

# PANNEBAKKER FAMILIE NIEWS



Pannebakker

NEWSLETTER OF THE PANNEBAKKER FAMILIE ASSOCIATION

## Origins of the Pennsylvania Pannebeckers

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*The following is the fifth 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.*

### Other Evidence Linking Hendrick to Friedrich

One of the points made earlier in linking Friedrich to Lotharius was that they lived so close together in Pennsylvania. There seems little doubt that that was a true indication of close relationship, because it was supported by much stronger clues of other kinds.

The same argument of close proximity can be advanced to indicate a close connection between Hendrick and Friedrich. The distance is a little greater this time, about a dozen miles. A dozen miles may seem a bit stand-offish if these men were really brothers, as we think they were. But remember, this was farming country. Family farms were typically 100 to 200 acres, as shown by the tax records. That means your nearest neighbor was about half a mile down the road. If your brother was a dozen miles away, that was really only about 20 houses down the road. A dozen miles is not very far in farming country.

It may be that Friedrich could have got somewhat closer to Hendrick than that, but it may also be that he didn't want to. Hendrick had been in Pennsylvania about 30 years when Friedrich came along. That is a lot of water under the bridge. Hendrick had got himself thoroughly mixed up with the Mennonites. He was living in a largely Mennonite community at Skippack. Friedrich may not have cared to move into the middle of all that. He had no compelling reason, as Hendrick had, to adjust himself to Mennonite ways. A dozen miles may have seemed like a good comfortable distance to him.

There is an intriguing possibility, mentioned by SWP in his genealogy of 1880, that Hendrick may have actually bought Friedrich's first farm for him in 1727. What is certain is that Hendrick bought 260 acres of land that year in Hanover Township. No one knows whether that means Upper Hanover or New Hanover. One gets the impression that they were a single township in 1727, and were split shortly afterward. A later account of the same land by SWP seems to have it in Upper Hanover one moment and in New Hanover the next, so the issue is still in doubt.

Hendrick seems never to have lived on that land nor to have farmed it, and none of his children did either. What did he buy it for? Well, it could have been just an investment. Hendrick bought at least 5 other parcels of land between 1720 and 1730, so there was nothing unusual about this purchase in 1727 – except that all the others were a good deal closer to Skippack.

The combination of Hanover Township and the year 1727 certainly has a suggestion of Friedrich about it. That was the year of arrival of the first known German settlers of Upper Hanover, alias New Goshenhoppen. Friedrich is not one of those known arrivals in 1727, but he could easily enough have come in that year all the same. Maybe he wrote to Hendrick ahead of time, asking Hendrick to find some farmland for him. Maybe he arrived with little money in hand, and Hendrick helped him along in good brotherly spirit. On could easily get carried away and compose a whole story on this heart-warming theme. But we will refrain. It may all mean nothing at all.

In 1880 SWP wrote that he hadn't been able to find out what became of that land after Hendrick bought it. In 1894 he wrote that it had come into the possession of Frederick Reimer by 1738, but he didn't say how. If

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Hendrick really bought the land for Friedrich, it would seem either that Friedrich didn't take it or else that he sold it within a few years. It is all very iffy, and it may mean absolutely nothing. But it is suggestive.

Consider next the first names that were given in Hendrick's family and Friedrich's. Repetition of the names, especially unusual ones, can be a clue to family relationships. There is in fact a good clue of this kind coming up, that helps link Hendrick to the Pfannebeckers of Flomborn. Is there anything of this kind that helps link Hendrick to Friedrich?

Samuel Whitaker Pennypacker thought there was. "There is considerable similarity in the Christian names among the immediate descendants of Heinrich and Friedrich," he wrote. Is that really true? Let's take a look.

Friedrich had only one known child, and he had the unusual name Weiant. That is likely to be a family name connected with his mother, but we don't really know. The names Frederick and Weiant reoccur in the next generation, for obvious reasons. The rest of Weiant's children all had very common names:

|       |          |           |
|-------|----------|-----------|
| Peter | Mary     | William   |
| Henry | Margaret | Elizabeth |

Now it is true that all six of these common names can be found among Hendrick's 58 grandchildren, especially Henry. Hendrick had no less than 7 grandsons named Henry, again for obvious reasons. But the two most distinctive names in Friedrich's family, Frederick and Weiant, do not occur in Hendrick's family at all – not even among his great-grandchildren.

