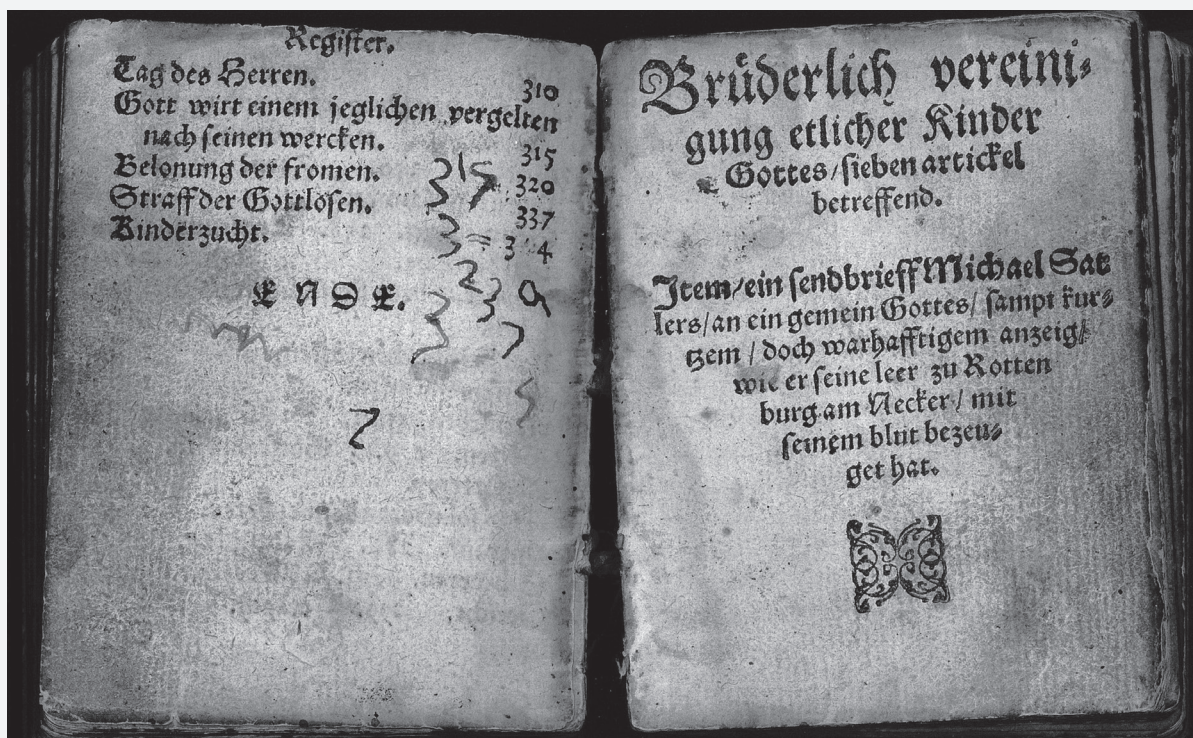


# Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage



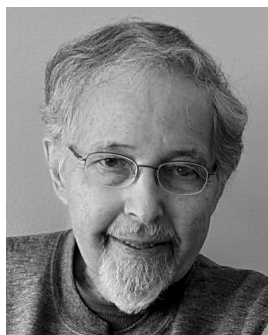
Volume 46, Number 1

January 2023



1527 Schleithem Confession

# Contributors to this Issue



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historical research program located at Goshen from 1979 to 1990. He has written, edited, or translated many works related to the Amish, Hutterites, or Mennonites, including *Colonial Germantown Mennonites*. His e-mail address is [leonardg@goshen.edu](mailto:leonardg@goshen.edu).

**Leonard Gross**, Goshen, Indiana, is executive director emeritus of the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church and is currently serving on the executive committee of the Mennonite Historical Society. He served as editor of *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* and director of the Mennonite denominational archives and



**Roger B. Meyers**

dairy farmer, along with being a school bus driver, his interest has broadened to other related families as well. Interestingly, his wife's maiden name is also Myers. He considers himself a "Myers-alogist" rather than a genealogist with his Franklin County connections.

Roger and his wife, Agnes, presently attend the Chambersburg Mennonite Church. His e-mail address is [agrofarm52@yahoo.com](mailto:agrofarm52@yahoo.com).

**Roger B. Meyers** is from Franklin County, Pennsylvania, where he graduated from the local James Buchanan High School. He became interested in his "roots" soon after his graduation but was primarily interested in the three Meyers/Myers families.

Now a semi-retired



**Philip A. Roth**

finishing the MCC PAX commitment, he returned to advanced aeronautical studies, eventually flying for Northeast Airlines (later merged with Delta Airlines). In 1962, he returned to his Pennsylvania home to assume management of the family orchards, retiring in 2012. His e-mail address is [philroth223@gmail.com](mailto:philroth223@gmail.com).

**Philip A. Roth** is native to Adams County, Pennsylvania. He was in the first group of MCC PAX men to Paraguay, South America. He has written two books: *Robert and Myrtle Unruh: A Legacy of Christian Service and Goodwill in Paraguay*, and *A PAX Adventure 1954–1956*.

At age seventeen, he

became a licensed pilot. After

became a licensed pilot. After



**Merv Stoltzfus**

Merv is passionate about healthy leadership and passing on faith to others through a wide spectrum of ministries. In his spare time, Merv enjoys his extended family and a variety of hobbies! His e-mail address is [mervs@atlanticcoastconference.net](mailto:mervs@atlanticcoastconference.net).

**Merv Stoltzfus** lives in Smoketown, Pennsylvania, with his wife, Jan. Merv is the executive conference minister with Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) of Mennonite Church USA. His responsibilities at ACC include supervision of the staff team and congregational ministries . . . equipping, encouraging, and mentoring ministries.

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# Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage



Volume 46, Number 1

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## ON THE COVER

An early edition of the so-called Schleithem Confession (ca. 1550). This booklet records common understandings reached by a group of Anabaptist leaders who gathered at Schleithem, Switzerland on February 27, 1527. The title is *Brüderlich vereinigung etlicher Kinder Gottes/ sieben artickel betreffend* ("Brotherly Union of a Number of Children of God Concerning Seven Articles"). The copy depicted is the oldest known in North America. In 1751 Lisi Yoder (YR24, later wife of Christian Beiler) of Lancaster County owned the book. Ownership inscriptions indicate it passed mother-to-daughter through several generations as it moved west from Lancaster County, to Mifflin County, Ohio, and to Indiana. The legacy of these common understandings continues among many spiritual descendants of the early Anabaptists. (Credit: Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen College)



*The mystery of why Myers family members were interred in the Montgomery Brethren in Christ Cemetery before the construction of the church continued through years of looking for clues and searching for answers.*

## **Mystery of the Montgomery Brethren in Christ Cemetery and the Posterity of Christian and Elizabeth (Dohner) Myers**

*By Roger B. Meyers*

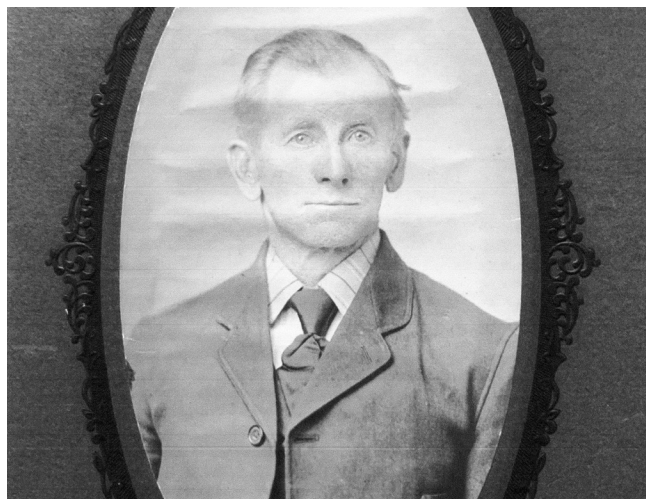
I had just collected birth and death dates from tombstones of ancestors and relatives buried in the Montgomery Brethren in Christ Cemetery and was passing the front of the adjoining church. That's when I noticed the concrete placard embedded in the front corner of the rustic red-brick wall of the century-old structure which read: "Built in 1873."

"Eighteen seventy-three," I mused. "That was right after the Civil War." I tried to recollect the possible thoughts my nonresistant kinfolk, who were now interred in this cemetery, may have had concerning the war. After all, the Battle at Gettysburg had taken place no further than fifty miles from this hallowed spot located at the mid-southern end of Franklin County, Pennsylvania, in Montgomery Township and not far from the Maryland border.

As I drove out of the parking lot onto the back-country road which bordered the church complex, it suddenly occurred to me that I may have recorded some death dates which predated the construction year of the church. I quickly glanced at the papers on my clipboard to verify that I had, indeed, recorded any such date prior to 1873. Sure enough, my great-great-grandfather Christian Myers died March 19, 1843, and his wife, Elizabeth (Dohner), died eight months earlier on July 17, 1842. Upon my arrival at home, I immediately checked all my information and discovered there were six other members of this Myers family who had been interred in this cemetery before the meetinghouse had been built. The questions that came to mind were: How did it come about that this family had buried their loved ones at this location thirty years before the church was constructed? Had they owned

this property? Did the cemetery have a name prior to the construction of the church? What influenced this congregation to build their meetinghouse beside an existing cemetery? What about the fact that Christian and Elizabeth had owned a farm in Washington County, Maryland? The fact that census records indicated Christian Myers had children born in Maryland also added to the mystery. I could not find any deed for Christian Myers owning land in Franklin County, Pennsylvania. I was mystified. And it would take me several years to solve this puzzle.

My first attempt at solving this mystery was to locate deeds for the previous owners of the property from which the Montgomery Church had been taken. It took me a while to find a deed for the church property, as the Grantee Index at the Franklin County Courthouse recorded the congregational names as the River Breth-



**Christian L. Myers (C93)** (Credit: Glen Kaye)





The grave markers on the left were in the old section, and the grave markers on the right were in the new section. The gap between the two rows is wider than the other spaces between rows in the cemetery. This gap is where the original fence row once stood. The Montgomery Brethren in Christ Church is further to the right but not shown in this photo taken in October 2022.

ren Congregation of Montgomery. (River Brethren was the former name of the Brethren in Christ.) From this deed, I learned the property was purchased in 1872 from a Jacob Young. Tracing deeds further back to 1842 and 1843, respectively, I could not find any filed claim that the property had belonged to the Myers family or any family that would have been connected to Christian or Elizabeth. In fact, I was coming across names that did not identify with the River Brethren (Brethren in Christ), nor did the names fit with the Brethren and Mennonite congregations of this area. Did Christian Myers, or some other family member, ask a private landowner if they could bury a loved one on his land simply because they liked the location? I did not think this was a possibility, and yet, I was beginning to wonder. And so . . . the mystery remained.

