

# PANNEBAKKER FAMILIE NIEWS



Pannebakker

NEWSLETTER OF THE PANNEBAKKER FAMILIE ASSOCIATION

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## Origins of the Pennsylvania Pannebeckers

*The following is the fourth in a series of articles based on the writings of Edward Upton and edited by Bruce Pennypacker. Recent discoveries may call into question some of the assumptions made in the articles.*

### Family Traditions Linking Hendrick to Friedrich

Traditions linking the family of Hendrick to the family of Friedrich came to SWP from both sides of the connection. The first two are second-hand reports of known origin, of the type called reasonably reliable. The third is more nebulous in origin and is probably a third-hand report. The quotes that follow are all from the writings of SWP.

1) "Nathan Pennypacker, of Pikeland, where grandfather William was a grandson of Hendrick, and had held his papers, said to me that his grandfather often told him that there were three emigrants of the name closely related, one of whom was not successful."

The chain here is:

William Pannebacker (1740 – 1815)  
↓  
Nathan Pennypacker (1805 – 1880+)  
↓  
Samuel Whitaker Pennypacker (1843 – 1916)

Congratulations!  
60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary  
of  
Ed and Louise  
Pennebaker

Nathan had to be pretty young when he heard this tale from his grandfather. It helps to know that he heard it repeatedly.

The three emigrants are obviously Hendrick, Friedrich and Lotharius. The one who was "not successful" must mean Lotharius. He seems to have died soon after his arrival, and his only surviving son moved out of Pennsylvania by 1776.

It seems clear that William would be in a position to know these facts first-hand, whether he held Hendrick's papers or not. He lived from 1740 through 1790 in Perkiomen – and – Skippack Township, roughly 10 to 12 miles from the seat of Friedrich's family, and not much further from where Lotharius and his children lived in Bucks County. His report clearly *implies* that there was in his time some contact between the three families, and that they all knew they were cousins. It appears that they were second cousins – William, the grandchildren of Friedrich, and the children of Lotharius.

2) "A granddaughter of the Kentucky emigrant, still living, heard him tell in her childhood of his relationship to Matthias, my great-grandfather, then a man of local prominence."

This looks like a second-hand report from a known source, because SWP certainly knew who he was talking about even though he didn't spell it out for us. The Kentucky emigrant probably means Frederick Pennebaker, who lived from 1751 to at least 1820 but apparently not to 1830. There were actually four Kentucky emigrants, Frederick and three of his brothers. But SWP knew practically nothing of the brothers Peter and William, and he knew relatively little of the brother Weiant. Frederick is the one he had learned most about, and the passage quoted was preceded by an explicit reference to Frederick a few lines above.

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Frederick had at least 6 granddaughters born before 1820, any or all of whom may have been still living in 1894 when that passage was written. Of those six, only Elizabeth and Catherine are mentioned in SWP's genealogy, so it is a fair guess that it was one of them who transmitted this tale from her grandfather Frederick to SWP.

Frederick had lived in New Goshenhoppen, PA from 1751 until he moved to Kentucky in 1792. The Matthias he is calling his relative was the one who became a Mennonite Bishop in his later years. Matthias was 9 years older than Frederick, and he lived near by in Perkiomen – and – Skippack Township until he was 32 and Frederick was 23. They were second cousins, assuming that the Flomborn connection is right. A close bond between them seems unlikely, because Matthias got heavily wrapped up in Mennonite affairs and Frederick was no Mennonite. But some degree of acquaintance seems inevitable in the 23 years that they lived only a few miles apart.

In 1774 Matthias moved over to Chester County, and Frederick probably saw little of him after that. He would have heard about him though, because Matthias was rising to prominence in Mennonite circles and preaching in several places including his old neighborhood at Skippack. He must have been pretty good as a preacher. His brother Henry was a Mennonite preacher too, but the family tradition asserts that, "He couldn't preach like Matthias."

Did Frederick have a certain admiration for his cousin Matthias, even though he was not himself a Mennonite? It would seem so, since he told tales of Matthias later in Kentucky. A second cousin, who is a preacher, and a good one, might well stir your family pride even though you are of a different faith.

A more difficult question: Would Frederick invent a relationship that didn't exist, just because he had the same family name as Matthias, the way he might have been tempted to do if his last name had been Washington? Impossible to say for sure, but it sounds unlikely. Not over a mere Mennonite preacher who had never been heard of outside of eastern Pennsylvania. You wouldn't get any envious glances out of that in Kentucky. You would only get blank stares. No, if Frederick is talking about Matthias in Kentucky, it's probably because Matthias is really his cousin, and Frederick is proud of him on that account. It's something along the lines of, "My cousin who is a City Councilman back in Oshkosh." If he is really your cousin, then it makes sense. If he isn't, well, you would invent something better.

What if this tale really came from Weiant instead of Frederick? It is possible, since SWP failed to spell it out for us. The main difference is that Weiant wouldn't have known Matthias personally the way Frederick would. He was too much younger, only 10 when Matthias moved away from Skippack. Thus the story would have less credibility, but at the same time it seems less likely that Weiant would talk about Matthias at all. It was most likely Frederick.

