1734, one for 200 acres (later vacated) and one for 150 acres. The survey (Survey C48-85) was made on Mar. 7, 1738, and assigned to Jacob Free. The title (Patent A9-271) was issued Apr. 24, 1741, shortly before Hans sold the east bank land to John Fisher.

43. One of the founders of Old Goshenhoppen Church was Martin Hiltebeitel, a contemporary of John Jacob Freed. The Freed land on the west bank of Perkiomen Creek was sold in a private transaction to an unknown party, probably about 1767. The buyer might have been Martin Hiltebeitel, as Abraham Hiltebeitel owned the land in 1828.

Who were John Freed's parents? Isaac never did figure it out. He speculated that they arrived on the *Vernon* in 1747, which carried two Freed brothers, Hans and Heinrich. He frequently referred to his grandfather as "Hans," which may well have been his nickname, but thoroughly fudged the history, skipping over names, dates, and places.

Isaac had to rely on his guesswork, a paucity of records (especially records from Europe), and the limits of communication through letters. One key document from Europe discounts Isaac's theory. However, we learn that there was, indeed, a Freed who left Germany in 1747. The "Hans" who arrived in 1747 with his brother Heinrich was named Paul.[44]

Through the Orphan's Court file of Jacob Freed, we know that Isaac G. Freed was related to Paul Freed Jr. We, therefore, must conclude that Isaac's grandfather John Freed, who owned the Franconia Inn, is also related to Paul Freed Jr. His great-grandfather was not a late arrival to the Pennsylvania scene but was there much earlier than 1747. That man was either Paul Freed Jr. himself or another Freed, a brother of Paul, whose nickname was Hans.

We further know that Paul Freed Jr. had a son named John, who was involved in the administration of his brother Jacob's estate and that this man did not own the Franconia Inn.[45] Isaac's grandfather, who did own the Franconia Inn, is, therefore, a nephew of Paul Freed Jr., and Hans is the brother of Paul Freed Jr., therefore, is not named Paul and did not arrive on the *Vernon*.

There is another mystery connected with Jacob Freed, son of Paul Jr. Where did his first name originate? An exhaustive list of all the Freeds and their children shows not a single one named Jacob. Researchers looking for Freed family roots in Germany also come up empty.

And so, everything fits together perfectly. Isaac's great-grandfather Hans Freed is the same man who was on the 1734 tax roll in Salford Township. His real name was Johann Jacob Freed. His brother was Paul Freed of Allen Township, who named one of his sons Jacob. The rest of the lineage now becomes clear. Johann Jacob (Hans) Freed was the father of the John Freed, who owned the Franconia Inn and married Susan Detweiler.

This addresses another mystery: A few years after Paul Freed Jr. died, his son Jacob moved to Quakertown, selling his land to Abraham Freed. But there is no obvious father-son connection between Paul Freed and Abraham Freed. Paul, who was not a citizen, was very careful to sell his land to three of his sons in 1767 and in 1768 to transfer ownership of the land without inheritance. His other living son, John, had bought land directly from the Penns, presumably funded by his parents. His surviving daughter, Mary, was married to Abraham Rieser.

We can deduce that Abraham is a nephew of Paul, a cousin of Jacob. But that leaves only one possible father: Hans Freed of Salfordville. Abraham Freed and John Freed, Isaac's grandfather, were brothers.

This is strongly confirmed by the simple fact that Abraham and John both bought land in April 1769. John bought the Franconia Inn for 750 pounds; Abraham bought his cousin's land for 375 pounds. I surmise that what happened is that because Hans was not a citizen and could not bequeath his land, he sold it for a nominal sum to his sons in two parts. John, the older brother, got land worth 750 pounds, while Abraham's was worth 375 pounds. In that case, being without land, Hans would have moved in with John at the Franconia Inn. Alternatively, Hans might have died about 1768 and the land was sold at auction, with the division between the brothers as noted. (It is also possible that each brother got 750 pounds, and Abraham spent only half his money when buying his cousin's land.)

This concludes the connection between Hans Freed and the book of Isaac Freed through Hans' son John. His other son, Abraham, has a fascinating story of his own, which we will explore later.

John Freed

A Freed Family History, otherwise known as the Red Book, written by my aunt June Freed Wilcox and her daughter, my cousin Joyce W. Graff, traced my family history back to the Civil War. Going beyond that was impossible, given the research constraints of the 1970s.[46] They went as far back as Abraham Freed, a

44. In 1739, the Elector, ruler of the Palatinate in the Holy Roman Empire, issued an edict that anyone who emigrated without permission would have his land forfeited, thus punishing any relatives left behind. In 1744, the Elector placed a limit of two hundred Mennonite families who could remain in his principality. Many families left in the next few years. Richard W. Davis, "Sixty Years of Mennonite Stauffer Immigrants to North America, 1710–1770," *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage* 16, no. 4 (October 1993). In 1747, Paul Freed, son of Peter of Obersülzen, was permitted to emigrate. "Obersülzen (Kreis Frankenthal) Paul Fried, son of the Anabaptist (Mennonite) Peter Fried of Obersülzen, 'went to the New Land,' document dated June 6, 1747" [Source: Michael Tepper, *New World immigrants: a consolidation of ship passenger lists and associated data from periodical literature* (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1979), 54. The *Vernon* arrived Aug. 1, 1747, in Philadelphia, with Hans and Heinrich Fried aboard.

45. John, owner of the Franconia Inn, died in 1777; John, Jacob's brother, filed a petition in Orphan's Court in 1789.

46. Joyce Wilcox Graff and June Freed Wilcox, *A Freed Family History* (1981).

noted Methodist minister in eastern Pennsylvania and the Eastern Shore of Maryland, whose children included Milton Freed. Abraham was an extremely popular name at the time, and Freed was not a rare name. Several families could claim an Abraham Freed of about the right age.

The next lead came through a phone call from Milton S. Haldeman, a Mennonite genealogist who wrote the book *Descendants of Christopher Haldeman: Son of Immigrant Nicholas Haldeman* (Masthof Press, 2008). The Red Book noted that the notebooks of Milton Freed (brother of my ancestor William Walton Freed) contained a lot of interesting stories about the family and referred to his aunt Mary Shirk. "We were unable to find the connection, and leave this to further scholars."

Milton Haldeman recognized the name immediately and was able to make the connection to the previous generation. In fact, Abraham is one of the children listed in a sampler by Lydia Freed, now in the collection of Mennonite Life (formerly Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society). Knowing who Abraham's parents were enabled us to make the connection to the book of Charles Heiberger, *Descendents of Johannes Friedt/Freed*, which meticulously documents the chain from Abraham Freed's father back to John Freed, my immigrant Freed ancestor.[47] To seal the deal, we recently obtained DNA confirmation that Lydia's father and brother are indeed the men named Abraham Freed in my lineage.

We are blessed with information on John Freed, the immigrant. In addition to his tombstone, in the Lower Skippack Mennonite Cemetery,[48] extensive land records show his neighbors' properties. From tax records, we know he owned 223 acres in Skippack. His will had been transcribed and published. What we did not know was what happened to the deed to his land.

I paid a visit to the Mennonite Heritage Center, where the collections manager, Joel Alderfer, spent some time with me, for example, pointing out an exhibition about the barn of Peter Freed, a son of John Freed, which was built in 1761 and is still standing. He showed me a copy of the will of John Freed and something I had never seen before, the inventory of his estate.

Until then, I had thought of John Freed as a man of average means. Yes, his farm of 123 acres was a little larger than most, which were typically either fifty or one hundred acres at the time, and, yes, he did own another farm of one hundred acres, but nothing extraordinary, especially when compared with the farm of Solomon Dubois, a whopping five hundred acres.

You can imagine my surprise when I learned that, in addition to John Freed's 223 acres in Skippack, he owned an additional 400 acres in Bucks County, several miles east of his primary farmland. Far from being a man of modest means, John Freed was one of the most important landowners among the Mennonite settlers.

This discovery led me to take another look at a reference in the 1714 books of the Penn family. They had granted a request by one John Fred to take an option on five hundred acres of land in the Valley Forge area.[49] That option never went to an actual survey and sale. There is a claim by the Fred family of Ireland that their ancestor, John Fred of Dublin Township, was the person who made the request. They explained that it never went to survey because John Fred had decided to return to Ireland and not pursue the matter.

When I looked more closely, I discovered that John Fred never returned to Ireland. His son did. So that cannot explain why he would have let the option lie dormant.

Now, armed with the fact that John Freed had enough money to buy five hundred acres and had arrived sometime between 1710 and 1727, I considered whether he might have been the mysterious purchaser of the option. What reason would he have to let it lapse?

The answer became clear when I read the Garber article in *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage* explaining that the Mennonite settlers could not bequeath their land to their descendants. Now it all made sense. John Freed arrived about 1711, eager to establish himself, and requested the option in 1714, which was granted. As he looked further into the legalities, he realized that buying the land outright would put his children at a significant disadvantage after his death.

Instead, what he did, I believe, was to lease land in Vincent Township,[50] about twenty-five miles north-

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47. James H. Wilcox and Joyce W. Graff, *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage* 34, no. 3 (July 2011):42 ff. This is the same Joyce W. Graff who is co-author of the Red Book. James H. Wilcox is her brother, and both are my first cousins.

48. A photograph of this headstone appears in Heiberger's book. A survey in 2020, however, found no trace of it; a group of John Freed's descendants are trying to locate it or replace it.

49. A copy of the warrant is filed in Warrant D.65-196, dated the 27th day of the first month of 1714 (that is, Mar. 27, 1714, as the calendar year began in March back then).

50. I have two main reasons to believe they might have settled first in Vincent Twp. First, it is close to where the Stauffers reportedly settled, the Valley Forge and Skippack areas. The evidence for Vincent
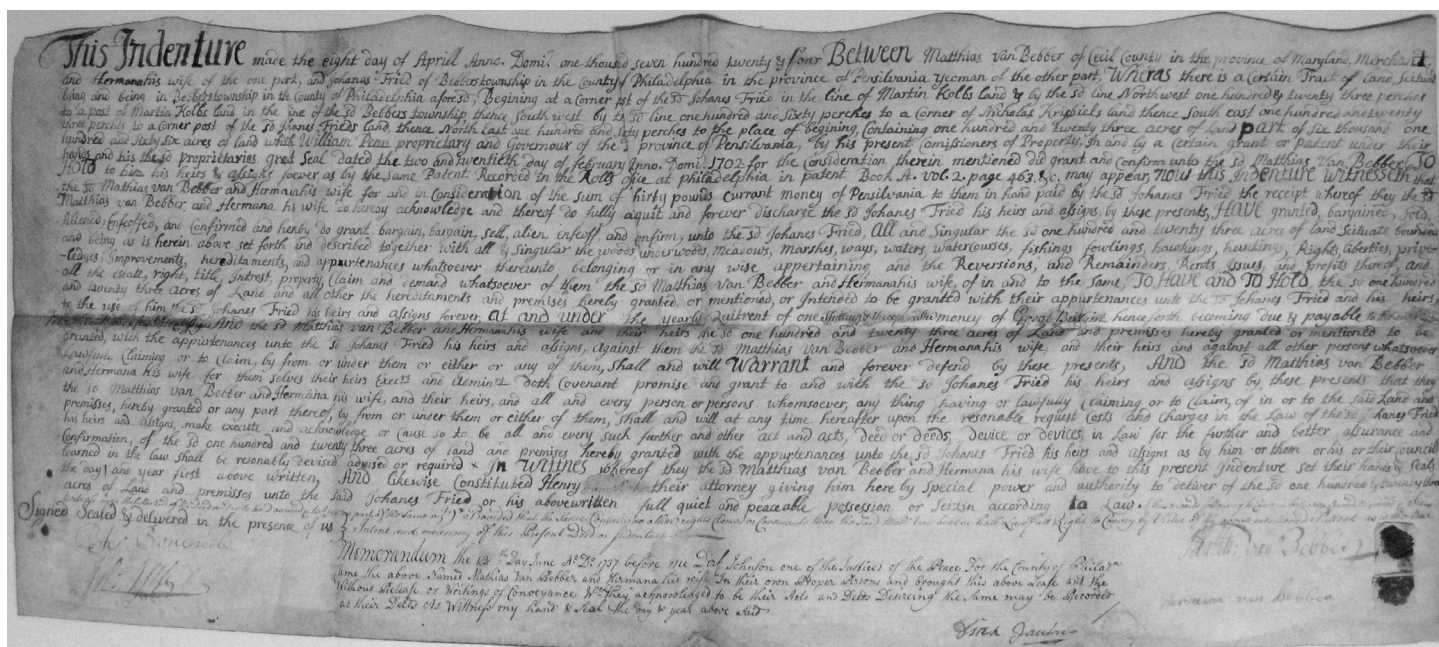
John Freed's original deed *(Credit: The Montgomery County Division of Parks and Heritage Services)*

This unrecorded deed of April 8, 1724 and the memoranda of April 1, 1723 and June 13, 1787 were all written by Hendrick Pannebecker the attorney for Van Bebber named in them.
Sam'l. W. Pennypacker
Nov. 2. 1902.

west of Germantown. His brother, Paul Freed Sr., bought fifty acres in 1714 in Matthias Van Bebber's new township, now known as Skippack, near Martin Kolb's land. Paul bought fifty more acres in 1721, and a year later, John bought one hundred acres. The brothers undoubtedly knew about the proposed legislation to allow Mennonites to become citizens and thus gain the right to bequeath land. After years of debate, such a law was finally passed in 1730 and was the subject of the Garber article in 2019. The article laid out the debate in the Pennsylvania General Assembly and the Lancaster County Mennonites who benefited. The article omitted almost entirely that a nearly identical law was enacted the following year for the Mennonites of Skippack Township, including John Freed and Paul Freed Sr., who became British subjects.