Years later, I was explaining this perplexing mystery to one of my dad's older brothers who lived within three miles of this cemetery. My uncle, who was quite knowledgeable about some of the church's past history, informed me that the cemetery itself came from two adjoining farms. He told me that if I stood out on the road and looked across the cemetery, I would see a line fence between two farms coming down and meeting the cemetery on the far side. At one time, that line fence had continued to the road, dividing the cemetery in two. My uncle explained that the old section of the cemetery, where the Christian Myers family is buried, came from one farm, and the new section of the cemetery along with the church property came from the neighboring farm. At some point, the old section was annexed to the church property, and today it appears as though it had

always been a part of the burial site for this church. I have since talked with a church trustee about this matter only to learn he, too, was not aware the cemetery was actually two separate, though side-by-side, burial sites merged together as one.

A visit to the cemetery proved what my uncle had said was true. However, the line fence between these two farms has since been removed, and all that is to be seen are the edges of two fields coming together. As I looked across the field that bordered the old section of the cemetery, I observed the field bordering the residential lawn of a dairy farm in the distance. I knew the owner and his wife as both were in my high school graduating class. I also knew the previous owner because his wife was a cousin to my mother-in-law. When I had a chance, I went to the courthouse to look at former deeds to this farm. Again, I came up short-handed. There simply was no family member owning this property at the time of Christian and Elizabeth's deaths, and I remained puzzled.

Sometime afterwards, I met my classmate who owned the farm and explained to him the mystery I had encountered of my ancestors being buried on his property which now belonged to the neighboring church. He quickly informed me that that field was not part of his farm. Assuring me that I was not the first person to think that it was because of its location against his lawn, he explained that the field was part of another neighboring farm which was considered, at that time, the estate of a well-known landowner in the community. That explained all my dead ends. I would have to go back to the local courthouse and search for deeds on the neighboring estate.

Montgomery Brethren in Christ Cemetery with the west side of the church as it appeared in 2022. The placard inscribed with "Built in 1873" is now covered by an addition that was built onto the front of the church on the right side of the photo.



Another trip to the courthouse brought me in contact with a deed bearing the name of the owner of this estate. With enthusiasm, I began tracing ownerships to the years of Christian's and Elizabeth's deaths, but alas, again I got nowhere. As before, I came up with names that simply did not fit in with this family. Just how my ancestors ever became buried in this cemetery was, indeed, a mystery. I was about to give up finding out. In fact, I actually did give up and made no more attempts to solve this mystery.

Several years later, I was fortunate to be in the company of some older men when one of the visitors mentioned the name of a former landowner who had owned a couple farms in the Montgomery Township community. I recognized the name as the one whose estate I had traced on former deeds. This man had owned more than one farm. Now I understood why I had not found any of my ancestors. I was tracing deeds on the wrong property, unaware that this individual had owned more than one farm. I would need to make another trip to the local courthouse. But, before that happened, a stroke of good fortune came my way.

During the years from 1852 to 1855, Pennsylvania kept a record of deaths and marriages which had taken place within the boundaries of the state. Each county recorded these vital statistics at their own local courthouse and also sent the information to the archives at Harrisburg, the capital of Pennsylvania. This recordkeeping was terminated in 1856 and was not revived again until the 1890s. During the Civil War, when Chambersburg, the county-seat

of Franklin County, was burned by the Confederate soldiers, the part of the courthouse containing these vital records was also destroyed, but my good fortune came from another source.

I was searching through census records at Coyle Free Library in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, and came across some books pertaining to local history. I discovered a three-pronged portfolio highlighting deaths and marriages in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, from 1852 through 1855. Curious, I pulled this book off the shelf to study its contents. Apparently, some thoughtful person had gone to the state archives, gathered information pertaining to Franklin County over that four-year period, and produced a booklet preserving those vital records for public use.

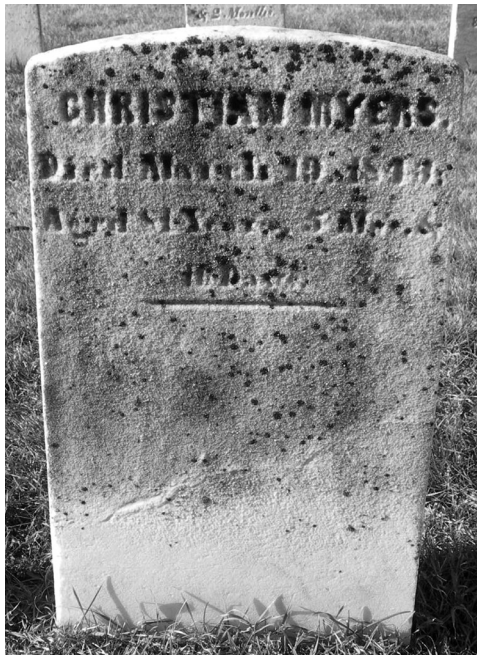
As I studied the pages of this portfolio, I came across the name of Elizabeth Myers in the "Deaths" section. I immediately recognized her as an unmarried daughter of Christian and Elizabeth, being identified as having died in Montgomery Township in July 27, 1853. But the place given as to where she had been interred was the exciting part. Her burial was simply given as: "at John Nighswanders."<sup>1</sup> This daughter is the only member of the Myers family that was interred in this cemetery during that four-year period. We have no other documentation proclaiming a name for this former burial plot.

I have visited this cemetery a few more times since that day when I first discovered the cemetery existed

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1. Franklin County Vital Records, Library ID# R 974.8 Entry #109.



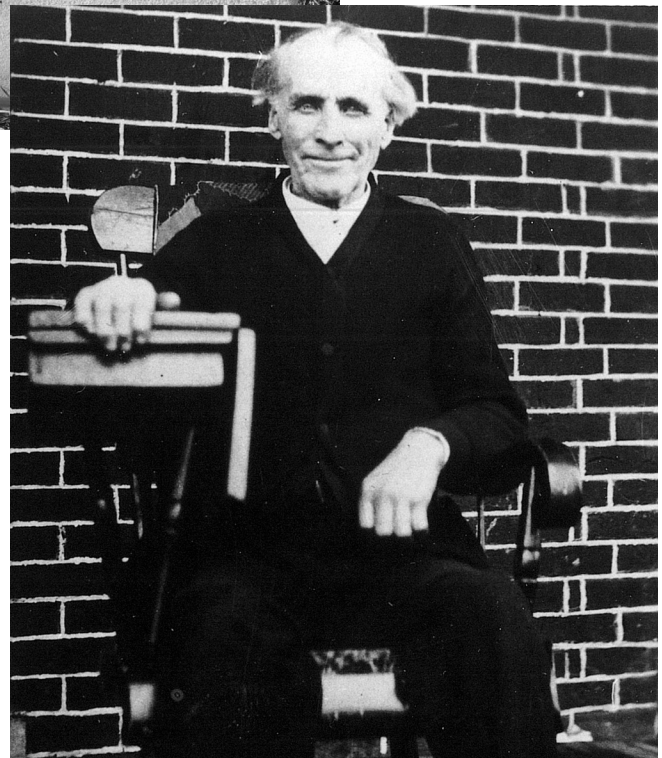


**Left: Christian Myers**  
(Credit: Montgomery Brethren in Christ Church)

**Right: Elizabeth Dohner Myers** (Credit: Montgomery Brethren in Christ Church)

before the church was built. I have also observed a few grave markers which appear to be older than the ones marking the final resting spots of Christian and Elizabeth Myers. With careful study, one can see the name "Nighswander" on these early monuments, which suggests that a family by that name may have owned the land at the time these clan members had been laid to rest. One such stone, if my reading of the engraving is accurate, gives the year of death for "Marie Wife of John Nighswander" as 1823. If that is factual, then the cemetery existed fifty years before the church was constructed.

My next trip to the courthouse was my final trip in solving this mystery. Yes, there was a John Nighswander who owned property in Montgomery Township which was sold on April 14, 1831, to Christian Sheller.<sup>2</sup> Ten years later, Christian Sheller sold this property to Benjamin Myers on April 1, 1841.<sup>3</sup> Benjamin Myers was the youngest son of Christian and Elizabeth Myers and was in full ownership of this farm when his parents died in 1842 and 1843. Apparently, this burial site, which is in the old section of the present-day Montgomery Brethren in Christ Cemetery, had been started by the Nighswander (Nisewander/Niswander) family and, having passed through the hands of the Sheller family, was used later by the Myers family. As the Myers family affiliated with this River Brethren/Brethren in Christ congregation, this "old section" eventually came in



**Benjamin Myers (C49).** Photo probably taken at his home during the early 1900s.

ownership of the present-day Montgomery Brethren in Christ Church. I have also learned that Benjamin Myers was elected to the ministry for this congregation and remained so until his death in 1894.

After many years of looking for clues and searching for answers as to how members of this Myers family became interred in this cemetery before the construction of the church, the mystery was finally solved.

Christian Myers (1761–1843) was the son of Christian Meyer/Myers who was born ca. 1720 and died March 13, 1798, and Anna (last name unknown and

2. Franklin County Deed 16-37.  
3. Franklin County Deed 18-417.



birth time unknown) who died March 22, 1798. Both died in Manheim Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The elder Christian Meyer was the son of immigrant Martin Meyer (ca. 1695–deceased by 1752) who sailed to America on the pink ship *Plaisance*,<sup>4</sup> landing at the port of Philadelphia and being qualified on September 21, 1732.

Elizabeth (Dohner) Myers (1765–1842) was the daughter of Abraham Dohner (1732–1789) and Magdalena Landis (ca. 1744–1798). Magdalena was the daughter of Mennonite preacher Henry Landis (ca. 1700–1760) of Hammer Creek, Warwick Township, Lancaster County, and his first wife, Veronica Groff (ca. 1710–ca. 1752/53). She was the daughter of Hans Groff.

The following is a brief outline of the Christian and Elizabeth Myers family, consisting of their nine children, fifty-five grandchildren, and a number of great-grandchildren. There is no question that more great-grandchildren exist than are listed, as we have not made the effort to locate all of Christian's grandchildren's children. An asterisk after the identification number indicates that individual or couple is buried in the Montgomery Brethren in Christ Cemetery.