3) "Col. Charles D. Pennebaker who is a descendant of Friedrich says he always heard that his grandfather Frederick who went to Kentucky was a near relative of Dirck, a descendant of Heinrich who went to Virginia." [This is from the 1880 genealogy where SWP always called his ancestor Heinrich. Later, after discovering that the man always signed his name Hendrick or Henry, SWP took to calling him Hendrick.]

This has to be a third-hand report, because Charles D. Pennebaker never knew his grandfather Frederick or at least never knew him when he was old enough to remember anything. Furthermore, "He always heard," is terribly imprecise. A phrase like that is a red flag to anyone who cares about reliability of the testimony. It suggests that Charles can't remember exactly who told him. And if he can't remember that much, how trustworthy is the rest of it?

So, we shouldn't give this report much weight, but you might count it as worth 5 or 6 on a 100-point scale. And every bit adds up. The Frederick in the report is again a second cousin to the Dirck in the report, like the last case.

There is one suggestive point to this report, despite its terrible fuzziness: How would they even know the existence of Dirck in Kentucky, unless Frederick had known him back in Pennsylvania? Sure, Dirck was well known in his own community, an iron maker and a captain in the Revolution. But that wouldn't make him known in Kentucky. At the most it would make him known in Berks County, PA, and later in Shenandoah County, VA.

So maybe this report is rated a bit too low. Maybe it should go up to a 7 or 8, or even a 9 on the 100-point scale. It seems to imply that Frederick had been acquainted with Dirck at one time, and knew he was a cousin of some degree. Is that likely? Yes. It is very much like the case of Frederick and Matthias. The differences are:

- a) Dirck was 14 years older than Frederick instead of 9 years older.
- b) Dirck was not a Mennonite.
- c) Dirck lived within a few miles of Frederick all the way to 1781, when Frederick was 30.

All told, it seems likely that Frederick may have known Dirck better than he knew Matthias. If he admired Dirck, it would probably be for Dirck's active part in the Revolution – a part that was very rare in the Pannebecker family, because so many of them were Mennonites. In Pennsylvania there were only Dirck and William, son of William, son of Lotharius.

Let's put the worst possible light on this report. Charles D. Pennebaker knows he has heard something about Dirck Pennybacker, but he can't remember who told him or just what they said. Is that worth anything? It is evidence that his grandfather Frederick had some acquaintance with Dirck, and mentioned him a few times in Kentucky. It has to be this Dirck, because there are no other Dircks in the family. And it has to be Frederick or one of Frederick's brothers who mentioned him in Kentucky, because no one else would have even heard of him. That doesn't tell us the family relationship between Dirck and Frederick, but it implies that there was one.

## Message From The President

Greetings Everyone,

Well we finally got a bit of snow for Christmas. In my immediate area, got about 4 inches but a lot of rain. Driveway all cleaned out as we type this.

The Mitchell household has had a reasonable year marred only slightly by a mini-stroke which temporarily affected my speech and had a bit of numbness in my right hand and forearm. No lasting effects thankfully. There is a short moral to the story. If you suffer any of the above symptoms, call 911. The guys and gals on the ambulance know what to do and they will do it. After all was said and done, CT scans, the usual poking and prodding, I was sent home with a years prescription for Plavix generic.

We would appreciate it if you canvass your aunts, uncles, cousins, whomever to see if you can generate interest in your organization. We will always welcome new members whether cousins or not. I just found a new cousin who has a tree on Ancestry. She has Jacob's and John's descendants down to the 1940 census. If interested and have access to Ancestry, just search for 'Lloyd Pennybacker' and her tree (Gail Allen) should pop up for you. Anyone not having access to Ancestry, just let us know and will do lookups for you.

Hoping everyone has a memorable Christmas filled with love and anticipation for a Great and Happy New year.

Ron

President, Pannebakker Family Association, Inc.

## *Pannebakker Familie Association Web Site*

The web site has been changed a bit! Still the same contents, however to access the newsletter section you will need to enter a user name and password. If you would like a user name and password, you must contact Bruce Pennypacker at, [throwcoach@gmail.com](mailto:throwcoach@gmail.com) and the necessary information will be sent to you. Below is the URL for the web site:

<http://www.pannebakkerfamilyassociation.com>

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## *Pannebakker Familie Association*



The Pannebakker Family Association is an outgrowth of the family reunion held at Pennypacker Mills, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania on July 2-4, 1999. The reunion celebrated the 300th year wedding anniversary of Hendrick Pannebecker and Eve Umstat, in Germantown, Pennsylvania in the year 1699. In the words of the Steering Committee of the reunion, "We hope that the 1999 Pfannebecker-Umstat Reunion will lead to the growth of a family association, which will provide a forum for conversation, collection and preservation of information, and a sense of lasting community among the heirs of this rich cultural heritage."