Armed with the assurance that they could will their land to their children, Paul and John continued to make additional purchases in Skippack until John eventually owned 223 acres and Paul, 242. Unknown to me was that John was also buying land in Bucks County, bringing his total to 623 acres.

Twp. specifically is that John Freed's daughter Mary married Peter Roth of Vincent Twp. about 1740. How did they meet? I believe they grew up together. Peter Roth anglicized his name to Peter Rhoad, and the old Vincent Mennonite Cem., also known as Rhoad's Burial Ground, is named for his family. Joel D. Alderfer of the Mennonite Heritage Center in Harleysville has written about this family. (Note that one abstract of John Freed's will mistakenly identified Mary's husband as Peter "Kulp." John Freed's will did not specify the married name of his daughter.)

There is further indirect evidence to support the idea that John Freed arrived about 1711. His oldest son, Heinrich Friedt, born in 1712, bequeathed land to his children. This bequeathal would not be possible unless Heinrich were a British subject, yet there is no naturalization record. This supports the idea that Heinrich was born in America and thus did not need to be naturalized after his father became a British subject.

When John Freed died in 1744, he left a will naming his youngest son, John, as executor, and his "dear beloved friends" Jacob Crader and Paul Freed as administrators. It was highly unusual to name both an executor and an administrator, but it makes sense when you consider that John had not yet turned twenty-one when his father wrote the will. One Freed family history speculates that John was not in his right mind when he wrote the will because Paul, his brother, had died in 1743. But it was not Paul Sr. who was named as co-administrator; it was Paul Freed Jr., who had not yet moved to Allen Township. The other administrator, Jacob Grater, was the son-in-law of Paul Sr. This explains why he referred to them as his dear beloved friends, which was simpler than saying "my brother's son-in-law and my first cousin once removed." Everyone knew what he meant.

Another interesting aspect of John Freed's inventory included a box for holding land deeds. What happened to the deeds? Governor Samuel W. Pennypacker of Pennsylvania gave a clue in an article written in 1907. He stated that he had John Freed's original deed in his possession[51] because it had been countersigned by his ancestor, a land agent for Matthias Van Bebber. I contacted the Pennypacker Mills Museum in eastern Pennsylvania, and I am happy to say that this Freed artifact, too, is a museum piece. The museum's curator was kind enough to send me a photograph of the original, reproduced publicly here for the first time.

The Freeds and divided loyalties

It is not often written about, but Americans were far from unanimous in supporting the split from England in 1776. Perhaps the greatest effect on churches was the forced separation of the American Episcopal Church from the Church of England. But it had a profound effect on the Mennonite Church as well.

The Mennonites, like the Quakers, were strict pacifists and opposed anything that would support war. They refused to bear arms, for example. But the Pennsylvania General Assembly had imposed a tax to support the fledgling Revolutionary Army, led by General George Washington, and the Mennonites had a problem.

Bishop Christian Funk of Franconia opposed taking up arms, but he felt morally obligated to support the revolution by any other means necessary. About four dozen of his fellow worshippers agreed with him, and he was excommunicated. My immigrant ancestor, John Freed's eldest son Henry Freed, sympathized with the Funkites. Radically breaking with Mennonite tradition, he enlisted in the army in early 1776, even before the Declaration of Independence. He was wounded in an early skirmish with the British and sent home to recuperate, where he married and started a family. Henry later rejoined the fight and was captured in battle but survived the war, which is fortunate for me because his son, my ancestor, Abraham S. Freed, was born in 1785 after the war. Henry's children, apparently, were all Funkites. Two of them married relatives of Bishop Funk, and others married into another Funkite family, the Rosenbergers.

After the war, and even during it, some people who supported England (often referred to as Tories)

left for another American English colony: Canada. In one Freed family, we see each sister leave with her husband for Canada about 1802.

While my Freed line remained in the United States, they gravitated away from the Mennonite Church. Abraham S. Freed, born in 1785, converted to Methodism, joining the United Brethren in Christ. He followed in the footsteps of Bishop Martin Boehm, a Mennonite who had co-founded the United Brethren in Christ in 1789. Abraham Freed became a well-known Methodist preacher, holding revival meetings around eastern and central Pennsylvania.[52] It was at one of these meetings where his son, also named Abraham, met Mary Singer, who hailed from Halifax, Pennsylvania, not far from Harrisburg.

Abraham and Mary traveled various circuits for the Methodist Church, mainly around Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, and on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. It was while serving in one of those circuits that Abraham suddenly became ill and died. His widow returned to Halifax with her seven children, including Alpheus, William, and Milton.

Milton kept meticulous notebooks that included the reference to Mary Shirk, allowing our family to trace its roots to Europe.

Alpheus was a gifted student and attended Dickinson University in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, a seminary with a prep school in Halifax. About that time, Mary moved to Williamsport, buying land next door to the university and building a log cabin, where she reared her family. Alpheus soon graduated and was sent to Kansas, where he became a noted preacher. (He was the local Methodist minister in Coffeyville, Kansas, on October 5, 1892, when the infamous Dalton Gang, to "beat anything Jesse James ever did," staged a double bank robbery, foiled by the townsfolk.)

Her second son, William Walton Freed, followed in his brother's footsteps as a preacher but was not as disciplined. He worked briefly as a printer in Philadelphia, then went west himself, holding revival meetings along the way before finally reaching San Francisco. He joined the crew of a ship heading around the Cape for New York and eventually made his way back to Williamsport, where he started a family that included my grandfather, the subject of the Red Book.

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51. Samuel Whitaker Pennypacker, "Bebber's Township and the Dutch Patroons of Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 31, no. 1 (1907): 6.

52. While sometimes called tent meetings, they were held in large auditoriums whenever possible, outside when not possible, but always mass meetings in the revival style of evangelical preaching.

The westward trail

As I stated initially, my goal was to use the scientific method, original records, and DNA tracing to look at the four Mennonite Freeds who immigrated to the Philadelphia area before 1734 and to connect them to the standard Freed family histories. To summarize:

—Paul Freed Sr. had no Freed heirs; his only child was a daughter Maria, who married Jacob Grater, founder of Graterford, who has descendants named Grater, Crater, or other variations.

—His brother, John Freed, has been examined in some detail, perhaps the most extensive work being the privately published book *The Freed/Fried Family: Descendents of Johannes Friedt (1682-1744)*. I have traced his descendants from that book to my Freed line, *A Freed Family History* by Graff and Wilcox.

—Paul Freed Jr., first cousin once removed of Paul Sr. and John Freed, had four sons and at least one daughter, Mary Rieser. Most Freeds who trace their lineage (incorrectly) to Paul Sr. should instead be tracing it to this man.

—Paul Jr.'s brother, Johann Jacob (Hans) Freed, is the immigrant ancestor of Isaac Freed, author of *History of the Freed Family*, through his son John Freed, who bought the Franconia Inn in 1769.

Usually, that would be the end of it. But, there is more!

Thanks to the Freed DNA Project, I learned that I am directly related to a descendant of a Freed family of western Pennsylvania. Isaac G. Freed had speculated that there might be a connection between these two branches, but nobody had a shred of evidence to support that notion. Who might be the missing link?

Thanks to the DNA evidence, I decided to pursue this matter more deeply. I discovered the story of Abraham Freed, a son of Hans.

Hans Freed owned one hundred acres along the Perkiomen Creek and did well for his sons John and Abraham. In 1769, John and Abraham used their inheritance to buy property. A year or so earlier, Abraham had married Mary Mayer, daughter of Abraham Mayer, a sawmill owner along the Perkiomen and a wealthy man, well-known among his fellow Mennonites.

Abraham Mayer was evidently displeased that his daughter and her new husband had decided to live north of the Lehigh, where Indian raids were becoming increasingly common as the French and Indian War heated up. I can only imagine the conversations that must have ensued between the father and the newlyweds. In any case, in 1773, the couple

began living in a cabin on the Mayer property in Upper Hanover Township.

Abraham Mayer died of old age in 1790, leaving a widow, Catherine, and giving permission for his three daughters and their husbands[53] to live on the estate for a year or so until its sale. After the "last vendue," when the estate was auctioned off, Abraham and Mary Mayer Freed headed south, toward Maryland.[54]

Land records show Abraham and Mary buying land near Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, in 1790. Afterward, in 1809, now in their late sixties, they decided to move farther west in Pennsylvania, to South Huntingdon Township, where a group of Mennonites from the Philadelphia area had founded the Jacobs Creek community in 1790.[55] This Freed branch, centered on Jacobs Creek, later expanded throughout the Pittsburgh area. Many Freeds from western Pennsylvania can trace their roots to Abraham Freed of South Huntingdon Township[56] and from there back to Hans Freed, their immigrant ancestor.

The Freeds in Europe

Thanks to the extensive research of Richard W. Davis,[57] we have some notion of the Mennonite Freeds in the Palatinate, residing along the Rhine River roughly from Karlsruhe to Frankfurt. This rich farmland, which I had the pleasure of visiting a few years ago,

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53. The three sons-in-law were Abraham Freed, Peter Kugler, and Jacob Kreter, a relative of the Jacob Greter who inherited the land of Paul Freed "Sr." in Skippack.

54. Andrew S. Berky, tran., *The Journals and Papers of David Shultze*, Vol 2 (Pennsburg, PA: The Schwenkfelder Library, 1952), 210, Apr. 1790: "The following moved away: on the 12th, Peter Kugler to York Co. and Abraham Friet to Conogocheague."

55. Henry Freed, a son of Abraham's cousin Jacob, was apparently the first to buy land in this area. Henry and his brother Paul moved from Quakertown to the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia about 1784. However, Henry didn't stay; he was living in Mounts Creek, Bullskin Twp., by 1785. Paul was part of a wagon train of thirteen people that made the trek from the Shenandoah Valley to Bullskin Twp. in 1797. Later arrivals included Henry Overholtzer, a distiller, and his son, Abraham, after whom Old Overholt Rye Whiskey is named. Abraham Freed, too, was apparently a distiller; he had paid tax in 1779 for a distillery in Upper Hanover Twp. The Mennonites of Jacobs Creek had their burial ground and meetinghouse at Pennsville.

56. Other Freeds of the area trace their ancestry to Paul of Bullskin Twp.; John Woolf Jordan in *Genealogical and Personal History of Western Pennsylvania* (1915) incorrectly traces Paul's roots to Hans Freed and mistakenly believes that Hans was a founder of Deep Run. Abraham's parentage is uncertain, and he apparently did not record it. Most histories trace his roots back to Bucks Co., while some go further and cite Paul Freed of Allen Twp. as his father. For the reasons I have stated, I find it much more likely that Paul was his uncle and that his father was, in fact, John Jacob (Hans) Freed.

57. Richard W. Davis wrote extensively about the Stauffer family, but he explored many Mennonite families in Europe, to nail down his research. His works include *The Stauffer Families of Switzerland, Germany, and America (including Stouffer and Stover)* (self-published, 1992). Paul Freed's father-in-law was Hans Stauffer.

was then part of the Holy Roman Empire and today is part of Germany, noted for its Riesling wine. As Davis explains, the genealogical records are sparse indeed because many were destroyed during World War II.

We do know a few things, however. There was a Heinrich Friedt who was one of the first Mennonites to arrive in the Palatinate. Because I had learned he had written to the church elders in Amsterdam, I visited the Mennonite Archives at the University of Amsterdam. When I told the director, Professor A. J. Plak, what I was looking for, he broke into a broad smile. "Perhaps," he said, "you would like to see this." After a minute or two scouring the top shelves of the library, he pulled down two books of transcriptions of letters. He showed me correspondence from 1690[58] between the Mennonite elders of the Palatinate and senior church officials in Holland, who pledged to give financial aid to the refugees who had begun flooding out of Switzerland about 1670. The signatories in the Palatinate included Heinrich Friedt and Valentine Hütwohl, a minister born about 1642 who had compiled lists of the refugees around 1672. A third letter, dated March 3, 1709,[59] concerned a scandal uncovered after the death of one Christian Pliem, a senior Mennonite official whose accounting of the funds received from Holland was—how do I put this diplomatically?—irregular.

Those were the first records I could find of any Friedt. Considering his companions, I strongly suspected he was Swiss. Friedt does not appear in the Swiss records,[60] but several Friedli families in the 1600s lived in Canton Bern. It was common for Swiss families to drop the "li" suffix when they moved to

Germany—Schnebli becoming Schnebel, for example, or Baerli becoming Baer. I thought to look there without immediate success.

Richard W. Davis found that by the late 1600s, several Friedt families were established in the Palatinate, including Heinrich Friedt, born 1656, and his father, Rudiger,[61] who lived in Aspisheim. Rudiger, like Hans, is a nickname. Because of German traditional naming conventions, I believe this Heinrich is the father of the brothers John and Paul who lived in Skippack. Ordinarily, the firstborn son was named after the father's father. We know that Heinrich had two sons who emigrated, Paul and John. Paul had no sons, but John did, and his firstborn was named Heinrich. If he followed tradition (and this family seemed to do so), John's father's name was Heinrich. Because Paul of Allen Township and Johann Jacob (Hans) Friedt of Salfordville both had firstborn sons named Johannes, we would expect their father to be named Johannes.