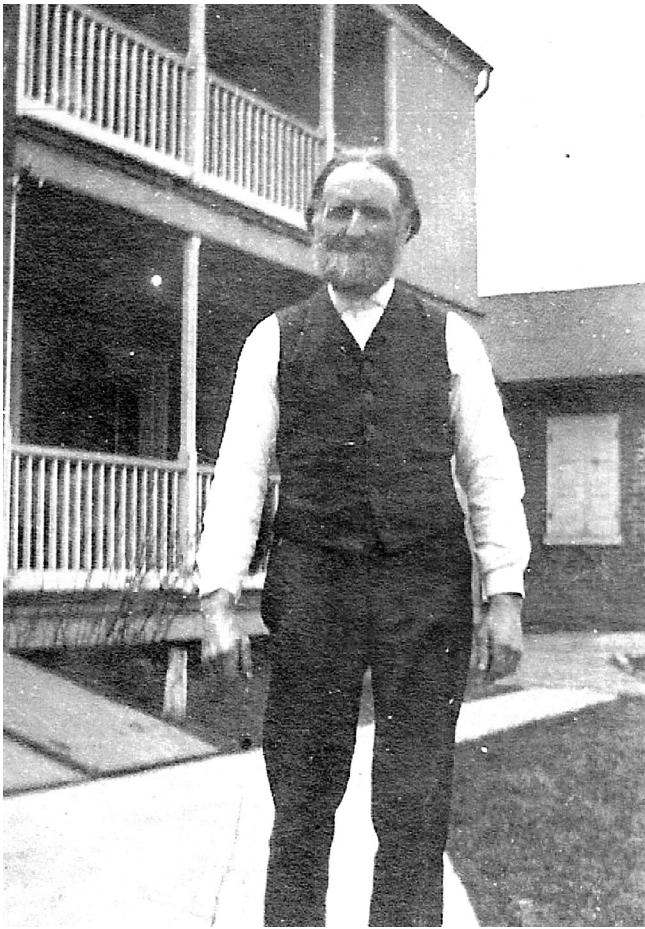
- C\*** Christian Myers, Oct. 4, 1761–Mar. 19, 1843  
m. Elizabeth Dohner, Aug. 27, 1765–July 17, 1842
- C1\*** Nancy Myers, Jan. 22, 1789–Oct. 11, 1868  
m. John Yeider, Nov. 28, 1764–Feb. 17, 1848
- C2\*** Elizabeth Myers, Sept. 4, 1790–July 27, 1853; single
- C3\*** Magdalena Myers, Feb. 2, 1796–Oct. 16, 1860; single
- C4\*** John D. Myers, Nov. 23, 1797–Apr. 20, 1871  
m. Rebecca Meyers, Oct. 8, 1803–Apr. 20, 1875
- C41\*** Mary Myers, Feb. 13, 1823–Feb. 15, 1903  
m. John Good, Sept. 30, 1823–July 7, 1901
- C411** Elizabeth Good  
m. \_\_\_\_\_ Miller
- C412** Christian M. Good, Mar. 22, 1849–Nov. 8, 1919  
m. Elizabeth Shaffner, Dec. 20, 1849–Apr. 5, 1925
- C413** Susan B. Good  
m. Jeremiah Witter
- C414\*** Anna Mary Good, May 16, 1858–May 12, 1942<sup>5</sup>  
m. Abraham Plum, Aug. 17, 1850–Mar. 29, 1924<sup>6</sup>
- C42\*** Elizabeth Myers, Aug. 26, 1824–Dec. 7, 1892; single
- C43\*** Hannah Myers, Dec. 18, 1825–Feb. 6, 1909  
m. Jacob Shaffer, d. Jan. 6, 1896
- C431** Emeline Emma Shaffer, July 7, 1857–Dec. 1949  
m. Robert Osbaugh

- C432** Amanda Shaffer, 1864–Mar. 4, 1932; bu. Cedar Hill Cem., Franklin Co., Pa.<sup>7</sup>  
m. Fisher Garner
- C433\*** David Shaffer, Jan. 29, 1866–July 17, 1948<sup>8</sup>  
m. Mary E. Shaffer
- C434** Eliza J. Shaffer  
m. Benjamin Grove
- C435** Rebecca Shaffer  
m. Lincoln Dulabaum
- C436** Lula Shaffer, Apr. 28, 1869–Oct. 15, 1945  
m. \_\_\_\_\_ Wilkes
- C44\*** Samuel M. Myers, Aug. 17, 1827–June 28, 1904  
m. Eliza Lindsay, Feb. 9, 1835–Sept. 16, 1915
- C441\*** Alice Myers, Jan. 31, 1860–May 6, 1901  
m. Joseph C. Hoffman, Nov. 10, 1858–Jan. 18, 1927
- C442** Rebecca Elizabeth Myers
- C443** Charles Franklin Myers
- C444** Jonathan Scott Myers  
m. Frances Martin
- C445** Maude Myers, Oct. 27, 1868–Aug. 14, 1947  
m. Daniel M. Meckley, Sept. 27, 1862–Sept. 17, 1922
- C446** Robert Boyd Myers
- C45\*** John D. Myers Jr., July 30, 1829–Nov. 5, 1904  
m. Anna Stoner, May 24, 1838–Sept. 30, 1915; no children
- C46** Rebecca Myers, Feb. 5, 1831–June 22, 1908  
m. Peter Good, Jan. 23, 1837–Feb. 20, 1910
- C461** John Milton Good, Nov. 26, 1859–Mar. 9, 1946  
m. Clara A. Deemy, Feb. 5, 1865–Nov. 21, 1937
- C462** Samuel M. Good, Aug. 26, 1861–Mar. 9, 1944  
m. Katie L. Hawbaker, Mar. 5, 1867–Sept. 8, 1944
- C463** Susan Amanda Good
- C464** Ida Katherine Good
- C465** Anna Rebecca Good, Jan. 6, 1869–Mar. 5, 1959  
m. William Deemy, Apr. 10, 1863–Sept. 7, 1956
- C466** Noah Good, Apr. 11, 1875–May 6, 1953  
m. Bertha Kilgore
- C47\*** Daniel Myers, Feb. 7, 1833–Dec. 16, 1891  
m. Martha Stoner, June 28, 1839–May 4, 1908
- C471** John S. Myers, Aug. 27, 1859–Jan. 23, 1929  
m. Mary G. Kriner, Sept. 19, 1864–Nov. 19, 1953
- C472** Andrew Myers
- C473** Anna E. Myers
- C474** Susan Myers
- C475** Harry Newton Myers, Jan. 26, 1870–Mar. 2, 1947; bu. Fairview Cem., Mercersburg<sup>9</sup>  
m. Ivey Brubaker
- C476** Nancy Myers
- C477** Charles Myers, Aug. 25, 1875–Sept. 13, 1938;  
bu. Fairview Cem., Mercersburg<sup>10</sup>  
m. Grace \_\_\_\_\_
- C478** Margaret Myers, Sept. 5, 1877–Jan. 6, 1967;  
bu. Stenger Hill Cem.,<sup>11</sup> Fort Loudon  
m. Snively B. Shelly

4. A pink (from Dutch *pinke*, meaning pinched) was a small sailing vessel with a sharply narrowed stern, often used for short-range missions in protected areas such as channels. In the 1730s, out of desperation, pinks were sometimes used for transatlantic voyages.

5. Pennsylvania death cert. 45558.  
6. Pennsylvania death cert. 26846.

7. Pennsylvania death cert. 26955.  
8. Pennsylvania death cert. 61645.  
9. Pennsylvania death cert. 23238.  
10. Pennsylvania death cert. 80199.  
11. Pennsylvania death cert. 4591.



**Jacob Myers (C493)** The photo was taken at his home in the 1930s. Jacob was elected to the ministry for the Montgomery Brethren in Christ congregation in 1904. He was bishop from 1913 to 1941. He was a grandnephew of minister Benjamin Myers (C9). Jacob's brother Ambrose Myers (C496) was also a minister at Montgomery from 1909 until his death in 1962.



**Minnie (Myers) Meyers (C494)** is the grandmother of the writer. The photo was taken at a local studio possibly on her wedding day, December 1, 1892.

**C479 Catherine Myers**, Feb. 17, 1879–Dec. 25, 1935  
m. Edward P. Crider, Oct. 7, 1876–Feb. 16, 1963

**C47a unknown**

**C48 Lydia Myers**  
m. \_\_\_\_\_ Hoffman

**C49\* Benjamin Myers**, Nov. 10, 1837–Jan. 4, 1921  
m.(1) Sarah Miller, Jan. 27, 1840–Oct. 28, 1872  
m.(2) Catherine Whisler, Apr. 14, 1844–Sept. 11, 1880

**C491\* David Emmert Myers**, Sept. 1, 1863–Aug. 11, 1864

**C492\* Annie Rebecca Myers**, Nov. 7, 1864–Jan. 10, 1942  
m. J. Franklin Garling, Sept. 27, 1868–May 4, 1941

**C493\* Jacob Miller Myers**, Feb. 18, 1867–July 11, 1943  
m.(1) Annie E. Sollenberger, Mar. 30, 1866–Jan. 29, 1916  
m.(2) Martha E. Sollenberger, Jan. 2, 1862–June 24, 1946

**C494 Minnie Myers**, Mar. 28, 1869–Feb. 5, 1939  
m. Samuel G. Meyers, Apr. 8, 1868–Apr. 3, 1939; the writer's grandparents

**C495\* Ida Sarah Myers**, Dec. 19, 1870–Dec. 16, 1951  
m. Alvin B. Young, Dec. 6, 1874–Feb. 12, 1947

**C496\* Ambrose Myers**, Apr. 4, 1875–Mar. 30, 1962  
m. Amelia Martin, Mar. 29, 1871–Feb. 20, 1955

**C497\* Laura Myers**, Nov. 17, 1876–Apr. 26, 1962  
m. Harvey B. Leshner, Apr. 1, 1877–Mar. 2, 1939

**C498\* Susan Myers**, July 2, 1878–Jan. 28, 1955  
m. John Siegrist Gayman, May 20, 1886–Feb. 1, 1960

**C4a Christian Myers**, Oct. 10, 1839–Mar. 26, 1903  
m. Sarah Wenger, 1845–Apr. 17, 1901  
**C4a1 Anna Myers**, Oct. 28, 1866–Dec. 26, 1933; bu. Spring Hill Cem.,<sup>12</sup> Shippensburg  
m. Hays Etter

**C4a2 Sarah Myers**, Mar. 20, 1868–Mar. 5, 1878

**C4a3 Jeremiah W. Myers**, July 14, 1869–Apr. 3, 1936  
m. Leah Lehman, Mar. 14, 1870–June 25, 1909

12. Pennsylvania death cert. 108243.





Sisters Mary Myers Ausherman (C77) and Magdalena Myers Lutz (C71) both lived near Abilene, Kansas, where this photo was taken in the early 1900s. Mary is seated on the left and Magdalena on the right. (Credit: Carl Nissley)