So, it is misleading to talk about a correspondence of names in the two families, at least in the way that SWP said it. The correspondence is only in the common names. It is conspicuously missing in the distinctive ones.

There is nevertheless a striking correspondence of names if you compare just the families of Weiant and Peter:

## Children of Peter and Elizabeth

## Children of Weiant and Nelche

|                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| John (1734)      | Peter (c. 1746)   |
| Henry (1736)     | Mary (c. 1746)    |
| Jacob (1738)     | Henry (1749)      |
| William (1740)   | Frederick (1751)  |
| Margaret (1742)  | William (1753-54) |
| Catharine (1744) | Margaret (1755)   |
| Samuel (1746)    | Unknown (1758)    |
| Elizabeth (1749) | Elizabeth (1761)  |
| Barbara (1752)   | Weiant (1763-64)  |

Except for the names Frederick and Weiant which came from his own family, you could make a good case that Weiant named nearly all his children after Peter and *his* children. Even the order of the names is the same. Can this be just coincidence? Is there any good reason why Weiant might have identified himself especially with Peter, to the exclusion of Hendrick's other 7 children?

There are a few reasons why that might be so. Peter was the most prominent of Hendrick's children, the most successful and the wealthiest. He bought and lived at the big estate that became known as Pennypacker's Mills. That was not only a big and impressive place, it was also closer to Weiant at New Goshenhoppen than the home of anyone else in Hendrick's family.

Besides that, Peter seems to have left the Mennonite fold and joined the Reformed Church at Old Goshenhoppen. There is a record of his burial by the Reformed minister John Theobald Faber, and some of his children appear in the records of the Old Goshenhoppen Reformed Church. His sons John and Jacob took an active part in the Revolution, John on the Council of Safety and Jacob as a soldier. This was a complete break with Mennonite principles and tradition.

There is the suspicion that Friedrich and Weiant may not have felt very comfortable among all the Mennonites in Hendrick's family. But Peter was the exception, the son who had broken loose from the Mennonite fold and joined a church closely connected with Weiant's. The Old and New Goshenhoppen churches in fact shared the same ministers, and the congregations were sometimes combined at Easter. Peter then was the cousin that Weiant could feel most at ease with, and he was just 5 years older than Weiant. His home was close, and it must have been a delightful place to visit with its 500 acre spread and its three mills on the Perkiomen. Peter was conspicuously successful and prominent, the first Pannebecker in fact to hold public office in Pennsylvania. If there was anyone in Hendrick's family that Weiant would be drawn to and form a bond with, Peter was the one.

It is easy to imagine that the bond would be reciprocal – that Peter, having revolted against the Mennonite traditions of his own family, might well take to Weiant as a kindred soul and most welcome cousin. He couldn't copy the names of Weiant's children, because Weiant married later and had his children later. But Weiant could take names from Peter's family if he wanted to, and it looks much as if he did.

If you can accept this line of reasoning it seems to shed a good deal of light on the relations between the families of Friedrich and Hendrick. It seems to show that they were indeed closely related, but for the most part there was a barrier between them. The barrier was without much doubt the difference in religion. If you were a Mennonite your religion pervaded your whole life and set you apart, just as it does with the Amish today. Hendrick had not quite become a Mennonite himself, but his wife was one and so were most of his children. That was the barrier between them and Friedrich's family. But when Peter broke away the barrier was down, and a real bond then developed between Peter and Weiant.

It now seems significant, after having read all that in a list of names, that the only tradition in Hendrick's family of a connection with Friedrich came down through the descendants of Peter. Look back at tradition #1. That came from William, a son of Peter. It all seems to hang together. The other branches of Hendrick's family didn't remember Friedrich and Lotharius because the religious barrier kept them apart. But in Peter's family the barrier was down.

## **Message From The President**

Spring is here. Say what?? Look in my yard and maybe the calendar is a bit off. We have had lots of snow and high winds. Some pretty serious snow drifts along the Interstate shoulders and ditches. I learned new ways to attack the snow with the wind blowing as it was. Maybe dusted off a few of the standard usage phrases I learned from my years in the Navy. Oh well, I keep telling myself, every day of survival is a gift.