Thanks to data compiled by Bruce Fosnocht and released in 2019 by Mennonite Life (formerly Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society),[62] I believe I have found the Swiss family from which we Freeds descend.[63] The initial couple were Peter Fridli and his wife, Catharina Wundt, and it appears that they baptized their children as infants. They might, however, have been secret Anabaptists; apparently, some families baptized their children as infants to comply with the law, essentially treating the baptism as a civil procedure rather than a religious one. The religious baptism could then take place when the children were old enough to make their own decision.

Peter Fridli and Catharina Wundt had four children, three of whom also practiced infant baptism. Their eldest son, however, did not. That son, Peter, born in 1603, married Barbara Schaller in 1634; none of his children's baptisms are recorded, so we can assume he was an Anabaptist.

His son, yet another Peter Fridli, was born about 1634 and was expelled as a Mennonite from Biglen, Switzerland, to Holland in 1660. Many Mennonites

58. James W. Lowry, edited by David J. Rempel Smucker and John L. Ruth, *Documents of Brotherly Love: Dutch Mennonite Aid to Swiss Anabaptists, Vol. 1, 1635-1709* (Millersburg, OH: Ohio Amish Library, 2007). Document 54. Dec. 11, 1690. Committee members in Amsterdam transmit money through Peter d'Orville at Frankfurt for the Palatinate and offer ongoing help to Mennonite ministers there. Document 77. March 3, 1709. Copy of a letter from the Palatine Mennonite churches about the dispatch of their delegates Peter Kolb and Hans Bechtel to Holland to discuss the Pliem affair. According to Lowry, "This letter provides a valuable list of twenty-six ordained Mennonites from the Palatinate with German names, unfortunately, not always accurately spelled in this copy by a Dutch secretary. The ministers gathered to sign this letter at two places, Immelhäuserhof on Mar. 3 and at Ibersheimerhof on March 13." Heinrich Friedt was among those who signed on Mar. 13, 1709.

59. Jeremy Dupertuis Bangs, *Letters on Toleration: Dutch Aid to Persecuted Swiss and Palatine Mennonites, 1615-1699* (Rockport, ME: Picton Press, 2004). Document 158: Mennonite Church Archives in the Amsterdam Municipal Archives, inventory number 1426 (June 18, 1690). Letter to the clergy throughout Holland and elsewhere from the clergy in the Palatinate. Document 159, a copy of the same, with slight spelling variations: Mennonite Church Archives in the Amsterdam Municipal Archives, inventory number 1131(b) (June 18, 1690), but inserted in a letter of Aug. 10, 1690, inventory number 1131(a).

60. Private correspondence, Hanspeter Jecker. He thought that a connection between the Fridli and Friedt families was unlikely.

61. The 1664 census lists the elder Friedt's name as Heinrich. The two men are referred to as Heinrich and Rudiger in the 1685 census. While it is not certain which one had the nickname, I think it is more likely that the younger one would have been identified as Heinrich as he was quite prominent in the community, while his father would have been given the nickname in the census. The reverse is also possible and consistent with the data.

62. Bruce Fosnocht, comp. "Swiss Surname Finding Aid" (LMHS.org, 2019).

63. This connection is necessarily speculative, as there are no common ancestors traced via DNA. However, it could prove productive for future researchers to look at Freedly families, especially any with Mennonite roots, to see if this theory can be confirmed or refuted.

attempted to return to Switzerland after expulsion, and it appears he went at least part way; he is next found in 1672 in the Palatinate,[64] on a supplementary refugee list by Valentine Hütwohl that does not state where the refugees were located. His name is given as Peter Frieder, and the list later shows Christen Frieder and Barber Frieder. I think what happened is this: The Dutch transcriber, not familiar with the names, wrote "er" for the suffix on the names when it was really "li." Then you have the names Peter Friedli, Christen Friedli, and Barbli Friedli. Barbeli was a common Swiss-German nickname for Barbara.

What, then, is the origin of this list? I believe no towns were listed because Hütwohl did not visit these places but relied on word of mouth. Whose mouth? We know that Rudiger Friedt was already established in Aspisheim by 1664. I believe he was the one who told Hütwohl about these other families, which, I believe, were headed by his brothers, Peter and Christen, and Christen's wife, Barbara.

Because they were too far for Hütwohl to visit, they could well have been in Karlsruhe or nearby Bruchsal, where Maria would later marry Jacob Wismer before their ill-fated voyage to New Bern, Carolina. I believe her parents are Christen and Barbara,[65] for two principal reasons. First, Maria is younger than the other members of her generation, and Christen was the youngest of the Swiss-born brothers. Second, Maria's grandchildren include a Christian Wismer—and nobody named Peter or Heinrich. Richard W. Davis names Christen as "Christen Frider," born about 1640 and identified as an Anabaptist at his child's christening in 1667 in Lauperswil, ten miles from Biglen. If Christen was born in 1640, his child could have been born about 1662 at the earliest. If he was an Anabaptist, he was baptizing his child after infancy but well before age twelve. Davis says Christen had a wife and one child, whom I identify as Barbara and their daughter, Maria, born about 1664.

Peter, then, would be a widower with a small child, Peter, born in 1655. There was another child in this generation, Paul, born in 1657. He was living in Weinheim bei Wallertheim in the 1698 census. He had a son, Johannes, born in 1680, who eventually settled in Hamm am Rhein. His father was possibly named Johannes as well. There are no men named Johannes Fridli or Johannes Friedt of the right age in any of the Mennonite census lists. Because Weinheim bei Wallertheim (identified today as Gau-Weinheim) is only about twelve miles from Aspisheim, I think he is a son of Rudiger. Paul may well have had another son named Heinrich, born about 1678 but who died before adulthood, and in that case, Paul would indeed have named his firstborn son after his father.

By 1690, the Fridli children are spelling their surname Friedt, and most have moved down the Rhine:

1) Peter moved with his father to Obersülzen. His son Peter (b. ca. 1677) is the father of Heinrich and Johann Paul, who emigrated on the bilander *Vernon* in 1747.

2) Heinrich was living in Aspisheim with his father, Rudiger. Heinrich became an important figure in the Mennonite community and was a contemporary of Valentine Hütwohl. His children included my immigrant ancestor, Johannes Freed (b. ca. 1682), and Paul Freed (b. ca. 1684), who emigrated about 1710 and eventually settled in Skippack. He had another son, Heinrich (b. ca. 1693), who remained in the Palatinate.

3) Paul settled in Weinheim bei Wallertheim. His son Johannes (b. ca. 1680) was the father of Paul Freed "Jr." of Skippack (later known as Paul of Allen Township) and Johann Jacob (Hans) Freed of Salford Township. Johannes remained in the Palatinate and was found in Hamm am Rhein in 1732 with his three youngest children. His two eldest, Paul and Jacob, emigrated about 1723.

4) Maria married Jacob Wismer and stayed in Bruchsal. They emigrated about 1710 and settled in New Bern, Carolina, where Maria and their daughter were killed in a massacre.

All these conclusions are fully consistent with the census data compiled by Richard W. Davis and the results of the Freed DNA Project, which showed that Paul Freed "Jr." and John Freed shared a common ancestor who is not their father. That common ancestor, I deduce, was Peter Fridli, born in 1634.

Later in Europe, a few more Freeds emigrated. Unfortunately, the vast number of descendants of the original four Freeds makes it difficult to track them in America. Two, however, are of particular note: Hans and Heinrich Freed, who arrived on the *Vernon*.

This ship is often referred to as the bilander *Vernon* in family stories. A bilander was a ship, a two-masted schooner, better suited for European trade than trans-

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64. Amsterdam Municipal Archives, inventory number 1199, translated by R. W. Davis. This list is dated 1672 but does not provide a location for the refugees. A companion document, Amsterdam Municipal Archives, inventory number 1196, was described by Charles Whitmer in "Swiss Anabaptist Refugees from Canton Bern in the German Palatinate in 1671," *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage* (April 2001). Whitmer notes the existence of Document 1199 and says he hopes to have it translated and published in the future.

65. There is another couple in Rüegsau, Switzerland, near Biglen, named Christen and Barbara Fridli. I have determined that this Christen is a son of Christen Friedli and Christina Brand; his wife's maiden name is Iseli.

atlantic passenger voyages. The *Vernon* made the crossing in 1747, arriving in Philadelphia on August 1. I have been unable to track the immigrants' whereabouts after landing in Philadelphia. Some Freeds purchased land in Springettsbury Township, near York, Pennsylvania, around that time. I would suggest that as a place for future researchers to explore.

Other Mennonite Freeds who arrived about that time are Peter Frit, August 11, 1732, on the *Samuel* and Jacob Fried, September 23, 1752, on the *St. Andrew*. Then there are two who may or may not have been Mennonite, as no other Mennonites traveled with them: Jacob Frith, September 24, 1751, on the *Neptune* and Christian Fried, August 24, 1750, on the *Brothers*.

And finally, there may be the first case on record of identity theft, a Jacob Fried who arrived four days before the Mennonite Jacob Fried in Philadelphia, on another ship, the *Edinburg*. While it is unlikely that this man was a Mennonite, it seems a huge coincidence that he shared the same name. Perhaps he met the Mennonite along the waterfront in England and just adopted his name? We shall probably never know.

Connecting the dots

Here are the connections between the immigrant Freeds of 1734 and the standard Freed family histories.

1) Charles Heiberger, *The Fried/Freed Family: Descendents of Johannes Friedt (1682-1744)* (self-published, 1984). As the title suggests, this book starts with one of the four Freeds. It is meticulously documented.

2) Isaac G. Freed, *History of the Freed Family* (1919), and Jacob A. Freed, *Partial History of the Freed Family and Connecting Families* (1923). These trace their roots to the John Freed, who married Susan Detweiler and died October 8, 1777. They then make reasonable but mistaken guesses on the couple's parentage. While the reports on contemporaneous families are use-

ful, they contain many errors on their ancestries. His ancestry is:

John Freed (died 1777)

John Jacob (Hans) Friedt, immigrant, owned a farm spanning the Perkiomen Creek about a mile west of Salfordville.

3) Joyce Wilcox Graff and June Freed Wilcox, *A Freed Family History* (1981). This book starts with Abraham Freed (1817–1865), president of the Philadelphia Conference of Methodist Ministers. His ancestry is:

Abraham S. Freed (1785–1840). Born into a Mennonite family, he converted to Methodism. His daughter Lydia's sampler at Mennonite Life was an important link in the family history. He is the last person in this line mentioned in Charles Heiberger's book.

Heinrich Fried (1754–1820). He fought in the Revolutionary War, and his children were Funkites, but he is buried in the Germantown Mennonite Cemetery; apparently, all was forgiven.

Heinrich Fried (1712–1786). Firstborn son of the immigrant John Friedt. Two of his children were Funkites. It seems likely that he was born in America.

John Friedt (1682–1744). Immigrant.

Conclusion

The Freeds were an important Mennonite family in the Palatinate and Pennsylvania, yet they are difficult to trace due to circumstance, and little has been written about them. I am continuing to look into various Friedli families in Switzerland. But it would be helpful to know if any male-line descendants of those families could be matched with the Mennonite Freed descendants to support or refute that theory. Expanding the Freed DNA Project to include Freedly families might be a useful source of information for future researchers into this fascinating family.

Genealogical history of the family

1. Peter Fridli, b. ca. 1580. Not originally Mennonite.
  m. Catharina Wundt.
  11. Peter Fridli, b. ca. 1603, Biglen, Switzerland.
    m. 1634, Barbara Schaller.
    111. Peter Fridli, b. ca. 1634, Biglen, Switzerland.
      1111. Peter Fridli, b. ca. 1655, Biglen, Switzerland.
        1111.1. Peter Friedt, b. ca. 1677, Obersülzen, Palatinate.
          1111.11. Paul (Hans) Friedt, b. ca. 1702, Obersülzen. "Left for the New Land" on or before June 6, 1747; immigrated to America on the *Vernon* on Aug. 1, 1747.
          1111.12. Heinrich Friedt, b. ca. 1710, Obersülzen; immigrated to America on the *Vernon* on Aug. 1, 1747.

112. Heinrich Fridli, b. ca. 1635, Biglen, Switzerland.

1121. Heinrich Friedt, b. ca. 1655, Biglen, Switzerland; d. after 1710, Aspisheim, Palatinate. Prominent Mennonite minister who signed correspondence with church elders in Holland.

1121.1. Johannes Friedt, b. 1682, Aspisheim; d. Dec. 31, 1744, Skippack Twp., Pa.; bu. at Lower Skippack Menn. Cem. My immigrant ancestor and subject of the book by Charles A. Heiberger.

m. Christianna _____, b. ca. 1688; d. after 1746, Skippack Twp.; presumed bu. next to her husband.

1121.11 Heinrich Fried, b. Oct. 30, 1712, probably in Skippack Twp.; d. Jan. 30, 1786, West Rockhill Twp.; bu. Jerusalem Union Cem.

m. Anna _____, Dec. 8, 1718–June 8, 1803, Norristown, Pa.; bu. Methacton Menn. Cem.

1121.113 Heinrich Fried, Aug. 16, 1754–Sept. 20, 1820; Revolutionary War; bu. Germantown Menn. Cem., Philadelphia.

1121.1135 Abraham S. Freed, 1785–1840; converted to Methodism; bu. at Mayer Graveyard, Lancaster Co. The graveyard is located at the Shoppes at Belmont mall.

m. Catherine Ecker, Feb. 7, 1775–Nov. 21, 1854. First husband Jacob Wanger; bu. Mayer Graveyard, Lancaster Co.

1121.11356 Abraham Freed, Jan. 8,1817–Feb. 28, 1865. President of the Philadelphia Conference of Methodist Ministers. His is the first entry in the Red Book by June Freed Wilcox and Joyce W. Graff.

m. Nov. 9, 1845, Mary Singer, Nov. 23, 1829–Nov. 9, 1893.