- C4a4\*** Rebecca Myers, Nov. 12, 1870–Dec. 14, 1876  
**C4a5** Mary Myers, May 25, 1872–Mar. 28, 1907  
 m. Jacob Lehman, Mar. 10, 1872–Nov. 11, 1944  
**C4a6** Medessa Myers, 1874–1933  
 m. Amos O. Musser, Dec. 28, 1868–Mar. 8, 1944; Medessa was Amos’s second wife.  
**C4b\*** Suzanna Myers, Jan. 14, 1842–Feb. 13, 1926  
 m. Samuel Beck  
**C4c\*** Henry Myers, Feb. 24, 1846–June 11, 1917  
 m. Lydia Myers (same as C8a), June 29, 1847–Nov. 14, 1910; Henry and Lydia were first cousins.  
**C4c1\*** D. Emmert Myers (same as C8a1), July 7, 1870–Nov. 7, 1938; single  
**C4c2\*** Harry C. Myers (same as C8a2), May 4, 1871–May 17, 1919; single  
**C4c3** Jesse Myers (same as C8a3), July 31, 1876–Feb. 1, 1955  
 m. Nancy A. Boppe, Dec. 12, 1874–June 6, 1956  
**C4c4\*** Annie Myers (same as C8a4), Dec. 21, 1884–Apr. 7, 1941<sup>13</sup>  
 m. George Daley  
**C5\*** Susan Myers, Nov. 25, 1799–Apr. 3, 1874  
 m. Henry Stoner, Feb. 11, 1795–Aug. 3, 1862  
**C51** David Stoner, 1824–Mar. 24, 1901  
 m. Barbara Myers, Sept. 11, 1822–Jan. 22, 1894  
**C52** Jacob Stoner, Mar. 7, 1825–Apr. 8, 1893  
 m. Anna Brechbill, Sept. 17, 1828–Dec. 18, 1900  
**C53** Christian M. Stoner, Dec. 23, 1826–Nov. 18, 1889  
 m. Nancy Young, Dec. 22, 1823–Sept. 12, 1887  
**C54** Elizabeth Stoner, 1829–May 23, 1864  
 m. David Bender, Mar. 8, 1829–Mar. 9, 1907  
**C55** Henry M. Stoner, (twin) Jan. 17, 1830–Feb. 27, 1865; single  
**C56** Benjamin Stoner, (twin) b. Jan. 17, 1830; no further information  
**C57** Nancy Stoner, 1833–June 13, 1875  
 m. David Bender, Mar. 8, 1829–Mar. 9, 1907, widower of Nancy’s sister Elizabeth  
**C58** Mary Stoner, d. Oct. 10, 1881  
 m. \_\_\_\_\_ Stumbaugh  
**C59** John M. Stoner, Nov. 1839–Apr. 3, 1896  
 m.(1) Lena Carbaugh  
 m.(2) Elizabeth Rowe  
**C5a\*** Joseph Stoner, Dec. 13, 1841–Apr. 22, 1924  
 m. Mariah Carbaugh, Nov. 2, 1849–Sept. 4, 1921  
**C6\*** David Myers, May 8, 1802–Mar. 11, 1868  
 m. Anna Stoner, d. 1876  
**C61\*** Elizabeth Myers, Dec. 16, 1836–Nov. 13, 1907; single  
**C62\*** Benjamin S. Myers, Apr. 22, 1840–Sept. 30, 1918; single  
**C63\*** Anna Myers, Nov. 5, 1846–Feb. 5, 1934; single<sup>14</sup>  
**C7\*** Mary Myers, Mar. 24, 1805–July 16, 1885  
 m. Martin Myers, Jan. 9, 1799–June 23, 1870; Mary and Martin were first cousins. Martin’s father was a brother to Mary’s father.  
**C71** Magdalena Myers, Mar. 5, 1825–Nov. 3, 1915  
 m. John Lutz, Nov. 30, 1824–June 22, 1911  
**C711** John Lutz Jr., Aug. 4, 1853–1925  
 m. Margaret Knoufe, 1857–1945  
**C712** Lanie Lena Lutz, Sept. 13, 1854–Apr. 16, 1920  
 m. Henry Reedy, Apr. 27, 1846–1918  
**C713** Martin Lutz, Nov. 10, 1855–1914, Whiteside Co., Ill.  
 m. Salome “Annie” Jones, Mar. 2, 1864–1955  
**C714** Henry Lutz, Mar. 1, 1858–Oct. 21, 1887  
 m. Ella Amanda Hunsberger, Mar. 5, 1867–Aug. 22, 1962, bu. Chilliwack Cem., B.C., Canada<sup>15</sup>  
**C715** Mary Lutz, Apr. 2, 1861–Oct. 26, 1950, bu. Venice Cem., Washington Co.<sup>16</sup>  
 m. Albert Douglas Clayton, June 13, 1851–Nov. 14, 1930

13. Pennsylvania death cert. 37791.

14. Pennsylvania death cert. 17180.  
 15. Married Ward M. White; Amanda is buried with him in Chilliwack Cem., B.C., Canada.

16. Pennsylvania death cert. 87480; also called Mattie in some records.



- C716 David Lutz**, b. June 14, 1864–Feb. 26, 1954<sup>17</sup>  
m. Sadie R. Jensen, Mar. 13, 1871–Oct. 24, 1950
- C717 Fannie Lutz**, June 6, 1867–Sept. 23, 1943  
m. Samuel Campbell, Dec. 31, 1862–Oct. 27, 1949
- C718 Samuel Lutz**, July 8, 1870–Sept. 26, 1957  
m. Anna Bliss, Mar. 17, 1872–Sept. 24, 1952
- C719 Jacob Lutz**, Mar. 23, 1873–Feb. 21, 1938  
m. Rebecca Wechtenhiser, Feb. 18, 1879–Nov. 21, 1934
- C72 Anna Myers**, believed to have died in infancy
- C73\* Elizabeth Myers**, Jan. 30, 1830–Apr. 6, 1896  
m. John Magsam, Dec. 19, 1833–July 30, 1913
- C731\* Mary A. Magsam**, Mar. 28, 1856–Jan. 1, 1929; single
- C732\* Melinda Magsam**, Oct. 16, 1857–Oct. 26, 1876
- C733\* Susan Magsam**, Mar. 6, 1859–Nov. 28, 1929  
m. Jacob Jury, June 3, 1866–Oct. 14, 1948
- C734 Rebecca Magsam**, Jan. 28, 1861–Oct. 6, 1931;  
bu. Browns Mill, Franklin Co.<sup>18</sup>  
m. David Miller, Mar. 22, 1857–Aug. 10, 1934
- C735 Barbara Magsam**, June 12, 1863–Mar. 17, 1932  
m. James R. Sites, Apr. 5, 1856–Sept. 28, 1934
- C736 Katie Magsam**, Mar. 21, 1868–May 23, 1955  
m. Alfred M. Gayman, Apr. 19, 1854–Mar. 21, 1926
- C737 David Magsam**, 1873–Aug. 1, 1931  
m. Martha Florence Kuhn, Nov. 16, 1879–June 27, 1977
- C74\* Susan Myers**, Feb. 5, 1832–Sept. 13, 1890; single
- C75\* Frances “Fannie” Myers**, Mar. 31, 1834–Oct. 22, 1905  
m. Charles Wilson, Apr. 24, 1827–Jan. 30, 1903
- C751 Martin M. Wilson**, Apr. 4, 1860–Oct. 19, 1946  
m. Lucinda Weigle, July 5, 1865–Mar. 28, 1922
- C752 Samuel S. Wilson**, July 24, 1861–June 4, 1939<sup>19</sup>  
m. Millie Jane Sheeley, May 10, 1860–Mar. 31, 1942
- C753 Jeremiah Wilson**, Feb. 11, 1865–July 6, 1939,  
bu. Upton Church of the Brethren Cem., Franklin Co.<sup>20</sup>  
m. Laura Garling, 1872–1938
- C754 Mary A. Wilson**, Apr. 16, 1866–July 10, 1937<sup>21</sup>  
m. Edward Martin, 1873–Jan. 22, 1935
- C755\* Rebecca Wilson**, Feb. 16, 1868–Aug. 12, 1941, single
- C756 Charles H. Wilson**, ca. 1870
- C757 James Wilson**, ca. 1872
- C758 Thomas Wilson**, ca. 1875
- C76\* John M. Myers**, Mar. 27, 1836–Jan. 24, 1908  
m. Maria Hawbaker, June 12, 1837–Dec. 18, 1889
- C761 Emma Susan Myers**, Oct. 12, 1863–Sept. 2, 1947  
m. Emanuel S. Hoffman, Mar. 8, 1863–Oct. 18, 1915

A letter dated June 8, 1953, written by David Lutz (C716) and sent to his brother Samuel Lutz (C718), states that “Ike, our new President, will sure have his hands full. I suppose you know that Ike’s grandfather, the preacher, and our mother were cousins. When we first came to Kansas from Illinois in 1879, I stayed at Eisenhowers one whole week and Ike’s father, David Eisenhower, was my bed mate. We often heard old Jacob Eisenhower preach at Belle Springs, ten miles south of Abilene for the River Brethren.”



Seated in the front row left to right are Ida Myers (C495) and Minnie Myers (C494). Standing in the back left to right are Clara Myers (C764) and a family friend Florence Witter. Photo was taken at a local studio about 1890.

17. Dates from California death index. I have not been able to confirm that Magdalena (Myers) Lutz and Jacob Eisenhower were first cousins. Perhaps their relation was more distant or they were just close friends.

18. Pennsylvania death cert. 95894.

19. Pennsylvania death cert. 56504.

20. Pennsylvania death cert. 64940.

21. *Illinois Deaths and Stillbirths Index, 1916–1947*.