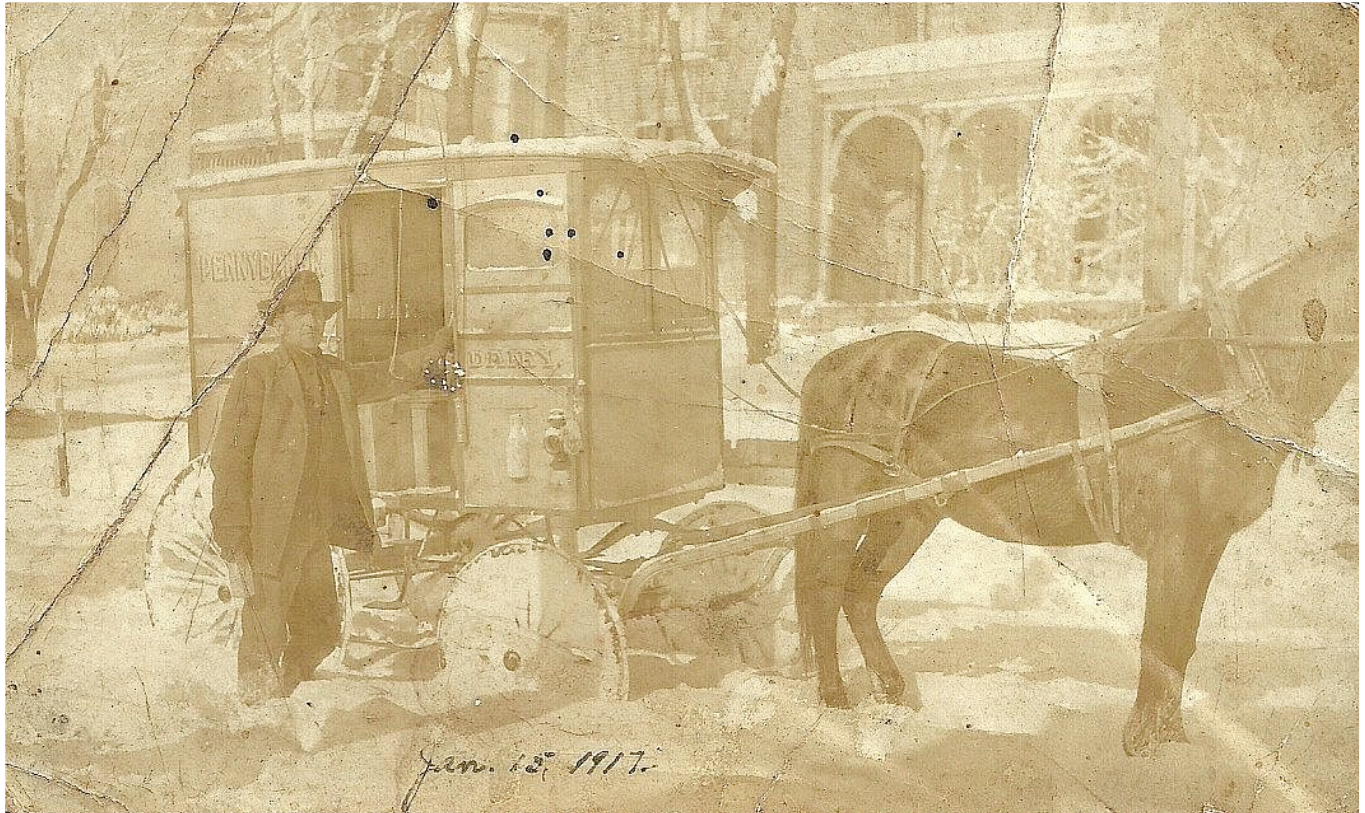
We are undergoing a little change in how we do business. Up to now, checks have been sent to me at my address to deposit in the local bank branch. Effective soon, said branch is closing. We have made other arrangements for the deposit of the dues checks and it will be done by our secretary, Marcy. You will be notified of the correct mailing address to send dues.

I 'bumped into' a nice lady who had posted on line that she had some 'Pennybaker' pictures which she wanted to get into the hands of family. She agreed your Association was a reasonable place to send them so she did at her expense. I have 13 pictures which I will happily scan and make available to anyone for identification of the person or persons in the pics. I have reason to believe it could be Pennys living in or near Carter County, KY. Nothing positive but a guess.

Don't forget to visit our website. Bill is looking into tax exempt status for the Association. You will be notified of any progress there.

Thanks to everyone and do have a great and safe summer/year.

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This is one of the photos sent to Ron Mitchell. If you can identify the location or anything about this photo, please contact Ron.



This one we know! It's 3 year old Levi, helping with the chores.

## *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."