1121.12. Peter Freed, 1714–1790. A major landowner in Lower Salford Twp., Pa.

m. Barbara Reiff, 1718–1773. Daughter of Hans Reiff.[66]

1121.13. Maria Freed, 1717–1790.

m. Peter Roth (Rhoad), 1715–1771. Rhoad's Burial Ground in Vincent Twp., Pa., is named after this family.

1121.14. Catharina Freed, ca. 1722–ca. 1802.

m.(1) ca. 1742, Jacob Kintzig (Kinsey), ca. 1715–ca. 1749.

m.(2) ca. 1751, Henry Rickert, 1715–1808.

1121.15. John Freed, 1725–1819.

1121.2. Paul Freed Sr., b. ca. 1684, Aspisheim; d. Mar. 1743, Skippack Twp., Pa.

m. Elizabeth Stauffer, b. ca. 1688, Alsheim, Palatinate.

1121.21. Maria Friedt, b. 1709, Alsheim, Palatinate; d. after 1760, Graterford, Pa.

m. Jacob Grater, b. ca. 1705, Palatinate; d. 1760, Graterford, Pa.

1121.3. Heinrich Friedt, b. ca. 1693, Aspisheim, where he remained.

1122. Paul Friedt, b. 1657, Biglen, Switzerland; d. ca. 1700, Weinheim bei Wallertheim, Palatinate. He was living in Weinheim bei Wallertheim in the 1698 census.

1122.1. Johannes Friedt, b. 1680, Aspisheim or Weinheim bei Wallertheim; d. after 1709, Hamm am Rhein, near Worms.

1122.11 Paul Friedt Jr., b. ca. 1702, Weinheim bei Wallertheim; d. ca. 1769, Kreidersville, Pa. Initially settled in Skippack Twp. before selling his land to Paul Sr.

1122.12 John Jacob (Hans) Freed, b. ca. 1703, Weinheim bei Wallertheim; d. ca. 1767, Frederick Twp., Pa.

1122.121. John Freed, b. ca. 1730, Pa.; d. Dec. 8, 1777, Franconia Twp., Pa. This is the earliest ancestor correctly identified by Isaac G. Freed.

m. Susanna Detweiler, b. ca. 1730.

1122.122. Abraham Friedt, b. ca. 1745, Pa.; d. Nov. 1832, South Huntingdon Twp., Westmoreland Co., Pa. See the "Westward Ho" section for more on this man.

m. Mary Moyer, b. ca. 1745, Upper Hanover Twp., Pa.; d. ca. 1832, South Huntingdon Twp., Westmoreland Co., Pa.

113. Christen Friedli, b. ca. 1640, Biglen, Switzerland.

m. Barbara _____.

1131. Maria Friedt, b. ca. 1664, Lauperswil, Switzerland; d. 1711, New Bern, Carolina.

m. Jacob Wismer, b. ca. 1659; d. 1725, Bedminster, Pa.

1131.1. [daughter] Wismer, b. ca. 1686, Bruchsal, Palatinate; d. 1711, New Bern, Carolina.

1131.2. Jacob Wismer, b. ca. 1688, Bruchsal, Palatinate; d. Feb. 24, 1787, Bedminster, Pa. bu. at Deep Run Menn. (East).

m. Nanny _____, b. ca. 1703. There is a dispute as to whether her maiden name was Souder or Oberholtzer.

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66. Identified as #H1 in Daniel R. Lehman, "Descendants of the Three Immigrant Mennonite Reiff Brothers of Europe and Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage* 22 no. 2, (April 1999): 12.

The forthcoming **Documents of Brotherly Love: Dutch Mennonite Aid to Swiss Anabaptists, Volume III, 1712–1784,** *will complete a twenty-five-year project of making available documents from the collection of the Dutch Mennonite Commissie voor Buitenlanschen Nooden (CBN) [Committee for Foreign Needs], currently housed in the Amsterdam City Archives.*

Eighteenth-Century Dutch and German Terms for Mennonite Congregational Leaders

By Edsel Burdge Jr. and Lydia Penner

As in the two earlier volumes,[1] this sourcebook documents the assistance the CBN gave to the Swiss Anabaptists in Switzerland and the Palatinate as the latter weathered persecution, political restrictions, and economic vicissitudes.

Researchers will find the documents in this final volume useful on a number of fronts. Scholars studying economic, political, and religious conditions in the Netherlands, Pennsylvania, the Rhineland, and Switzerland during the eighteenth century will find sources that can elucidate their narratives. Likewise, will historians of the Atlantic world as they focus on the intricate networks that promoted and supported immigration to North America. Genealogists will discover details that will enable them to fill in portraits of their ancestors. Persons who claim a spiritual heritage from these eighteenth-century Anabaptist believers may be inspired by the generosity of the Dutch Mennonites and the fortitude of the Swiss.

As an example of the type of questions that can be asked of these documents, the research notes on the chart at the right list the various Dutch and German terms that Mennonites used to refer to congregational leaders during the eighteenth century. As a reference point for the chart, we will first take note of the terms for congregational leaders in the Dutch and German texts of Article IX, "The Choosing and Ministry of the Teachers, Deacons, and Deaconesses in the Church,"[2] in the 1632 Dordrecht Confession of Faith, which served as a common confession after the Swiss in the Rhineland adopted it in 1660.[3]

The documents in the chart on pages 22–31 used a number of the leadership titles that appeared earlier in Dordrecht. The most common terms, *Dienaren/Dieneren* (literally servants), are the most commonly used terms in the documents. They were used in both an individual sense as minister/ministers, or collectively as ministry. The Dutch *Outsten* (elder) is used occasionally in the documents, whereas its German cognate *Eltesten* (Aelsten) occurs frequently, albeit not always in the sense of an overseer or bishop. The use of the terms *Bischoppen/Bischoffen* in Dordrecht is based on 1 Timothy 3:1-2, but they do not appear in any of the eighteenth-century documents cited below. As the chart demonstrates, other terms were also used for the oversight office. Dordrecht's citation of Ephesians 4:11, introduces *Leeraer/Lehrer* (teacher).

1. James W. Lowry, ed., *Documents of Brotherly Love: Dutch Mennonite Aid to Swiss Anabaptists, Volume I, 1635-1709* (Millersburg, OH: Ohio Amish Library, 2007) (hereafter cited as *DBL,* 1); James W. Lowry, ed., *Documents of Brotherly Love: Dutch Mennonite Aid to Swiss Anabaptists, Volume* II, *1710-1711* (Millersburg, OH: Ohio Amish Library, 2015) (hereafter cited as *DBL,* 2).

2. Irvin B. Horst, tr. and ed., *Mennonite Confession of Faith, Adopted April 21st, 1632, at Dordrecht, the Netherlands...* (Lancaster, PA: Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, 1988), 29.

3. Irvin B. Horst, "The Dordrecht Confession of Faith: 350 Years," *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage* 5, no. 3 (July 1982): 2-6.
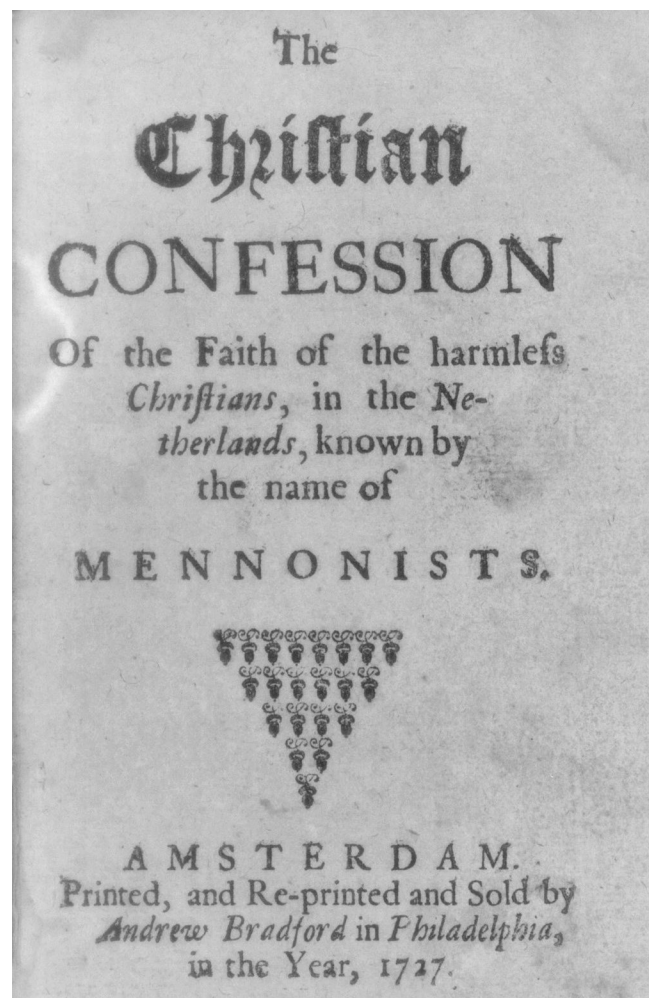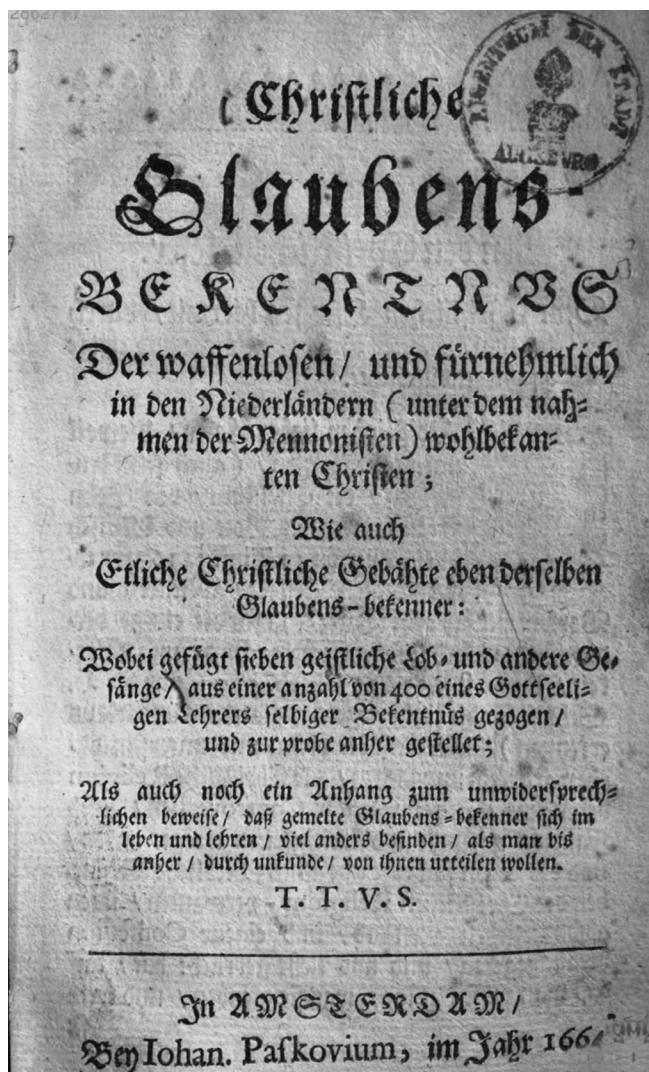
German (1664) and English (1727) editions of the Dordrecht Confession of Faith

Dutch[1]	German[2]	English, 1727[3]	English, Horst[4]
Diensten	Diensten	Ministry	Offices
Dienaren/Apostelen/ Evangelisten/herders, ende Leeraers	Dieneren, Apostelen, Evangelisten, Hirten, und Lehrern	Ministers, Apostles, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers	ministers, apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers[5]
Bisschoppen/Herders, ende Vorganghers	Bischoffen, Hirten, und Fürgängern	Bishops, Pastors, and Leaders	bishops, pastors, and leaders
Outsten	Eltesten	Elders	elders/bishops
Diaken-dienaren	Diaconen/Diacon-diener	Deacons	Deacons
Dienaressen	Dienerinnen	Ministresses	Deaconesses

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1. *Confessie ende vredehandelinge Geschiet tot Dordrecht, AD. 1632* (Haerlem, 1633), 30-35, as reproduced in Horst, *Mennonite Confession of Faith,* 59-61.

2. *Christliche Glaubens-Bekeninus Der Wassenlosen, und fürnehmlich in den Niederländen (unter dem nahmen der Mennonisten) wohlbekanten Christen* (Amsterdam: Iohan Paskovium, 1664), 14-18.

3. *The Christian Confession of the Faith of the Harmless Christians, in the Netherlands, known by the name of Mennonists* (Philadelphia: Andrew Bradford, 1727), 20-25. This was a reprint of the 1712 *Confession* printed in Amsterdam by the Dutch Mennonites at the request of the Mennonites in Germantown, Pennsylvania. Horst, "The Dordrecht Confession of Faith: 350 Years," 6-7.

4. Horst, *Mennonite Confession of Faith,* 29-30.

5. Capitalization and spelling are as they appear in the original documents.

These terms are picked up a number of times in the documents to refer to the preaching office, alongside other titles that refer to the same office. *Diaken/Diacon* is sometimes used below, but a number of other terms are also used for the office that looked after the poor. Dordrecht also provided for the appointment of *Dienaressen/Dienerinnen* (deaconesses) who were to assist the deacons. However, this office is not found in any of the documents below.