- C762\*** **Albert C. Myers**, July 22, 1865–Dec. 2, 1946  
m.(1) Susanna Heisey, Dec. 15, 1864–June 4, 1907  
m.(2) Emma Elizabeth Byers, Dec. 13, 1863–Aug. 2, 1950
- C763** **Mary E. Myers**, Sept. 14, 1867–Sept. 12, 1947  
m. Levi S. Martin, Feb. 7, 1868–Dec. 21, 1933
- C764** **Clara E. Myers**, Nov. 11, 1869–Oct. 12, 1947  
m. James McPherson Hughs, 1875–Feb. 28, 1929
- C765** **Daniel M. Myers**, Dec. 8, 1871–Apr. 29, 1929  
m. Beulah B. Lichty, May 23, 1884–May 11, 1958
- C766** **Ida C. Myers**, Apr. 10, 1874–Mar. 7, 1963  
m. Martin West Rines, Nov. 13, 1877–Dec. 23, 1948
- C77** **Mary Myers**, Dec. 21, 1837–Feb. 16, 1923<sup>22</sup>  
m. William Ausherman, Mar. 24, 1817–Sept. 11, 1894; Mary was William’s second wife; three children
- C771** **Meta Susan Ausherman**, Dec. 21, 1871–Oct. 12, 1963  
m.(1) Thomas S. Urie, Jan. 5, 1847–July 28, 1927  
m.(2) Henry Walter Davidson, May 8, 1873–Mar. 27, 1966
- C772** **Martin Ausherman**, June 18, 1873–Jan. 20, 1939  
m. Mary Baird, May 28, 1876–July 12, 1936
- C773** **Annie Elizabeth Ausherman**, Sept. 12, 1875–1958  
m. Charles Coleman, Feb. 10, 1869–Feb. 15, 1929
- C78\*** **Catherine Myers**, Apr. 4, 1840–Apr. 25, 1909  
m. John Clopper, June 27, 1834–Mar. 18, 1922
- C781** **Mary Catherine Clopper**, July 25, 1864–July 23, 1939  
m. William Grumbine, Apr. 11, 1862–Mar. 23, 1929
- C782** **Dora Florence Clopper**, Feb. 24, 1866–May 15, 1931  
m. George Perrott, Sept. 14, 1866–Mar. 29, 1922
- C783** **Ellen E. Clopper**, Mar. 30, 1868–Aug. 20, 1961
- C784** **Eliza Jane Clopper**, Oct. 29, 1870–Aug. 27, 1950  
m. John W. Yeates, 1859–Apr. 15, 1949
- C785** **Jacob Martin Clopper**, July 26, 1875–July 24, 1940<sup>23</sup>  
m. Maggie Edna Hollinger, Mar. 3, 1877–Apr. 4, 1946
- C79\*** **Barbara Myers**, Nov. 2, 1843–Oct. 15, 1890; single
- C7a\*** **Rebecca Myers**, Oct. 5, 1846–June 10, 1870; single
- C8\*** **Christian D. Myers**, Jan. 24, 1807–July 17, 1888  
m. Frances “Fanny” Long, Jan. 19, 1811–Dec. 1, 1889
- C81** **Samuel Myers**
- C82** **Anna Myers**, June 20, 1828–Nov. 25, 1863  
m. Daniel Brubaker, Nov. 23, 1825–Mar. 12, 1906<sup>24</sup>
- C83** **Elizabeth Myers**, Aug. 23, 1832–Dec. 5, 1910<sup>25</sup>  
m. Jacob Shaffner, July 4, 1838–Jan. 25, 1909
- C84\*** **Mary Myers**, Feb. 20, 1834–Feb. 2, 1886  
m. Thomas Graham, July 14, 1814–Aug. 20, 1892
- C841** **Harry Graham**
- C842** **George Graham**
- C843** **Benjamin Graham**
- C844** **Jane Graham**
- C845** **Cyrus Graham**
- C846** **Ellie Graham**
- C85** **Franny Myers**, Sept. 15, 1837–Aug. 3, 1863  
m. Jacob Shaffner
- C86\*** **Sarah Myers**, Oct. 7, 1839–Jan. 4, 1884  
m. George Washington Garling, Apr. 11, 1841–Sept. 1, 1904
- C861** **John McClellan Garling**, Sept. 18, 1864–Oct. 2, 1922
- C862\*** **Christian Dohner Garling**, Jan. 5, 1865–Dec. 24, 1865
- C863\*** **Westannie Garling**, Aug. 24, 1866–Sept. 21, 1867
- C864** **George Washington Garling Jr.**, Feb. 22, 1868–Mar. 6, 1954
- C865** **Nathan Emmert Garling**, b. Dec. 16, 1869
- C866\*** **Martha Elizabeth Garling**, Jan. 13, 1871–Sept. 30, 1871
- C867** **Samuel Scott Garling**, June 27, 1872–Jan. 23, 1946<sup>26</sup>  
m. Katie Hoover, 1882–1946
- C868** **Sarah Myrtle Garling**, b. Aug. 28, 1874
- C869** **Calvin Centennial Garling**, Aug. 4, 1876–Oct. 22, 1967; single<sup>27</sup>
- C87\*** **Benjamin L. Myers**, Feb. 20, 1841–Apr. 3, 1907  
m. Rebecca Grove, Apr. 18, 1842–Mar. 12, 1907
- C871\*** **Minnie Grove Myers**, Sept. 16, 1871–1886
- C872\*** **Fannie Long Myers**, 1873–1895
- C873\*** **Annie Myers**, Sept. 6, 1877–July 11, 1933  
m. David Shaffer
- C874** **Martha B. Myers**, Mar. 22, 1878–Mar. 30, 1976<sup>28</sup>  
m.(1) William J. Strock, July 1, 1867–Apr. 19, 1928  
m.(2) Ralph Eli Hackman, June 27, 1872–Nov. 25, 1962
- C875** **Hettie May Myers**, Nov. 28, 1881–July 7, 1953  
m. Grover C. Martin, May 25, 1885–July 3, 1963
- C876** **Margie Viola Myers**, Aug. 15, 1885–Nov. 1, 1960  
m. Amos Bender, Oct. 19, 1879–Mar. 31, 1948
- C88** **Christian Myers**, ca. 1844–bef. 1870
- C89** **John G. Myers**, ca. 1846–bef. 1880
- C8a\*** **Lydia Myers**, June 29, 1847–Nov. 14, 1910  
m. Henry Myers (same as C4c), Feb. 24, 1846–June 11, 1917; Lydia and Henry were first cousins
- C8a1\*** **D. Emmert Myers** (same as C4c1), July 7, 1870–Nov. 7, 1938; single
- C8a2\*** **Harry C. Myers** (same as C4c2), May 4, 1871–May 17, 1919; single

22. Gravestone says Maria.

23. Pennsylvania death cert. 64908.

24. Pennsylvania death cert. 23384.

25. Pennsylvania death cert. 122179.

26. Pennsylvania death cert. 3619.

27. Pennsylvania death cert. 097206-67.

28. *The News Chronicle*, Shippensburg, PA (April 2, 1976): 3. Also death certificates of her husbands.

- C8a3\*** Jesse Myers (same as C4c3), July 31, 1876–Feb. 1, 1955  
m. Nancy A. Boppe, Dec. 12, 1874–June 6, 1956
- C8a4\*** Annie Myers (same as C4c4), Dec. 21, 1884–Apr. 7, 1941<sup>29</sup>  
m. George Daley
- C8b\*** Martha Myers, Aug. 16, 1849–Dec. 15, 1898  
m. J. B. Young
- C8c** David Myers
- C8d\*** Hettie Myers, Nov. 22, 1853–Aug. 19, 1944  
m. Benjamin Hoffman, Oct. 17, 1856–July 25, 1931
- C9\*** Benjamin Myers, 1809–Oct. 17, 1894  
m. Anna Long<sup>30</sup>
- C91\*** Mary Myers, Apr. 21, 1835–Feb. 14, 1908<sup>31</sup>  
m. Henry Rice, Jan. 29, 1829–Nov. 25, 1907
- C911** Anna E. Rice, Dec. 14, 1856–Apr. 27, 1931  
m. Daniel Y. Stoner, July 30, 1854–Sept. 28, 1897
- C912** Fannie Rice, Apr. 19, 1860–July 23, 1911  
m. Daniel H. Diehl, Sept. 7, 1855–Jan. 2, 1921
- C913\*** Jeremiah Rice, Mar. 3, 1864–Dec. 29, 1938
- C914** James W. Rice, Dec. 18, 1865–Nov. 17, 1930
- C915** David H. Rice, July 4, 1868–Mar. 11, 1939<sup>32</sup>  
m. Margaret Helen Miller, June 8, 1855–Dec. 23, 1923
- C916** Mary Nettie Rice, Feb. 27, 1870–Jan. 23, 1931; single
- C917** Ida Kate Rice, Jan. 4, 1872–Mar. 20, 1939  
m. Samuel Bowman, Jan. 6, 1867–1924
- C918** Margaret Jane Rice, Aug. 27, 1874–Apr. 14, 1921; single
- C92\*** Fannie Myers, July 9, 1837–June 20, 1911  
m. Isaac G. Hoffman, Nov. 12, 1824–Aug. 4, 1892
- C93\*** Christian L. Myers, Oct. 1, 1840–Jan. 14, 1913  
m.(1) Mary Ann Garling, May 25, 1844–Sept. 26, 1876  
m.(2)\* Mary Ann Morter, Apr. 13, 1845–Nov. 30, 1888
- C931** Emma Myers, Sept. 18, 1864–Oct. 30, 1916  
m. Fred Cuffel, 1869–1945
- C932** Jacob Wesley Myers, Aug. 19, 1865–Nov. 9, 1945  
m. Lola LaStell Donnelly, Mar. 1, 1879–Aug. 15, 1930
- C933** William A. Myers, b. Mar. 9, 1867  
m. Minnie Margaret Elizabeth Hager
- C934\*** Anna Mary Myers, Oct. 11, 1872–Apr. 23, 1876
- C935** Martin Luther Myers, Mar. 28, 1874–Oct. 2, 1961  
m.(1) Christiana Marie Hager, Sept. 27, 1872–Apr. 28, 1941  
m.(2) Blanch Shuller, b. Aug. 30, 1876
- C936** Ida Myers, Aug. 30, 1876–Oct. 24, 1927  
m. Andrew Jackson Lake, Mar. 24, 1862–June 22, 1946
- C937** Mayme Amanda Myers, May 15, 1880–Aug. 9, 1977  
m. Perry Rosenthal Skeen, Feb. 10, 1882–Mar. 4, 1958
- C938** Cora Ann Myers, July 4, 1882–Dec. 30, 1963  
m. Jay Cyrus Hoover, July 26, 1886–Aug. 12, 1964
- C939** Margaret Martha Bell Myers, Feb. 29, 1884–May 2, 1962  
m. Walter Lee Ray, Nov. 23, 1865–Mar. 12, 1965
- C93a** Katherine Myers, Feb. 9, 1886–Aug. 10, 1954  
m. William Robert Armstrong, Aug. 29, 1878–Jan. 1, 1937
- C94\*** Samuel L. Myers, Nov. 10, 1842–Feb. 8, 1923<sup>33</sup>  
m. Mary Catherine Elliot, Sept. 1849–Mar. 18, 1930
- C941** Minnie Belle Myers, b. Mar. 1868<sup>34</sup>  
m. Harry N. Landis
- C942** Orpha A. Myers, Sept. 27, 1870–Mar. 13, 1941<sup>35</sup>  
m. Adam E. Steiger, Oct. 14, 1868–Aug. 22, 1937
- C943** D. Lawrence Myers, Nov. 20, 1872–Apr. 26, 1945  
m. Louise S. Frischholtz, Dec. 1864–Aug. 28, 1955
- C944** Annie V. Myers, Oct. 12, 1875–Feb. 10, 1959  
m. Dr. John Miller Kuhn, Feb. 22, 1857–May 26, 1932
- C945** Frank Elliott Myers, June 8, 1880–Jan. 29, 1937<sup>36</sup>  
m. Mabel Geneveive Cox, Dec. 31, 1883–Dec. 18, 1932
- C95** Elizabeth Myers  
m. John Shaffer
- C96\*** Leah Myers, Nov. 13, 1846–Oct. 9, 1916  
m. Aaron Hoffman, Oct. 10, 1842–Oct. 10, 1902
- C97\*** Sarah Myers, Aug. 26, 1848–Dec. 25, 1902; single

29. Pennsylvania death cert. 37791.

30. Surname from children's death certificates.

31. Pennsylvania death cert. 14741.

32. *Freeport Journal* (March 11, 1939).

33. Pennsylvania death cert. 22833.

34. Age thirty-two and single in the 1900 census; marriage to Harry Landis in *Valley Spirit*, Chambersburg, PA (September 10, 1902).

35. Pennsylvania death cert. 28650.

36. *Public Opinion* Chambersburg, PA (January 30, 1937).



*Nearly every person who has heard the name Musselman knows it is associated with food processing.*

## John, C. H., and I. Z. Musselman Visionaries 1906–1984

*By Philip A. Roth*

Few people know that two Musselmans were involved in food processing: Christian H. Musselman (1880–1944) and Ivan Z. Musselman (1857–1963). And almost no person living today has heard about the third Musselman, Christian’s father, John Musselman (1858–1931).

John Musselman truly pioneered fruit processing in Adams County, Pennsylvania—not once, but twice.<sup>1</sup> This unorthodox complexity will be shortly sorted out. In any case, it is beyond doubt, that Christian High Musselman (C. H.) was the principal Musselman who powered forward the fruit-processing industry in Adams County. It was C. H. who had the energy, discipline, and extraordinary executive ability to make it happen. His apple-processing business—and, by association, the fruit-growing industry—was the chief contributor to Adams County’s economy in the first half of the twentieth century. In 1944, when C. H. died, the C. H. Musselman Company was one of the world’s largest, if not the largest, apple-processing organization. Indeed, he rose to the opportunity, the right person in the right place at the right time.

### Getting started in Adams County

John Musselman was the second of three brothers, Samuel, John, and George. Their mother died young, their father never remarried, and there is no record of sisters. As young adult farmers, all three were entrepreneurially inclined. Samuel’s sideline was operating a creamery. Later, in 1911, he joined his brother George selling feed, coal, and lumber.<sup>2</sup>



John H. and Elizabeth (Lizzie) Musselman in the 1920s  
(Credit: Adams County Historical Society)

John moved sideways from grain and dairy farming into “truck farming” or vegetable growing. He had a permanent booth in a market in Lancaster City. His sideline enterprise was setting up a small vegetable cannery on his farm, primarily canning sweet corn, for something to sell in off-season months. When John’s oldest son, Christian, married Emma Sweigert in 1902, he continued working for his father, focusing on the sales end of the business and attending the Lancaster market.

1. *Gettysburg Times Newspaper* (October 13, 1931). Frontpage heading, “Pioneer Canner Dies Suddenly.”

2. The Musselman Lumber Company in New Holland, PA, was owned and operated by Musselman descendants, changing with time and still going strong in 2023.



**Back: Christian and Emma, Ella, John S., Elizabeth. Front: John H., Berta, Martha, Lizzie, Emma. Photo taken in 1902. (Credit: Adams County Historical Society)**

In 1905, John Musselman learned about a business opportunity, supposedly from Milton Hershey of Hershey chocolate fame. The Biglerville Canning Company, processing vegetable and fruit crops, was for sale in Adams County.<sup>3</sup>

John convinced the Biglerville group to hang on for one more year by leasing to him for the 1906 fall crop. He then sent John Jr. and his eldest daughter, Ella, to Biglerville to run the operation for a few months.<sup>4</sup>

The lease period was a break-even proposition for the Musselmans. But the experience gave John

Sr. what he needed to know in assuming the risk of buying the company. John decided not to buy at the asking price; instead, he waited for the sheriff's sale in the spring of 1907 to make his purchase.

But John Jr.'s passion was not farming or canning apples. Becoming a missionary was a better dispositional fit. So, John Sr. sent his son to Goshen, Indiana, for college and seminary, where he met Fannie Hershey, a classmate. By 1913, John Jr. and Fannie were planning marriage and had been commissioned by the Mennonite Board of Missions to serve in India. Rumor somehow established that C. H. directly bought his brother's partnership interest. Still, no evidence was found to support that there was a formal partnership agreement between John and his two sons.

Tragedy struck just before John and Fannie's wedding. John Jr. contracted typhoid fever and died at age thirty-two. John Jr. is remembered "as a tall, dark-haired, handsome young man with a

3. No positive confirmation on the Hershey-Musselman connection was found although it is plausible. Milton Hershey (1857-1945) and John Musselman (same age) were Mennonites living in Lancaster County, near New Holland. Hershey's first cousin Anna married John's brother George. The Hershey candy bar was introduced in 1900. Milton Hershey, widely established in business circles, likely had his ear to the ground regarding the status of cannery businesses or start-up food processors in southcentral Pennsylvania and northern Maryland.

4. The agreement was dated September 25, 1906. Emma Musselman (Mrs. C. H.), in a 1957 interview, stated only green beans and apples were processed in 1906.



Left: Emma G. and Christian H. Musselman with Lester and Luella. Photo taken in 1920. Right: Christian H. and Emma G. Musselman in the mid-1930s (Credit: Adams County Historical Society)

jolly good feeling toward everybody and a constant desire to do missionary work.”<sup>5</sup>

In 1907, Christian moved his soon-to-be-expanded family from East Earl Township, Lancaster County, to Biglerville. Their son Lester arrived in 1908, and their daughter Luella in 1910. Today’s roadmap shows seventy-three miles between the Musselman home at Mill Creek in Lancaster County and Biglerville. It took them a day and a half to travel by horse and buggy. The furniture supposedly already in Biglerville was missing but did show up later.<sup>6</sup> It is unclear how much time John spent at Biglerville. No documentation or family lore was found to answer that question. Given the difficulty in travel, either by horse and buggy or railroad, one might assume Christian was on his own, without much oversight from his father. It was a “sink or swim” situation for twenty-seven-year-old Christian without a telephone. Throw him into the deep end and see what happens.

The following might be a skeleton in the closet. In 1911, John Sr. and C. H. parted company agreeing to disagree on one or another aspect of the organiza-

tion or operational philosophy. The precise reasons for this change in ownership after four years were never recorded. Apparently, father and son were not synchronized on the Musselman company’s future direction. We know that C. H. had proven resourceful. His learning curve graphically must have been a straight line headed straight up. He learned to manage employees and finances, meet deadlines, make the right things happen, and prevent encumbering misadventures.

As later events show, C. H. was extraordinarily well organized, disciplined, and gifted with unparalleled integrity, though later regarded as a clever negotiator.<sup>7</sup> John and C. H. must have recognized that after four challenging but fruitful years, a bright future was highly probable with expanding supply on the input side coupled with rising demand for the product. The question in 1911 must have been, who shall be in control going forward?

Evidence suggests that John was production oriented and not in a position to continue operations alone without sales and administrative backup. John’s capital financed their startup when he was fifty-three. (Life expectancy for men in 1910 was forty-nine.) From a conventional view, the partner with the gold is primary and would thus exercise control.

5. Kenneth E. Lawver, “History of the C. H. Musselman Company,” *The Processor* first issue (May 1943): 3. Howard Y. Musselman, *My Musselman Family History* (Adams County Historical Society, December 1976). John Jr.’s funeral, July 15, 1913, was held on the day of his planned marriage. Fannie wore her wedding dress to the funeral. She sailed for India as planned and later married a Mennonite widower missionary also serving in India.

6. 50-year celebration, *Gettysburg Times Newspaper* (April 26, 1957). Interview with Mrs. C. H. Musselman, who also mentioned that her husband had only an eighth-grade education.

7. Adam Boyer, *An Economic History of Fruit Processing Industry in Adams County, Pennsylvania*, Pennsylvania State University, Gettysburg College Library (Gettysburg, PA, 2012). 7. Noted in conversation with fruit grower John B. Peters in the late 1960s, who did business, in addition to fruit sales, with C. H. on several occasions.



C. H., the subordinated partner, would be jettisoned in a down-and-out dispute. Did C. H. say to his father, "I will return your investment with compounded interest, and the Musselman Canning Company is mine alone"? We don't know, but it might be that John recognized the wisdom of allowing his strong-willed son the freedom to follow through alone. After four years of resourceful hard work, Christian had proven his ability with innovative good judgment. John might have provided guidance and insight, but Christian had provided the muscle, the heavy lifting, and the requisite day-to-day management. Thus, the balance of power fell to Christian. John capitulated, returning to his home and family of a wife and five daughters in Lancaster County in 1911. There is no family folklore or written confirmation about terms.

All things considered, it was a power play by Christian. Nonetheless, the split was superficially cordial, and John never publicly expressed his disappointment. For example, in 1927, all three Musselmans worked and worshipped together to organize a Mennonite congregation in Fairfield.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, in 1943, C. H. processed cherries for I. Z.'s Orrtanna Canning Company.<sup>9</sup>

With no person to answer to, C. H. had an inflection year in 1912, and things happened. He started building a second factory at Gardners and a brick house/home on factory property in Biglerville, in addition to modifications to the Biglerville plant. C. H. must have been a perfectionist. Coveralls hung in his office and traveled with him everywhere to investigate the many gritty details of production bottlenecks that claimed his attention. The early years yielded false starts with new and improved processing procedures and machinery breakdowns. Such things come with a newly-ventured territory.

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8. The three Musselman families attended the Mummasburg Mennonite Church in Adams County which was organized in 1823 and conservative in dress and lifestyle. Business connections led the Musselmans into assimilation with the wider population. In a few years, the Musselmans were challenged by the district church elders on matters of dress, post-secondary education, and life insurance as security for bank loans. After a decade of unease, the bishop refused communion to the offenders in 1926. A meeting was held at the home of John Musselman during the 1926 Christmas season to begin organizing a new Mennonite congregation. A constitution was adopted in February 1927, and a building was purchased in Fairfield. C. H. offered to pay half of the purchase price and John and I. Z. paid the second half. Amos Geigley (John's son-in-law, who had been ordained years before) was called to serve as minister for the new congregation with forty charter members. Howard Musselman, *From the Beginning, Fairfield Mennonite Church 1927-1977*, Adams County Historical Society (Gettysburg, PA, September 1977), 7.

9. The official line from C. H. Musselman Company: "C. H. Musselman's father left the cannery in 1911 citing his desire to return to his native Lancaster County." Donald Horst, *140 Years of Fruit Growing History in Adams County and The C. H. Musselman Company* (Biglerville, PA: The National Apple Museum, 1999).