The first column of the chart below gives the number of the document and its date; the second column gives the sender and recipient, as well as where the term is found in the document. The third column gives the language of the document; column four gives the term in the original language, followed by an English translation in column five; the last column refers to the person or persons to whom the various titles are applied.

Document/Date	Sender/Recipient	Language	D/G term	Translation	Reference
11. Dec. 14, 1712	Ministers at the Zon Mennonite church in Amsterdam to Germantown Mennonite ministers —greeting	Dutch	dienare	ministers	Both the leaders at the Zon and Germantown
	—salutation		mede dienaren	fellow ministers	
	—signature		dienaren	ministers	
14. March 23, 1713	Johannes Houbakker, for ministers of the Lam and Toren Mennonite Church, Amsterdam, to Rotterdam Mennonite ministers —heading	Dutch	dienaren[4] leeraren[5]	council preacher	Rotterdam leaders
	—greeting		opsienderen[6]	overseers	Rotterdam leaders
	—in text		Leeraren	preacher	
	—signature		leraren en diakenen	preachers and deacons	Amsterdam leaders
17. July 17, 1713	the Zon church council to Germantown leaders —greeting	Dutch	Dienare[n] en opsiendere, soo Leeraers als Diaconen	ministers and overseers, preachers as well as deacons	The Zon church council does not seem to be sure how the Mennonite leaders in PA should be addressed
	—in text		outsten[7]	elder	Jacob Gottshalk at Germantown
	—closing		dienare[n] en opsienders	ministers and overseers	Zon church council
20. Feb. 12, 1714	Jonas Loheer, Offstein, on behalf of the Palatine Mennonite leaders to CBN —greeting	German	lehrer[8] [und] obsienders	preachers and overseers	Dutch Mennonite leaders. The Palatine leaders take over the Dutch terminology.

4. Used here in the same sense as *Kerkenraad*, a church council of ministers and deacons. Angelique Hajenius, *Dopers in de Domstad. Geschiedenis van de doopsgezinde gemeente Utrecht 1639-1939* (Hilversum, NH: Verloren, 2003), 60.

5. Among sixteenth-century Dutch Anabaptists, *leraar*, literally "teacher," was the bishop. Gradually this became the term for a preacher or minister of the word. Cornelius Krahn, "The Office of Elder in Anabaptist-Mennonite History," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 30, no. 2 (April 1956): 121; *DBL*, 2:78-79, 742-743.

6. The standard Dutch spelling is *opzieners*. It is a translation of *episkopous* in the New Testament, which KJV translates as "bishop" and NIV as "overseer." In Dutch Mennonite congregations, the overseers baptized, served communion, resolved disputes among congregations, and performed marriages. Other names used for the bishop in the Netherlands in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were *oudste, bisschop, and leraar in volle dienst* (elder, bishop, and minister in full service). Krahn, 123; Hajenius, 60.

7. *Oudste* is the Dutch translation of the New Testament word *presbuterous* (an older person). It is translated "elder" in the KJV in Acts 11:30, 25:15. Among the Dutch Mennonites, an *oudste* functioned as a bishop or overseer of the congregation. Krahn, 122.

8. *Lehrer* literally is "teacher." The Palatine Mennonite ministers' manual, *Allgemeines und Vollständiges Formularbuch für die Gottesdeinstliche handlungen, in den Taufgesinnten, Evangelisch Mennoniten-Gemeinden venbst Gebetern, zum Gebrauch auf alle vorkommende Fälle beim öffentlichen Gottesdienst, wie auch die Formen und Gebetern unsrer Brüder am Necker* (Neuwied: J. T. Haupt, 1807), 92-102, gives the order for appointing a *Lehrer des Worts für die Gemeinde*, also called a *Diener des Wort* (minister of the Word). This is the same office as *Prediger* (preacher). See *Allgemeines und Vollständiges Formularbuch*, 121. Amos B. Hoover, *German Language: Cradle of Our Heritage* (Ephrata, PA: Muddy Creek Farm Library, 2018), 206.

Document/Date	Sender/Recipient	Language	D/G term	Translation	Reference
	—in text		diener und Eltesten[9]	ministers and elders	Leaders in the Palatinate
22. March 1, 1714	J. Loheer to CBN	German	lehrer und opsienders	preachers and overseers	Dutch leaders
23. April 3, 1714	Casper Guth, Ibersheimerhof, to J. Loheer —greeting and in text	German	diener und Eltesten	ministers and elders	Palatine leaders
43. Aug. 10, 1715	J. Loheer, Peter Kolp, and Valentin Hüthwohl in Offstein and Kreigsheim, to CBN —greeting	German	diener und Eltesten prediger und opsienders	ministers and elders preachers and overseers	Palatine leaders Amsterdam leaders
55. Dec. 17, 1715	J. Loheer, P. Kolp, Ulrich Stauffer, and V. Hüthwohl in Offstein, to CBN —greeting	German	lehraren und dieanren	preachers and ministers	Dutch leaders
	—in text		diener und Eltesten	ministers and elders	Leaders from Switzerland and Zweibrücken
61. May 9, 1716	J. Loheer, P. Kolp, Henrich Ruth, Hans Burkholder, and Hans Jacob Schnebele in Offstein and Eppstein, to CBN —greeting	German	prediger und dieakonen	preachers and deacons	Dutch leaders
	—postscript		diener und Eltesten	ministers and elders	Palatine leaders
63. June 2 and 10, 1716	Jacob Meyer, Immelhäuserhof and H. J. Schnebele in Mannheim, to CBN —greeting	German	dieneren dienerr	ministers	Dutch leaders Palatine leaders
	—address		Dienern	ministers	CBN
64. June 10, 1716	Henrich Ruth, Christian Neukumter, and Heinrich Goebels in Eppstein to CBN —greeting	German	diener und fur steher[10]	ministers and leaders	Dutch leaders
	—in signature		fur stehrer	leaders	Eppstein leaders

9. *Diener und Aeltesten* is a term that occurs several times in the Swiss Brethren church order adopted at Strasbourg in 1568. It also appears in a 1688 church order adopted at Offstein in the Palatinate. Literally "servants and elders," H. S. Bender translated it as "ministers and bishops." *Diener* can refer to the individual or collective offices of the ministry, whether a bishop, minister, or deacon. A 1630 Swiss Brethren church order refers to the *bestaetigeter Aelteste* (confirmed elders), who were to "visit the congregations, fill all offices… ordain ministers and bishops by the laying on of hands" and "take charge of communion, baptism, marrying, punishing and expelling." A 1668 church order adopted at Obersülzen in the Palatinate equated *Aeltesten* with *Bischöfe.* However, the Reistians and Mennonites in Pennsylvania often used *Aeltesten* or *Eltesten* to refer to a *Diacon* (deacon) or an *Armendiener* (minister of the poor). The Amish used *Aeltesten* only in reference to a bishop. Harold S. Bender, "The Discipline Adopted by the Strasbourg Conference of 1568," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 1, no. 1 (January 1927): 60-66; John M. Byler, ed., *Alte Schreibens: Amish Documents and Record Series* (Sugarcreek, OH: John M. Byler/Schlabach Printers, 2008), 32-40, 43-45, 50-51; *DBL,* 1:662-663; Paton Yoder, "The Structure of the Amish Ministry in the Nineteenth Century," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 61, no. 3 (July 1987): 282-288; Hoover, 206.

10. Standard German spelling is *Vorstehers* ("leaders"—in the sense of "those who stand before the congregation"). Alfred Götze, *Frühneuhochdeutsches Glossar* (Bonn: A. Marcus und E. Weber Verlag, 1920), 89. Christian Hege, *Die Täufer in der Kurpfalz Ein Beitrag zur badisch-pfälzischen Reformationsgeschichte* (Frankfurt am Main, HE: Kommissionsverlag von Hermann Minjon, 1908), 44-45, referred to sixteenth-century Anabaptist ministers in the Palatinate as *Vorsteher,* alongside *Lehrer* and *Prediger.* The term can refer to any of the three traditional offices among the Mennonites of Swiss Brethren background. Document 73, refers to the *vor stender der glaubigen arnen* (leaders of the poor believers). In document 179, *Vorsteher* is used collectively of the signers of the 1745 letter from Pennsylvania to the CBN, who included two bishops, three preachers, and a deacon. See also documents 78, 156, 161, and 188. However, the 1807 Palatine *Allgemeines und Vollständiges Formularbuch,* 102, refers only to deacons as *Vorstehers bey der Gemeinde; DBL,* 1:646-649; Harold S. Bender, "The Office of Bishop in Anabaptist-Mennonite History," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 30, no. 2 (April 1956): 129.

Document/Date	Sender/Recipient	Language	D/G term	Translation	Reference
73. June 26, 1718	Johannes Kassel, in Amsterdam, to H. Burkholder, P. Kolb, J. Loheer, and H. J. Schnebele in the Palatinate —greeting	German	lehrer deß götligen words vor stender der gelaubigen armen	preachers of the Divine Word leaders of the poor believers	Hans Burkholder and Peter Kolb Jonas Loher and Hans Jacob Schnebele
	—in text		diacken	deacons	Pieter Apostool and other deacons in Amsterdam
74. Aug. 1718	J. Loheer and P. Kolb to CBN —address	German	prediger diacken	preachers deacons	Leaders in Amsterdam
	—postscript		diener und eltesten	ministers and elders	Palatine leaders
76. May 30, 1719	J. Loheer, P. Kolb, V. Hüthwohl, and H. Burkholder to Mennonite leaders in Holland and Pa. —greeting	German	Diener und Eltesten Predinger, Diener, Eltesten	ministers and elders preachers, ministers, and elders	Palatine leaders Leaders in Holland and Pa.
78. Sept. 30, 1719	Eppstein leaders to the Lam and Toren leaders in Amsterdam —greeting and address at the end	German	diener und fur steher	ministers and leaders	Both the Palatine and Dutch leaders
86. April 26, 1726	P. Kolb and four other leaders in Kreigsheim to CBN —greeting	German	diener und eldesten	ministers and elders	Leaders in Holland
	—in text		dinner/deiner/diner	Ministers	Palatine leaders
94. June 24, 1726	Rotterdam Mennonite leaders to CBN	Dutch	Dienaren	Deacons	Rotterdam leaders
95. April 12, 1727	P. Kolb and six other Palatine leaders to CBN —opening text	German	diener und Eldesten	ministers and elders	Both the Palatine and Dutch leaders
	—closing		Diner	Ministers	Palatine leaders
97. May 6, 1727	P. Kolb and seven other Palatine leaders to CBN —greeting and closing	German	mit diner	fellow ministers	Both Dutch and Palatine leaders
98. May 20, 1727	P. Kolb and ten other Palatine leaders to CBN —greeting	German	mit diner	fellow ministers	Dutch leaders
	—in text		bradiger	preacher	Michael Frantz, a Palatine leader immigrating to Pa.
	—closing		mitdiener vorgesetzten[11]	fellow ministers leaders	Leaders in the Palatinate
	—signature		lerer	preacher	Palatine Heinrich Kündig
99. June 9, 1727	Rotterdam Mennonite leaders to CBN —closing	Dutch	dienaren en opzieders	ministers and overseers	Rotterdam leaders
100. July 9, 1727	Rotterdam Mennonite leaders to CBN —closing	Dutch	Dienaren	Ministers	Rotterdam leaders

11. Götze, 89, where *Vorgesetzter* is equivalent to *Vorstender,* can be translated as "leaders." See document 64. Harold S. Bender, "The Discipline Adopted by the Strasbourg Conference of 1568," 61, 65, translated *vorgesetzten* as "ministers."

Document/Date	Sender/Recipient	Language	D/G term	Translation	Reference
101. July 22, 1727	Herman Schijn for CBN to P. Kolb —greeting	Dutch	mede dienaren	fellow ministers	Palatine leaders
	—in text		leeraren	preachers	Palatine leaders
102. Dec. 14, 1727	P. Kolb and four other Palatine leaders to CBN —in text	German	dineren	ministers	Palatine leaders
104. May 21, 1728	CBN to Heinrich Kündig, Michael Krebiel, and David Kauffman, leaders at Sinsheim in the Palatinate —greeting	Dutch	Dienaaren en opizienderen	ministers and overseers	Palatine leaders
	—postscript		leeraar	preacher	Bartholomeus van Leuvenig, a minister at the Lam in Amsterdam
105. Sept. 5, 1728	Hans Burkholder and three other Palatine leaders in Mannheim to Bartholomeus van Leuvenig for CBN —greeting	German	diener lehrer mit diener	Ministers teacher fellow ministers	Dutch leaders B. van Leuvenig Dutch leaders
	—closing		vorgesetzeten	leaders	Palatine leaders
106. Oct. 25, 1728	Rudolph Egli to CBN —closing	Dutch	dienaaren	ministers	Letter is fraudulently purported to be from the Amish ministers of Hohenwettersbach
109. Dec. 29, 1728	Forged letter by Rudolph Egli to CBN —greeting at the end of letter	German	Dominee[12]	Reverend	B. van Leuvenig
110. June 25, 1729	Amish ministers, Hohenwettersbach, to Rudolph Egli —closing	German	denen	ministers	Forgery by Rudolph Egli
111. July 19, 1729	B. van Leuvenig for the CBN to Amish leaders at Hohenwettersbach —greeting	Dutch	dienaaren en opzienderen	ministers and overseers	Amish leaders
	—postscript		bedienaaers	ministers	Amish leaders
112. Sept. 12, 1729	Jacob Egli and four other Amish leaders of Hohenwettersbach to CBN —greeting	German	Dienern und Auffsehern[13]	ministers and overseers	Leaders in Amsterdam
	—signatures		Diener zum buch[14] Diener der nothdurft[15]	minister of the Book minister of needs	Amish leaders

12. The Dutch translation renders these names as *Do. van Leuvenig, Hr. van Voorst en van Anklam. Dominee.* This title, from the Latin *dominus* (lord), is used for a Protestant minister in the Netherlands. Its use is indicative of the greater professionalism of the Dutch Mennonite ministers and of the growing tendency to apply terms and concepts from the dominant Reformed (Calvinist) Church. Krahn, 120, 124. Egli's use of this term shows his familiarity with Dutch Mennonite terminology.