The Musselmans started banking with The First National Bank of Gettysburg, today ACNB Bank. C. H. served as their fourth president starting in 1919 and resigning in 1922 to focus on his canning enterprise. One can speculate that C. H. really wanted an insider look at the banking system; three years in the 1920s would be long enough to serve that purpose. I. Z. was the seventh president from 1958 until 1962; his death was a few months later in 1963.

In 1920–1921, C. H. built the third factory at Inwood, West Virginia. This event was another chapter in C. H.'s management development with problems training workers and delegating responsibility to persons not yet ready for the challenge. The Inwood project required personal time away from Biglerville and Gardners, the supreme test for executive talent. In 1922, he incorporated C. H. Musselman Company, Inc., naming himself president and general manager. The business expansion in fifteen years from 1907 was fearlessly phenomenal as if C. H. had no perception of potential risk. He might have been anxious now and again, but nothing worried him to inaction.

Employees were enamored with the boss's steadfast charisma. C. H. was frequently seen working into the night and most weekends. He moved effortlessly among employees talking openly about company affairs and asking how their work was going or about their personal well-being.<sup>10</sup> It was the Mennonite ethos carried forward from the nineteenth century—work, eat, sleep, go to church, and little more. Distractions or pleasures were considered wasteful, self-indulgent, and, most of all, simply unbecoming.

And fruit growers were engaged too; a quotation in the *Gettysburg Times Newspaper*, April 26, 1957, on the fiftieth anniversary, "There was something in Mr. Musselman's handclasp that you knew was sincere. He came among us speaking as a humble man, and we didn't question his honest desire to be helpful." Another grower quotation, "His energy was boundless."

### John Musselman's second start

John did not waste time finding a new partner, confirming that ending the father-son relationship was not his idea. Almost certainly a calculated inaccuracy to generate a polished public image for C. H.—herein lies the closet skeleton. John had seen his vision for commercial food processing succeed. The prospects were bright; the road ahead was clear. There was

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10. "C. H. Musselman Company's House Organ," *The Processor* (December 1943): 2.

room for competition in this groundbreaking and profitable business. He promptly approached his twenty-six-year-old nephew about organizing a partnership and starting a second fruit-processing factory in southwestern Adams County. His second partner was Ivan Zimmerman Musselman (I. Z), the oldest son of John's older brother Samuel. I. Z. was six years younger than C. H., his first cousin.

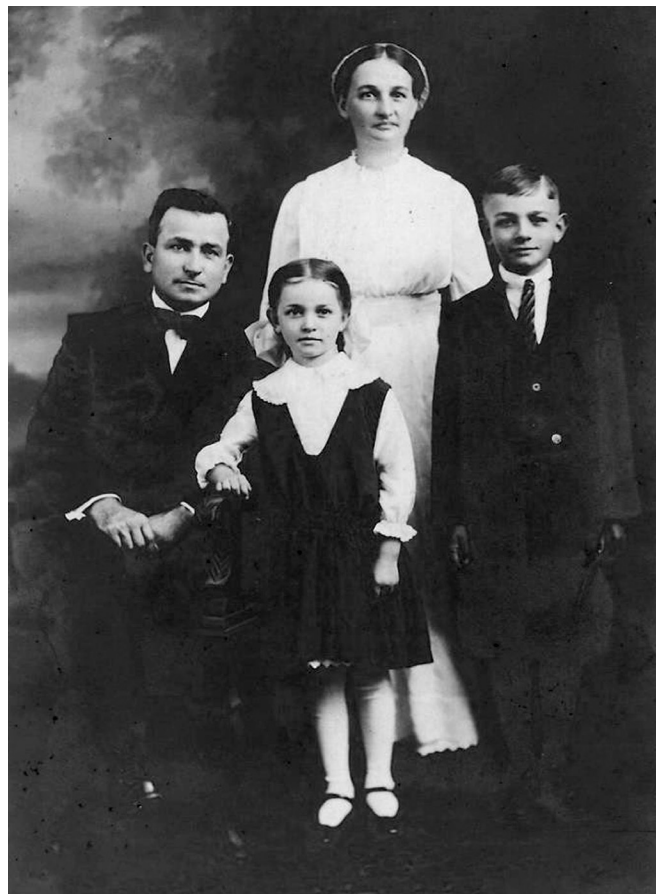
Before finishing high school, Ivan began courting a non-Mennonite young woman. That raised a few eyebrows and caused parental consternation. But that initiative earned young Ivan a two-year, all-expense-paid trip to Goshen Academy, Goshen, Indiana, to finish high school. He met Cora Yoder (1884–1935) from Tennessee, whose father was a Mennonite preacher. They were married after graduation, and by 1913, they had two young preschool children. I. Z., working for his father and his Uncle George Musselman, was engaged in a previously mentioned Lancaster County feed, coal, and lumber supply business. Additionally, he was living and working on his father's farm property at Blue Ball, Pennsylvania. (I. Z. said, "I was lucky," speaking privately to me in 1962 about Uncle John's offer.)<sup>11</sup>

I. Z. reacted positively to the idea of a partnership with his Uncle John but countered by saying he had only two thousand dollars to contribute to the partnership. Uncle John replied, "That's enough, you can balance out the partnership interests from your future share of operating profits."<sup>12</sup> John had Orrtanna in mind as a suitable location for his second venture into fruit processing. The location provided every physical thing a food processor needs, principally a railroad. Consider the standard of living in 1913:

1. Horses provided the motive power.
2. Steam engines fueled with wood or coal powered railroads and provided industrial energy (the steam engine's prime mover dominance was coming to an end in a few more years).
3. Few hard-surfaced roadways existed, only in large cities.

11. Full disclosure: I am I. Z. Musselman's grandson. I grew up in a household occasionally hearing about "Uncle John," who died three years before I was born. As I remember the dialog, Uncle John was always referenced in a tone of respect and gratitude for giving our branch of the Musselman family this brass ring. My mother recalled that Uncle John lived in her parents' home for a few years during her early childhood. According to my mother, the reason was clear enough, saying that Aunt Lizzie (Elizabeth) would not agree to leave Lancaster County until her five daughters were "married to good Mennonite boys and settled into their own households."

12. *My Musselman Family History*.



Ivan Z. and Cora Musselman with Mary and Howard about 1917 (Credit: Catharine Roth)

4. A few telephones
5. Radio (known as wireless) was limited to commercial enterprises and used mostly Morse code (not yet voice wireless).
6. The Wright Brothers first flew a powered glider in 1903, a dangerous contraption with no practical use except for thrill seekers with a death wish.



Orrtanna Canning Company in Orrtanna, Pennsylvania, about 1920 (Credit: Howard Musselman)



7. Electricity was only in cities and primarily for lighting.

Railroads were key for transporting inbound building materials and production machinery. Tin cans, sugar, and other processing supplies were needed in volume quantities. Coal was needed for firing boilers for steam power, heating the office area, and heating hot water. Railroads were necessary for shipping the finished product consigned to brokers for distribution in major cities.

The Harrisburg and Gettysburg Railroad Company had established rail service south to Orrtanna in 1871 for passengers and freight, following Thaddeus Stevens' Tapeworm Railroad right of way. The track ended at Orrtanna until Western Maryland Railroad finished laying track across South Mountain from Hagerstown. My mother and her older brother Howard rode the early morning train to high school in Gettysburg in the morning and returned later the same day. It was a long school day, leaving home in the predawn darkness and returning to fading sunlight in the early evening.

Second, food processing requires water in quantity for production and daily cleanup. Little Marsh Creek, a subsidiary of larger Marsh Creek, had its headwater in the South Mountain foothills. A small

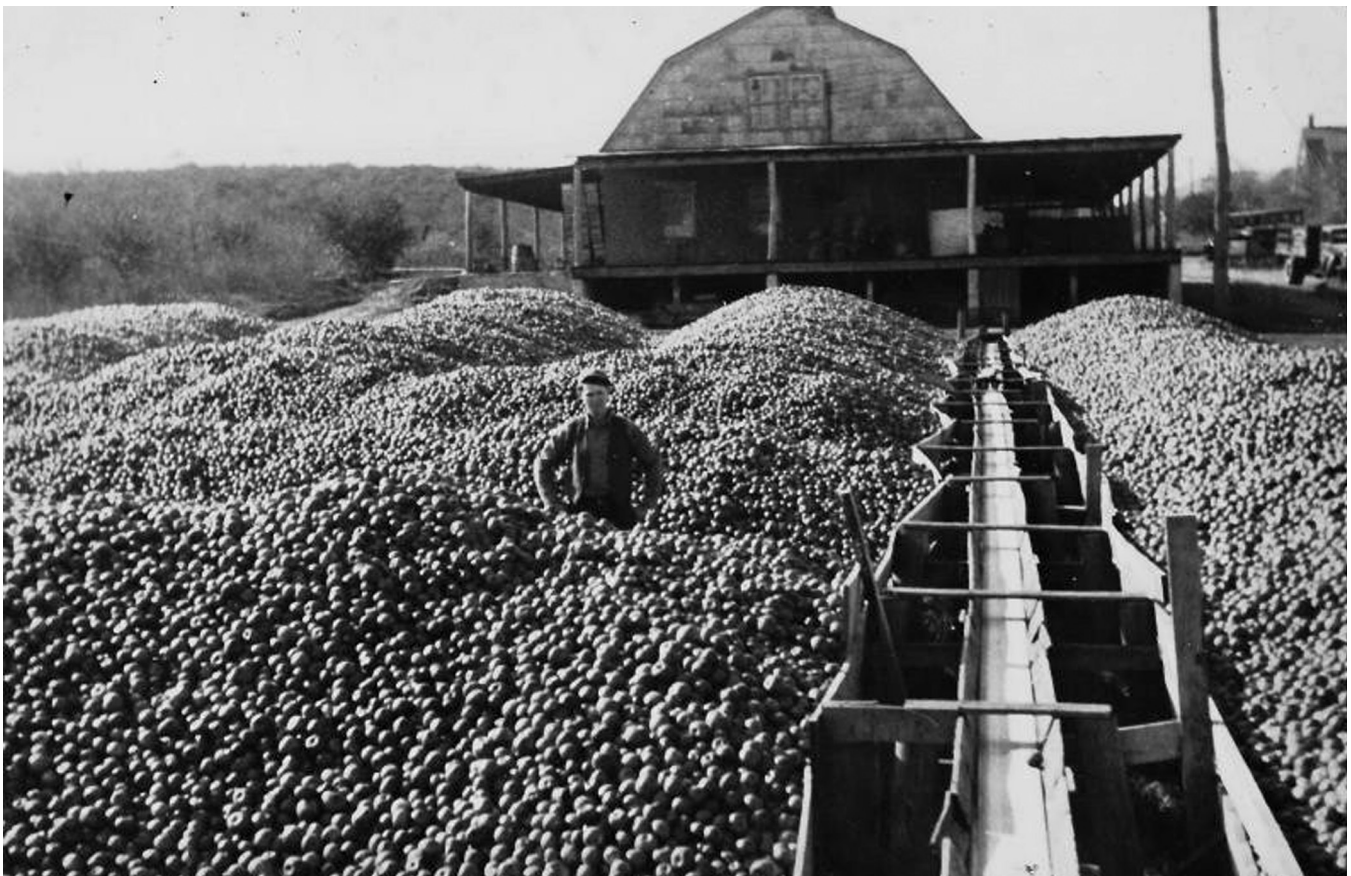
dam was constructed a stone's throw from the plant to back up water into a small water reservoir. Farther downstream at Orrtanna's lower end stood an operating water wheel grist mill (the mill is abandoned today but still standing). There was plentiful water from hand-dug wells in the Orrtanna area.