13. *Dienern und Auffsehern* may have been influenced by *dienaren en opziener*, as commonly used by the Dutch Mennonites. *Aufseher* was also used by the Skippack confirmed ministers in 1773. See document 223.

14. *Diener zum Buch* (minister of the Book) or *Diener des Worts* (minister of the Word) were the terms most commonly used by the Amish to refer to preachers. Amish bishop Hans Nafziger of Essingen observed in 1781 that *dir den Dienst zum Buch befohlen* (he to whom the service of the book fell) was "to admonish the people with the Word of the Lord, conduct prayers, visit the widows and orphans, care for and comfort [them], watch over the congregation according to the discipline, [and] assist the elders [bishops] in the work of the Lord." *Ein alter Brief Copia oder Abschrift eines Briefs, welcher den Dienern und Aeltesten der Gemeinde zu Holland auf ihr Begehren und Ansuchen ist zugeschickt worden den 26ten März, 1781, von Hanß Nafziger in Esingen bei Landau im Oberland.* (Elkhart, IN: Mennonitische Verlagshandlung, 1916), 21; Harold S. Bender, ed. and tr., "An Amish Discipline of 1781," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 4, no. 2 (April 1930): 147; Yoder, 283, 285-286.

15. This term for a deacon occurs in a 1672 letter from the Anabaptist refugee leaders from Switzerland to the ministers at the Lam in Amster-

Document/Date	Sender/Recipient	Language	D/G term	Translation	Reference
114. Oct. 1, 1730	Hans Burkholder in Gerolsheim to B. van Leuvenig for CBN —greeting	German	mid diner	fellow ministers	Leaders in Amsterdam
	—in text		ange[hen] der diner völlig denst[16]	appointed minister full minister	Hans Burkholder
115. Oct. 1, 1730	H. Burkholder to B. van Leuvenig for CBN greeting	German	diener	minister	B. van Leuvenig
	—text and closing		mid diner	fellow minister	Both to BvL and HB
117. Nov. 3, 1730	CBN to H. Burkholder —in text	German	lehrer	Preachers	Palatine leaders
118. Dec. 12, 1730	H. Burkholder and Jacob Hirschler to B. van Leuvenig for CBN —address	German	mitdiner	fellow ministers	Dutch leaders
119. Dec. 12, 1730	H. Burkholder to B. van Leuvenig —address	German	mid diener	fellow ministers	Dutch leaders
122. Feb. 16, 1731	H. Burkholder to B. van Leuvenig for CBN —greeting	German	mit diener	fellow ministers	Dutch leaders
	—closing		diener	Minister	Hans Burkholder
127. May 1, 1731	H. Burkholder and J. Hirschler to B. van Leuvenig for CBN —in heading	Dutch translation of German original	Do[minus]	Rev[erend]	The translator added Do[minus], since the Palatine leaders did not use this title
130. June 12, 1731	B. van Leuvenig to Dirk van Beek in Rotterdam, with return letter —in headings	Dutch	Do[minus]	Rev[erend]	The Dutch leaders are using this term to address each other
131. June 25, 1731	B. van Leuvenig to D. van Beek —address	Dutch	Do[minus]	Rev[erend]	D. van Beek
132. Aug. 10, 1731	D. van Beek to B. van Leuvenig —heading	Dutch	Do[minus]	Rev[erend]	B. van Leuvenig
	—address		Den Eerwaarden Dominee Leeraar	To the esteemed Reverend Preacher	B. van Leuvenig
133. Aug. 14, 1731	CBN to Heinrich Kündig and Michael Krehbiel, Grumbach, Palatinate —address	German	leeraer diaken	preacher deacon	H. Kündig M. Krehbiel

dam. *DBL,* 1:420-421. Delbert Gratz, *Bernese Anabaptists and Their American Descendants* (Goshen, IN: The Mennonite Historical Society / Goshen College, 1953), 80, notes that eighteenth-century Anabaptists in the Jura referred to deacons as *Armendiener* or *Diener der Notdurft.* The Amish also used *Armendiener* (minister of the poor), *Almosenpfleger* (keeper of alms), and *Diacon. Ein alter Brief Copia,* 23, used *Diacon Diener* to refer to those chosen for *den Dienst zu den Armen* (the service to the poor). Yoder, 283-285.

16. H. S. Bender observes that among the Swiss-Brethren-descended Amish and Mennonites in Switzerland, Alsace, South Germany, and Pennsylvania, the term *Völliger Diener,* or *Voller Diener* (full minister) referred to the office that among nineteenth-century American Amish and Mennonites would come to be labeled as *bischöfe* (bishop). Bender, "The Office of Bishop in Anabaptist-Mennonite History," 129-130; Yoder, 286-288. The 1807 Palatine *Allgemeines und Vollständiges Formularbuch,* 106-121, contains a rubric for *Einen Diener des Worts in den vollen Dienst inzusetzen* (To put a minister of the Word into full service). Hoover, 207, notes that full ministers had the "authority to baptize, preside at the 'Breaking of Bread,' marry couples, lay hands on newly-chosen ministers to install them, receive people into the church, [and] excommunicate the impenitent."

Document/Date	Sender/Recipient	Language	D/G term	Translation	Reference
135. Nov. 1, 1731	List of congregations, members, and leaders in the Upper Palatinate	Dutch	dienaaren diacon[en]	ministers deacons	Palatine leaders
136. Dec. 10, 1731	D. van Beek to CBN —in text	Dutch	Diakonen	Deacons	Rotterdam deacons
137. Jan. 1732	List of congregations and leaders in the Palatinate on the west side of Rhine	Dutch	dienaaren diacon	ministers deacon	Palatine leaders
139. May 9, 1732	D. van Beek for Rotterdam leaders to B. van Leuvenig for the CBN —closing	Dutch	Dienaren en Opzieders	ministers and overseers	Rotterdam leaders
	—address at end		Den eerwaarden Do[minus] Leeraar	To the esteemed Rev[erend] Preacher	B. van Leuvenig
142. May 12, 1732	H. Burkholder, J. Hirschler, and Christian Stauffer in Gerolsheim to B. van Leuvenig for CBN —greeting and closing	German	mid diener	fellow ministers	Both the Palatine and Dutch leaders
143. June 9, 1732	D. van Beek for the Rotterdam leaders to Henricus Bakker for the CBN —closing	Dutch	dienaren en opzienders	ministers and overseers	Rotterdam leaders
	—address		Den eerwaarden [Do]minus Leeraar	To the esteemed Rev[erend] Preacher	H. Bakker
144. Oct. 6, 1732	Heinrich Kündig and eight other leaders in the Upper Palatinate to B. van Leuvenig for the CBN —greeting and closing	German	dihner und eltesten	ministers and elders	Palatine leaders
	—in text		Dÿener diner	minister minister	Several Palatine leaders
	—signatures		lehrer	Preacher	Christian Eicher at Immelhausen
	—address		Lehrer	Preacher	B. van Leuvenig
148. Dec. 10, 1739	H. Burkholder and C. Stauffer to B. van Leuvenig and Johannes Deknatel —in text	German	diackon	deacon	Deacon at Westrich
156. Aug. 1740	H. Burkholder, J. Hirschler, and C. Stauffer to B. van Leuvenig and J. Deknatel —in text	German	Dienaaren en voorstanders	ministers and leaders	Palatine leaders
	—closing		mede Dienaaren	fellow ministers	Palatine leaders
157. Jan. 7, 1741	H. Burkholder and C. Stauffer to B. van Leuvenig for CBN —greeting	German	mit diener	fellow ministers	Dutch leaders
	—closing		diener	Ministers	Palatine leaders
158. April 8, 1741	H. Burkholder and J. Hirschler to B. van Leuvenig for CBN —closing	German	diener	ministers	Palatine leaders
159. Dec. 9, 1741	H. Burkholder and C. Stauffer to B. van Leuvenig for CBN —greeting	German	mit diener	fellow ministers	Dutch leaders

Document/Date	Sender/Recipient	Language	D/G term	Translation	Reference
160. Jan. 27, 1742	H. Burkholder and C. Stauffer to B. van Leuvenig for CBN —greeting	German	mit diner	fellow ministers	Dutch leaders
	—closing		diener	Ministers	Palatine leaders
161. Feb. 27, 1742	H. Burkholder to B. van Leuvenig for CBN —greeting	German	mit diener	fellow ministers	Dutch leaders
	—in text		dieacken diener	deacons ministers	Palatine leaders
	—closing		diener und vorsteher	ministers and leaders	Palatine leaders
162. May 5, 1742	H. Burkholder to B. van Leuvenig for CBN —greeting	German	mit diener	fellow ministers	Dutch leaders
	—in text		diener	Minister	Amish leader of Westrich
163. June 7, 1742	CBN to H. Burkholder —greeting	Dutch	Dienaaren	Ministers	Palatine leaders
164. Nov. 14, 1742	H. Burkholder to B. van Leuvenig for CBN —greeting	German	mit diener	fellow ministers	Dutch leaders
165. Dec. 15, 1742	H. Burkholder to B. van Leuvenig for CBN —greeting and in text	German	mit diener	fellow minister[s]	Both Dutch and Palatine leaders
166. April 22, 1742; 167. June 24, 1743; 168. Aug. 3, 1743	H. Burkholder to B. van Leuvenig for CBN —greeting	German	mit diener	fellow ministers	Dutch leaders
169. Jan. 4, 1744	H. Burkholder to B. van Leuvenig for CBN —greeting and closing	German	mit diener	fellow ministers	Both Dutch and Palatine leaders
172. April 10, 1744	H. Burkholder to J. Deknatel for CBN —closing	German	mit diener	fellow ministers	Palatine leaders
176. Dec. 8, 1744; 177. June 20, 1745; 178. Aug. 26, 1745	H. Burkholder to J. Deknatel for CBN —greeting	German	mit diener	fellow ministers	Dutch leaders
179. Oct. 19, 1745	Jacob Godshalk and five other leaders in Skippack, Pa., to B. van Leuvenig and H. Bakker for CBN —greeting	German	Dienern und Vorstehern Diener und vorsteher	ministers and leaders ministers and leaders	Dutch leaders Pa. leaders
	—closing		mit dieneren	fellow ministers	Pa. leaders
	—signatures		vorsteher	Leaders	Among the six signers are two bishops, three preachers, and a deacon
	—address		Kirchen Rath	church council	Collective leadership of a Dutch congregation
180. Dec. 10, 1745	H. Burkholder to J. Deknatel for CBN —greeting	German	mit diener	fellow ministers	Dutch leaders

Document/Date	Sender/Recipient	Language	D/G term	Translation	Reference
184. Nov. 7, 1746	H. Burkholder to Tobias Nieuwenhuis in Amsterdam —in text	German	kirchen raht	church council	Dutch leaders
185. Nov. 7, 1746	H. Burkholder to CBN —greeting and address	German	kirchenraht	church council	Dutch leaders
	—in text		diacken	Deacon	Palatine leader
186. May 16, 1747	H. Burkholder to J. Deknatel —greeting	German	mit diener	fellow ministers	Dutch leaders
187. June 8, 1748	CBN to Skippack leaders —greeting and address	Dutch	Dienaaren en Opziendenen	ministers and overseers	Reply to 179; refers to Skippack leaders
188. June 12, 1748	H. Burkholder and Heinrich Fried to J. Deknatel for CBN —in text	German	mit diener diener und Eltesten	fellow ministers ministers and elders	Palatine leaders
	—closing		diener und vorsteher	ministers and leaders	Palatine leaders
189. May 7, 1749	Peter Berg and Jacob Weber to CBN —in text and closing	German	diener undt ältisten	ministers and elders	Palatine leaders
189. May 9, 1749	H. Burkholder to J. Deknatel for CBN —in text	German	mit diener	fellow ministers	Peter Berg and Jacob Weber
190. May 19, 1749	H. Burkholder to J. Deknatel —in text	German	diener diacken prediger	ministers deacon preacher	Refers to Peter Berg and Jacob Weber as diener, and then separately to PB as a diacken and JW as a prediger
192. Feb. 8, 1750; 193. Sept. 8, 1750; 194. Oct. 31, 1750; 195. March 28, 1751	H. Burkholder to J. Deknatel —greeting	German	mit diener	fellow ministers	Dutch leaders
197. June 29, 1751	H. Burkholder to J. Deknatel —in text	German	vorsteher pfarer/pfarrer/Pfarh[errn]	elders pastor	Lay leaders in a Reformed parish in Worms; Reformed clergyman
199. April 4, 1752	Christian Burkholder in Gerolshim, to J. Deknatel —closing	German	lehrer	Teachers	Palatine leaders
203. April 19, 1754	Agreement between Jura leaders and families going to Pa. —heading and text	German	Diener und Eldisten	ministers and elders	Leaders in the Jura
	—signatures		Diener zum Wort Eltiste Diener	Ministers of the Word elder ministers	Leaders in the Jura
205. Jan. 1, 1755	C. Burkholder to J. Deknatel —in text	German	mitdiener	fellow ministers	Palatine leaders
	—signature		diener des worts	minister of the Word	Palatine leader Heinrich Fried
208. Sept. 7, 1758	Michael Kauffman and three other Va. Mennonite leaders to CBN —in text	German	Diener und altesten	ministers and elders	Va. leaders

Document/Date	Sender/Recipient	Language	D/G term	Translation	Reference
	—closing		Menniste Prediger	Mennonite preacher	Full minister Benjamin Hershey of Lancaster County
210. June 23, 1760	H. Fried, J. Hirschler, C. Burkholder, C. Stauffer, and Ulrich Burkholder to the Lam and Toren church council —greeting and address	German	kirchen Raht	Church council	Collective leadership of a Dutch congregation
	—signatures		diener des worts Eltesten diener	minister of the Word elder ministers	HF, UB, and JH Refers to CB and CS
	—postscript		kirchen raht	church council	Collective body of leaders at the Lam and Toren
211. Feb. 15, 1761	C. Burkholder to Gerhardus van Heyningen for the Lam and Toren church council —in text	German	bestätigten diener des worts[17] diener	confirmed ministers of the Word ministers	Palatine leaders
212. March 31, 1761	C. Burkholder to G. van Heyningen	German	kirchen Raht	church council	Leaders at the Lam and Toren
213. Jan. 6, 1762	C. Burkholder and J. Hirschler to G. van Heyningen for the Lam and Toren church council —signature	German	vollständiger diener des worts	full minister of the Word	Jacob Hirschler
	—address		kirchen raht	church council	Leaders at the Lam and Toren
214. Feb. 14, 1762	C. Burkholder, J. Hirschler, and U. Burkholder to G. van Heyningen for the Lam and Toren church council —address	German	kirchen Raht	church council	Leaders at the Lam and Toren
215. Dec. 8, 1762	C. Burkholder to G. van Heyningen for the Lam and Toren church council —address	German	kirchen Raht	church council	Leaders at the Lam and Toren
216. Feb. 13, 1763	C. Burkholder to the Lam and Toren church council —address	German	kirchen Raht	church council	Leaders at the Lam and Toren
217. Dec. 19, 1763	J. Hirschler to the Lam and Toren —greeting	German	lehrer und vorsteher	preachers and leaders	Leaders at the Lam and Toren
	—signature		beställigter lehrer	confirmed preacher	Jacob Hirschler
218. April 28, 1764	J. Hirschler to the Lam and Toren church council —in text	German	Vorsteher der Armen gantz rath, lehrer und vorsteher lehrer	leader for the poor entire council, preachers and leaders preacher	Deacon Christian Burkholder Palatine leaders Jacob Hirschler

17. *Bestätigter Diener* (confirmed minister) is the same office as *Völliger Diener* or bishop. The term appears in the Swiss Brethren church order adopted at Zofingen in the Berner Aargau in 1630. Jeremias Mangold, *Ein Warhafftiger Bericht* (1645), refers to *Bestelter Diener,* under the years 1637 and 1640. It is used frequently in the 1773 letter from the Pennsylvania leaders. Byler, 36-37; *DBL,* 1:52-53, 76-77; Bender, "The Office of Bishop in Anabaptist-Mennonite History," 129-130; see document 223.

Document/Date	Sender/Recipient	Language	D/G term	Translation	Reference
	—address		kirchen raht	church council	Leaders at the Lam and Toren
219. Nov. 30, 1764	J. Hirschler to the Lam and Toren church council	German	kirchen raht	church council	Leaders at the Lam and Toren
220. Feb. 27, 1765	C. Burkholder to the Lam and Toren church council	German	kirchen Raht	church council	Leaders at the Lam and Toren
221. Aug. 13, 1766	J. Hirschler to the Lam and Toren —closing	German	diener am Evangelium Jesu	minister in the gospel of Jesus	Jacob Hirschler
	—address		kirchen raht	church council	Leaders at the Lam and Toren
222. Sept. 18, 1768	Johannes Blum at Goch to Amsterdam Mennonite leaders —greeting	German	Domini und diakens	ministers and deacons	Amsterdam leaders
223. March 1, 1773	Pa. leaders Andrew Zeigler, Isaac Kolb, and Christian Funk to Weyand Peter Wynand and Zino van Abbema, leaders at Krefeld —in text	German	Diener	ministers	Leaders in Europe and Pennsylvania
			Lehrer (Lehren)	preacher(s)	William Rittenhouse, Jacob Gottshalk, Hans Neuss, Herman Karsdorp, and Martin Kolb at Germantown
			Diakon	deacon	Jan Neuss at Germantown
			Aufseher	overseer	Jacob Gottshalk at Germantown
			Lehrer und bestätigte Diener des Worts	preachers and confirmed ministers of the Word	1717 immigrant bishops Benedict Brechbühl, Hans Burkholder, and Valentine Klemmer in Pa.
			bestätigte Dienern zum Worts	confirmed ministers of the Word	18 bishops in Pa. in 1773
			Prädikanten	minister	G. van Heyningen at the Lam and Toren
	—closing		mit diener	fellow ministers	Andrew Zeigler, Isaac Kolb, and Christian Funk
	—appendix		bestete Diener	confirmed ministers	Leaders in Franconia and Conestoga
			Diener zum Worts	ministers of the Word	
224. Oct. 7, 1776	J. Hirschler to the Lam and Toren —closing	German	lehrer den am Evangelium Jesu Christÿ	preachers of the gospel of Jesus Christ	Leaders at the Lam and Toren
	—address		kirchen Raht	church council	Leaders at the Lam and Toren

The complete table will be available in the forthcoming *Documents of Brotherly Love: Dutch Mennonite Aid to Swiss Anabaptists, Volume III, 1712–1784.*

A group of African American pastors and church leaders within the Lancaster Mennonite Conference (LMC) invited me to provide a historical overview of African American experiences within LMC. This article is an edited version of several presentations I shared with that group and with LMC. It represents cursory initial research using what is readily available at Mennonite Life and reaches through the mid-twentieth century.

A Brief Overview of African American Experiences within Lancaster Mennonite Conference

By Jean Kilheffer Hess

Home Missions

In the late-nineteenth century, cross-cultural mission energy among Lancaster Mennonites, with a particular interest in overseas settings, was a spill-over from the mission fervor sweeping Protestant-related churches in the United States.

During the first quarter of the twentieth century, "home missions" movements complemented this evangelical push and encouraged Mennonites to consider local and regional communities as mission fields. White Mennonites looked beyond their bounded communities, carrying a burden to reach those perceived to be outside the realm of God.

Sometimes the initiative for beginning home missions came from an individual or group wanting to reach others for Christ. In some cases, home missions provided opportunities for workers to use leadership gifts unused by a home congregation.

Other missions developed when individual families moved into or near urban centers to benefit their livelihoods. As these newcomers looked around their new neighborhoods, they saw people who needed Christ and reached out to them.

While formal Lancaster Mennonite Conference (LMC[1]) leadership—most visibly the Bishop Board—initially distrusted and sought to limit mission out-

reach, eventually they reversed course and, at times, took the lead in establishing local or regional mission churches. By the mid-twentieth century, the Franconia Conference of the Mennonite Church similarly encouraged home missions, and both conferences found themselves working in the same urban centers.

White Mennonites from rural settings entered cities with confidence that they knew how the world worked and what the world needed. Never mind that the cultures and contexts they encountered differed significantly from their own. They appear to have been equally confident that what they had to give exactly met the needs they perceived. They entered new rural settings with the same buoyancy.

Based on my cursory initial research, I have not found evidence of white Mennonites engaging in self-examination or cultural formation as they approached these cross-cultural and often racially diverse settings. Such cautious learning and preparation did not enter their frame of reference.

In the 1930s, Mennonites showed up in New York City in swarms to see church members bound for foreign missions board ships. "Swarms" conveys the likely visual impact for local people when they observed large groups of uniformly dressed plain people gathering for a shared goodbye ritual. These white, rural Mennonites would often sing and preach and hand out tracts while they were in the city, and then they returned home. It wasn't long until some LMC members wondered aloud why Mennonites weren't sticking around to share the Good News longer term.

Mennonites who moved into settings where there was not already a Mennonite presence seemed to

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1. During the period covered by this overview, Lancaster Mennonite Conference was, in legal terms, an independent entity that affiliated ad hoc with other Mennonite bodies across the United States and Canada, and primarily those within what was called the Mennonite Church. Today, the entity that had been Lancaster Mennonite Conference goes by the name LMC: A Fellowship of Anabaptist Churches. For simplicity, I'm using the acronym LMC throughout this article.

Seeing off missionaries. New York, October 1937, onboard the ship *American Legion.* *Credit: Mennonite Board of Missions. Photographs. Argentina, 193701954. IV-10-7.2 Box 1 folder 45, photo #1. Mennonite Church USA Archives-Goshen, Goshen, IN*

Wandy Bryant directs the Diamond Street Mennonite church choir through warm-up exercises, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1985. *Credit: Mennonite Board of Missions Photographs, 1971-1995, IV-10-007.3 Drawer 2 Folder 5. Mennonite Church USA Archives-Goshen. Goshen, IN.*

bring sincere care for the souls of their neighbors. They may not have known what they didn't know regarding cross-cultural living and building truly mutual relationships, but they knew how to run programs. Early programs focused on children in New York City, Philadelphia, Lancaster, Columbia, Steelton, and others. Often women took the initiative or made up the lion's share of workers running Sunday school and Bible school programs that sometimes grew to serve hundreds of children.

These women regularly visited neighborhood homes. They persistently invited children to Sunday school or church. Mattie Lee Cooper, of Philadelphia, shares her experience from the 1930s:

> Two very simply, but oddly attired white ladies came to our apartment door and invited us to their church nearby. They wore the white prayer cap and extremely simply made dresses and black footwear. They said they were Mennonites. We had never heard of these people before, and white folks didn't invite us to accompany them anywhere. You can imagine our perplexity on the appearance of these "sisters."[2]

Her African American family did not immediately respond to the invitation. She relates, "Finally, after many invitations and an admonition 'not to dress up,' we began to attend worship services at this small interracial [Diamond Street] Mennonite Church."[3]

In New York City, a Mennonite-organized Fresh Air Fund program guaranteed stays in white Mennonite homes in Pennsylvania for the primarily African American and Latina/o children participating. New York's Seventh Avenue Mennonite Church emerged after an earlier mission congregation, St. Ann's, held a 1953 outdoor summer Bible school in Harlem.[4] Oxford Circle Mennonite Church, in Philadelphia, focused heavily on children's programs, bussing children to church for almost three decades before making a conscious shift to broader family ministry.

In Columbia, Lancaster County, a mission effort included a growing Sunday school that regularly hosted between 175 and 265 children. In the August 26, 1922, Lancaster newspaper, *Intelligencer Journal*, a headline noted: "Columbia Has New Mennonite Mission—Largest Church of that Denomination in County Is Nearing Completion."[5] If the headline is correct, this mission church in Columbia was larger than any other Mennonite church in Lancaster County at the time. The article mentions an auditorium capacity of five hundred. By 1939, more than four hundred children regularly attended Sunday school there.

Church Leaders Segregate by Race

Even with a large building, the Columbia Mission Sunday school had outstripped available space, and leaders determined to split the group in half. They chose to separate the students based on race.

"Increase in attendance to over four hundred, made it necessary to divide the school into two groups

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2. Mattie Lee Cooper, "The Role of Religion in the Socialization of my Family." Unpublished manuscript accompanying a "Dedication Service" program held July 29, 1979, at Diamond Street Mennonite Church, Philadelphia, PA, pages unnumbered. *Mennonite Life Archives*
3. Cooper.

4. MacMaster, *Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Churches of New York City,* 58.
5. "Columbia Has New Mennonite Mission—Largest Church of that Denomination in County Is Nearing Completion," *Lancaster Intelligencer*, August 26, 1922.

Sunday school students at Columbia Mennonite Church, Columbia, Pennsylvania, ca. late 1950s. *Credit: Mennonite Life photo collection, gift of Paul Geib.*

Columbia Mennonite Church building, Columbia, Pennsylvania, ca. 1950s. This meetinghouse was designed and built to seat five hundred. *Credit: Mennonite Life photo collection, gift of Paul Geib.*

in 1939: one for the Negroes held in the Mt. Zion A. M. E. Church on Fifth Street, one for the white children at the Mission."[6] Later, the two Sunday schools combined again with 350 children attending.

A pattern emerges within LMC whereby reference to segregated reality treats African American and white integration as the starting point for conversation rather than confessing it was church leaders who enforced racial separation in the first place. A 2017 issue of the conference's *Shalom News* features a cover image of nine Black boys and two white teachers with the banner "Breaking Barriers: The Story of Sharon Mennonite Church." The article, "Joy Unspeakable: Outreach, Revival, and Racial Integration in Steelton, Pa.," is cast as celebrating the 1963 integration of the white church, begun in 1935 on Myers Street, and

the African American church, called Sharon Mennonite Church and begun in 1952. These churches sat one block from each other.

The article is written by a ninety-nine-year-old white man as he reflects on helping to start the Black church. Between the triumphal lines, the reader hears the pain of reality. He recalls taking African American youth to segregated youth meetings, annual summer gatherings sponsored by LMC that brought together "Black youth from various inner-city mission outreaches."[7] He notes that "although Sharon Church was officially named in 1955, it never had its own pastor or deacon."[8] He lists the white people who filled all the key leadership roles in the congregation begun separately and specifically for African Americans. The initial project in Steelton was "a mission church for white people, he says."[9]
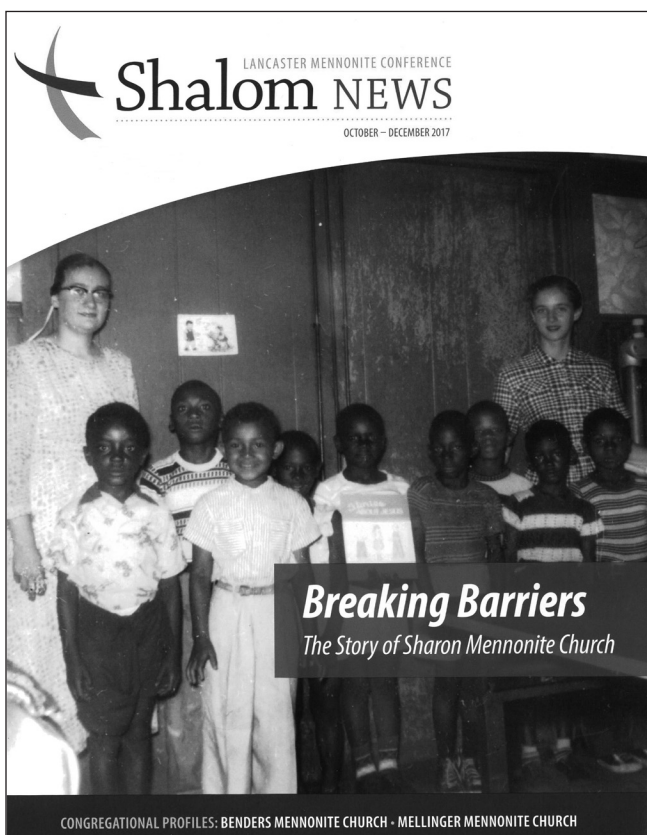
White Mennonites systematically found ways to keep African Americans from significant congregational decision-making and leadership. This pattern appears at the mission in the rural Welsh Mountains area of Lancaster County, at the Vine Street Mission in Lancaster City, in Philadelphia, and elsewhere. Churches that specifically reached out to African American communities typically maintained whites in all formal leadership roles.

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6. Mary E. Leaman, research paper titled "History of Columbia Mennonite Mission: 'To Thee Also' Preaching the Gospel in Columbia," 1962–1963 academic year, Columbia Mennonite Church (Columbia, Pa.) Collection, Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society archives.

7. Richard Cline, "Joy Unspeakable: Outreach, Revival, and Racial Integration in Steelton, Pa."*Shalom News*, Oct.–Dec. 2017, 4.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid., 3.

LANCASTER MENNONITE CONFERENCE
Shalom NEWS
OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2017

Breaking Barriers
The Story of Sharon Mennonite Church

CONGREGATIONAL PROFILES: **BENDERS MENNONITE CHURCH · MELLINGER MENNONITE CHURCH**

Many mission congregations experienced a rapidly-changing leadership rotation of white men and their spouses. Built on children's ministry success, these churches hosted many African American children, and sometimes their families would begin attending and actively engaging in church. Relatively few African Americans chose to become formal church members, however. It was widely acknowledged that when Black members did join the church in the mid-twentieth century, they were held to even stricter standards regarding uniform dress and other white Mennonite cultural requirements than even the people who insisted on the rules.

A Colored Workers Committee was formed mainly of white Mennonites who worked in interracial settings across the United States. At a 1954 meeting of the committee, "participants were asked, 'Do we ask our new mission members to dress much plainer than members of home congregations?' The white mission workers in attendance decided in the affirmative and went on to say that stricter requirements proffered a 'blessing rather than a hindrance' to the African-American converts."[10]

In those mission congregations that saw a surge of new African American members at some point, Afri-

can American attendance usually diminished within a decade or two. While various factors may have been at play, insistence on plain dress and white church leaders—almost always white men—holding all the levers of power appear to be central to the story.

The issue of control emanated strongly from the Bishop Board. There are stories of individual leaders in urban settings recognizing the need for cultural humility and flexibility and requesting support for that approach—so that people could not just be welcomed but truly belong. Consistently, the answer from Bishop Board was "no." While the Bishop Board's need for control is a theme that affected church life well beyond the specifics of African American history within LMC, a belief in white superiority figured into the control dynamics.

A current member of the LMC Bishop Board, Josef Berthold, wrote a doctoral dissertation that examined LMC home mission church efforts in various urban congregations. He noted that few mission churches thrived or sustained. He points to racial boundaries having been used to create distance "between those who were doing mission and those who were subject to mission."[11]

Those "subject to mission" were not considered eminently gifted individuals; experts on their own communities, strengths, and needs; or people to learn from. They were considered people who needed to learn and were not considered today's or tomorrow's leaders. As a result of these attitudes, white Mennonite efforts to build congregations that included African Americans were dogged with lack of leadership continuity and with regular turnover of white leadership. African Americans stepping up to lead could be easily sidelined by a newly-applied rule or a vaguely referenced expectation.

In his review of the Columbia Mennonite mission story, Berthold summarizes that mission leaders

> did not hesitate to cross cultural and ethnic boundaries when they reached out to African Americans, yet this did not result in a [local] and inclusive church community. One has to wonder if this was all that was possible given the restrictions of the Conference leaders. Whatever the reasons for this chasm, the result was that the church remained relatively small in size and did not expand by including the [local] population of Columbia in leadership or membership. The cradle Mennonites remained alone, detached from the blessings they otherwise could have received,

10. Tobin Miller Shearer, *Daily Demonstrators: The Civil Rights Movement in Mennonite Homes and Sanctuaries* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 16.

11. Joseph Valentin Berthold, "Regaining the Missional Edge in the Lancaster Mennonite Conference" (DMin diss., Biblical Theological Seminary, 2015), 173.

not just by numerical growth, but by gaining insights into the word they were so liberally sharing, and by experiencing the Holy Spirit in transforming ways."[12]

In the 1980s, when LeRoy Bechler wrote the book *The Black Church in North America: 1886-1986*, LMC had the largest number of Black and racially integrated congregations with sixteen. But there were only 323 Black members among those sixteen churches or an average of twenty members per congregation. Ohio and Eastern Conference had slightly more Black members, at 399, among just five Black or integrated congregations.

Lancaster Mennonite Conference Actions

The legacy of LMC official action is uneven concerning connecting with and supporting African Americans, African American civil rights, and African American leadership within the Mennonite Church. There have been conversations; there have been short-term limited efforts—sometimes by individuals with considerable Conference power. But if you believe Jesus' words, in Matthew and repeated in Luke, that "a tree is known by its fruit," the LMC tree has produced little truly healthy fruit.

In 1951, the Bishop Board discussed "a tentative statement on racialism" but decided within the same meeting not to act.

In 1960, LMC published a statement, available to congregations, titled *From the East, West, North, South: Statement on Race Relations*.

In 1971, the Bishop Board reviewed the 1960 statement for possible revision but chose to replace it with a 1955 Mennonite Church statement adopted in Goshen, Indiana. There were LMC representatives at that 1955 meeting who signaled support for the statement; however, it had never been highlighted or used in LMC. Out of this, the LMC Peace Committee published a three-session Sunday school curriculum on race called "One Nation, One People."

The impetus for this final and slightly more comprehensive resourcing for congregations has an important back story.

Black Manifesto

In April of 1969, James Forman, the former Executive Secretary of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee that worked with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the civil rights movement, made a presentation at the National Black Economic Development Conference in Detroit. It was titled "Black Manifesto to the

White Christian Church and the Jewish Synagogues in the United States of America and All Other Racist Institutions." It's referred to as the Black Manifesto.

With the backing of others at the conference, Forman demanded an initial payment of $500,000 for Christian and Jewish participation in slavery and the ongoing oppression of African Americans. He threatened to crash worship services if white churches didn't respond, and he and others began doing just that. LMC leadership became very nervous.

The Black Manifesto came out shortly after a June 1968 meeting of 25 urban Mennonite pastors in Elkhart, Indiana that focused on the Mennonite church and racial inequities. John Powell, an African American pastor in Detroit, had spoken to the Mennonite Church press about this meeting. He called white Mennonites "passivists [rather] than pacifists" with regard to the struggle for civil rights. In October, the group met again, this time in Chicago, and LMC representatives attended. The group elected five men, including four African Americans, to make up a new steering group called the Urban Racial Council.

In July 1969, LMC sent a letter to all ministers in the conference addressing the Black Manifesto and how to respond if an African American person were to interrupt a worship service to draw attention to its calls for justice.

With John Powell at the helm, the Urban Racial Council group took up the Black Manifesto and customized it to spark conversation in the Mennonite Church. At the 1969 biennial assembly of Mennonites in Turner, Oregon, Powell strode to the podium as the newly-appointed secretary of the Urban Racial Council. Church officials had invited him to speak and had sent copies of the Black Manifesto to delegates in advance of his talk. Instead of making demands,

John Powell, center, leading an evening meeting. Chicago, Illinois, ca. 1967–68. *Credit: Mennonite Board of Missions photo collection, 1967–68 from Chicago, IL. IV-10-7.2 Box 3a Folder 60 Photo #17. Mennonite Church USA Archives-Elkhart, IN.*

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12. Ibid., 153-154.

he laid out seventeen recommendations. He called for $500,000 annually for the Urban Racial Council, which would provide African Americans and Latinos with jobs and education.

Powell worked hard to use language that the Mennonite Church could relate to and understand. Regarding his speech at the 1969 assembly, Tobin Miller Shearer wrote, "Rather than a thankful recipient of the church's largesse, Powell came as an outspoken critic of the church's integrity. In response to Powell's blunt commentary, one white delegate stood up in the assembly and pronounced, 'If we do what John Powell tells us, they'll have me out of my pulpit and a [n-word] in there.'"[13]

Bishop Paul G. Landis had become personally interested in race relations when he worked alongside a Jamaican pastor in ministry to migrants in Homestead, Florida, in the 1950s. At this assembly, he supported Powell's effort and pushed hard for a positive vote. After two days of executive negotiations, a six-point motion was presented to the delegates. The motion confessed racial wrongdoing and called for above-budget giving of $6 per member. Representing two national committees, Landis moved to accept the proposal. The motion carried when put to the vote by the delegates.[14]

Back in LMC, however, Bishop Landis used the doctrine of nonresistance to suggest that a more appropriate response would be serving African American people and congregations rather than actually responding to the call for financial reparations.

Mahlon Hess, a minister and editor of the LMC mission magazine, argued that Christians needed to take "the lead in making financial resources available."[15] Neither of these men was hearing from or directly speaking with African American members of LMC.

In fact, in the five months after the assembly, LMC lay people expressed more interest in race conversations than did the leadership. The Lancaster Conference Colored Workers Committee helped interested lay people invite speakers, including Tom Skinner, a charismatic African American evangelist from New York City, who spoke before a crowd of six hundred at Paradise Mennonite Church.

Despite positive words followed by stiff resistance, John Powell was ready to keep talking about the Black Manifesto. As Miller Shearer wrote, "For the better part of five years, the Minority Ministries Council [which grew out of the Urban Racial Council], . . . captured the attention of Mennonites at all levels. Church leaders traveled to converse with council staff, individuals corresponded with Powell and other council leaders, and congregations hosted council speakers despite significant reservations about Minority Ministries' methods and their association with the Black Manifesto."[16] A bit later, Shearer comments, "The previous seven decades since African Americans first entered the Mennonite Church saw a few periods of forthright discussion across racial lines, but none offered as sustained, focused, and intense an exchange as that which took place when white Mennonites worried that African American men might disrupt the order of their worship services."[17]

In LMC, leadership prepared for and had conversations but gave no money. Rather than focus on how they could undertake fundraising to support Black-led efforts to address the everyday effects of racism, Landis and other leaders shifted LMC attention to interpreting church doctrines of nonconformity to the world and submission to authority.[18] Miller Shearer observes that suddenly energy was going into "figuring out how to keep women's hair uncut and covered up [rather] than in deciding how to pay for the legacy of slavery. Although Landis had backed Powell's recommendations in Turner, Oregon, he generated little interest in Black Manifesto conversation among his fellow bishops and ordained clergy."[19]

In summary, intentions, words, and seeming personal or broader interest mean little if they do not produce clear, abundant, nourishing fruit.

Postscript

Hear John Powell and Tobin Miller Shearer in the October 26, 2021 webinar "Racial Harm & Harmony Among Mennonites" here: https://aht.libraryhost.com/s/archive/item/259. Miller Shearer notes that Vine Street Mennonite Mission, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, was the first Mennonite Church in North America to segregate attendance by race. Powell shares first hand experiences. He highlights that Shalom Community Church, Ann Arbor, Michigan is inviting contributions through February 2022 to its repair fund (https://shalomcc.org/repair/) which is designed to deliver on the failed promise of the 1969 motion passed at the Turner, Oregon assembly.

13. Miller Shearer, *Daily Demonstrators*, 206.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., 203.

16. Ibid., 193.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., 209.
19. Ibid., 210.

Recommended Reading

Orders:
Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society
2215 Millstream Road
Lancaster, PA 17602-1499

Phone: (717) 393-9745
Fax: (717) 290-1585
Email: shop@lmhs.org

Please call the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society for shipping charges and book orders. Prices are subject to change without notice.

Ames, Alexander L. *The Word in the Wilderness: Popular Piety and the Manuscript Arts in Early Pennsylvania.* University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2020. 264 pp. (Paperback). $29.95. ISBN: 978-0-271-08590-6.

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Roth, John D. *A Cloud of Witnesses: Celebrating Indonesian Mennonites.* Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2021. 200 pp. (Paperback). $19.99. ISBN: 978-1-5138-0939-7.

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