Third, a shirt factory in Orrtanna and two tanneries were operating nearby. An adequate population of employable adults with building skills and experienced mechanics from the shirt factory was available, including town and nearby farm women for seasonal workers.

Fourth, excellent fruit-growing soil with a southeastern exposure near Orrtanna. Small apple plantings were already established along South Mountain between Cashtown and Fairfield, an area colloquially known as Carroll's Delight. By 1930, larger commercial orchards sprang up from Cashtown to Fairfield, with Orrtanna Canning Company equidistant between them. Noah Sheely, credited with planting the county's first commercial twenty-three-acre apple orchard in 1878, was near Cashtown. (Noah built a now-famous round cattle barn on his property.) His son Daniel bought two farms totaling 453 acres in 1940, a quarter mile from Orrtanna on Mt. Carmel Road, planting roughly 225 open acres with



Orrtanna Canning Company, early 1930s (Credit: Howard Musselman)



Orrtanna Canning Company, mid-1930s (Credit: Arthur Roth)

apple trees. We might presume it was an orchard planted specifically for processing at Orrtanna.

The Orrtanna Canning Company was up and running for the 1913 apple crop year. The partnership purchased a section of farmland fronting on Western Maryland Railroad. In April 1913, I. Z. moved his family, household furniture, and two cows via Pennsylvania Railroad. I. Z. rode in the boxcar to care for his cows. His wife, Cora, their two children, and his mother (temporarily helping with the move) rode in the same train's passenger cars. The railroad boxcar and passengers were transferred to the Western Maryland Railroad in Hanover. At Orrtanna, they moved into a white, Dutch-siding, frame farmhouse on the purchased property. Twenty years later, this was the first home for my newly-wedded parents. Later, I. Z., Uncle John, John's son-in-law Amos Geigley, and I. Z.'s brother-in-law Frank Yoder, all built homes at different times, in a cluster, along Orrtanna's Third Street.<sup>13</sup>

13. I remember, as a youngster, watching from the sidewalk, mesmerized by the train stopping and starting to uncouple and maneuver coal cars into the siding to the factory's fireroom. I was entranced by the loud clanking noise and jerking motion as cars coupled

together then stopped or started. The steam engine's belching smoke and its ponderously slow motion were supernatural—who or what was making such a huge machine go? The coal car with a railroad employee riding on one end, getting a shove from the steam engine, then slowly coasting on the tracks by itself, was magical. How could it happen that the car would always stop just at the exact point for unloading? The coal would go into huge piles by the fireroom door, eventually moving inside with a shovel and wheelbarrow to stoke the boiler furnace.

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Left to Right: Kathleen Donaldson, stenographer; Howard Musselman, sales manager; I. Z. Musselman, proprietor; Arthur Roth, production manager; Frank Yoder, office manager. Photo taken mid-1920s. (Credit: Howard Musselman)



Ivan Z. Musselman in 1952

In the 1920s, when Aunt Lizzie's daughters were married, Uncle John built a house across from I. Z. in Orrtanna. John and I. Z. partnered for eighteen years until John's death in October 1931, at age seventy-three. The distance between home and the factory was a short meander. Not feeling well on October 12, he rested that morning but, after lunch, decided to walk to the factory. A short distance from home, he collapsed on the sidewalk. Men gathered to carry him home, where he died the following morning.

From the beginning, Orrtanna Canning was a family-oriented business in contrast to C. H.'s larger operation. In 1931, I. Z.'s son Howard, having graduated from college, returned home with his bride, Ruth, to learn the business as a sales manager. Two years later, son-in-law Arthur Roth joined the team as production manager. Before that, Frank Yoder, I. Z.'s brother-in-law from Michigan, moved to Orrtanna to become office manager and bookkeeper. He supplemented his income by serving as Orrtanna's postmaster for a few years into the 1930s.

John's partnership arrangement with I. Z. was lucrative enough for John to provide four of his five daughters, in order of birth, and their husbands with a start in fruit growing.



- Ella married Amos Geigley, two hillside adjoining farm properties near Fairfield
- Elizabeth married Banks Benner, a hillside farm near Ella (Carroll's Delight area)
- Martha married Harry Stoner, farm near Orrtanna
- Bertha married Clarence Eshleman, farm in Franklin Township, near McKnightstown (Clarence died a few years later, and Bertha remarried and moved away)

I. Z.'s three siblings also followed him to Adams County. Already noted is Samuel. His two sisters, Katy Geigley and Mabel Bucher, and their husbands started separate orchard operations near Orrtanna. I. Z. later bought the Bucher orchard when they moved back to Lancaster County. Katy's husband's vocational fate is lost to present-day recorded history.

Orrtanna Canning Company's early claim to fame was planting Montmorency Tart Red Cherry trees in 1915, hoping to lengthen the processing season (harvest in July) and to broaden the product line. Likely, it was John's idea; perhaps it was his favorite fruit pie. The first crop was processed in 1924. Processing cherries provided early income for fruit growers for many years until western growers with irrigation, mechanical harvesting, no hail storms in July, and lower ambient temperatures created an oversupply. Prices plummeted. With eastern grower unit production costs higher than market prices, a near end to Adams County commercial tart cherry production occurred in the 1990s.

### **C. H. Musselman Company, later years beginning 1940**

C. H. developed ill health symptomatic of heart disease in the 1930s and began delegating responsibility and giving himself weekends off. By 1943, his illness precluded traveling to and from the Biglerville office. At age sixty-three, C. H. established a charitable foundation, presumably in anticipation of death. John A. Hauser joined the company in 1934 and rose through the ranks in personnel and production to become vice president, the heir apparent. C. H. died on January 6, 1944. John Hauser, President; Emma Musselman, First Vice President; and daughter Luella Arnold, Secretary and Second Vice President, formed the new top management.<sup>14</sup>

14. *Gettysburg College Alumni Magazine*, August 1981, Gettysburg College Library, "Fruits of Success, the Musselman Legacy": 3. Hauser recalls that in 1939, he chauffeured C. H. to visit Milton Hershey, from

As post-World War II consumer price inflation (CPI) increased, food processors, particularly growers, fell on hard times with low food pricing. The massive industrial capacity buildup for war machines now lay underutilized and, in some cases, idle. The sudden decline in demand for discretionary canned food, such as apple pie filling, apple juice, apple butter, and apple sauce, collapsed raw fruit prices offered by food processors.

The company weathered the storm with substantial financial reserves and the lion's share of the market. But growers considered loyal were not exactly happy with narrow to nonexistent income margins. Less efficient growers without a financial cushion were seriously hurt. By 1948, C. H.'s Midas touch—he could do no wrong—proved non-transferable to newer management. In the first instance of deteriorating choices, the company stubbed its toe buying 2,900 additional fruit land acres from distressed or early retiring growers or growers without succeeding families to carry on. This action had an unintended consequence. Musselman growers perceived this land acquisition as betrayal, a move to guarantee C. H. Musselman Company raw fruit rather than paying a reasonably fair price to independent growers. In a few years, grower confidence in getting equitable fruit pricing from C. H. Musselman Company evaporated. The company's empathy for growers disappeared into a black hole.<sup>15</sup>

Buying an equipment supplier (Wolff Farm Supply, 1958) and a canning company in Michigan with two plants (Dwan Home Canning, 1959) and even more fruit acreage gave the company an inaccurate appearance of continued growth and prosperity.<sup>16</sup> In 1961, the sale of C. H. Musselman Company to Pet Milk was an accurate indicator of regression since the death of C. H. in 1944.<sup>17</sup> Management failed to recognize the competitive impact of the Knouse Foods Cooperative. Instead of adjusting to a new reality, management buried itself into a deeper hole

whom C. H. sought advice on setting up a foundation. Hershey established his Foundation in 1935 and C. H. in 1943. C. H. followed Hershey's pattern for local community grants. C. H.'s foundation issued grants in Adams County and the area surrounding Inwood/Martinsburg, WV. Milton Hershey died in 1945, twenty-one months following C. H. Treatment for heart disease in 1940 was bed rest. "Use it or lose it" was not yet medical science.

15. Adam Boyer, 55, 78-79.

16. When a company expands, the capitalized growth covers up operational deficiencies not easily detected except by audit. As a closely-held private corporation, financial information to evaluate performance was not available to the public.

17. The sale was inaccurately labeled a "merger" by management. C. H. Musselman Company was 1/7th the size of Pet Milk in sales.

that eventually led to Knouse Foods buying insolvent C. H. Musselman Company assets in 1984.<sup>18</sup>

Through keen maneuvering under President Dean Carey's circumspect leadership, Knouse Foods' grower members picked up the entire eight-million-dollar tab when the orchard real estate and equipment was auctioned to its members (4,163 acres). Knouse Foods Cooperative, Inc. gained the physical plant, machinery, and invaluable Musselman marketing goodwill at near zero net cost. It was an astute maneuver with textbook clarity for business school case studies everywhere.

So, in summary for C. H. Musselman Company: Starting in 1907, the company was fashioned from bankruptcy, ascended to preeminence in the mid-1940s, then declined into insolvency by 1984. The orchard real estate assets were redistributed by auction to Knouse Foods Cooperative, Inc. member fruit growers. The fruit-processing facilities were either sold or assimilated into Knouse Foods. And the label "Musselman" will likely live into the future.<sup>19</sup>

Not to be overlooked, the C. H. Musselman legacy has lived on through two foundations, the first established by C. H. and a second by Emma, Mrs. C. H. Musselman. Both had profound legacy consequences for Adams County. Primary beneficiaries were Gettysburg College, Annie M. Warner Hospital, Gettysburg YWCA, and the Biglerville Penn State Fruit Research Laboratory. Other institutions were community public schools and libraries, two Mennonite colleges in Ohio and Indiana, and community social service agencies in Adams County and Berkeley County, West Virginia.

### **Orrtanna Canning Company, later years beginning 1940**

In the darkness before the daybreak at Orrtanna on December 3, 1942, the temperature dropped to eight degrees Fahrenheit, accompanied by strong west winds. A structural fire broke out while workers attempted to thaw frozen water pipes. Fortunately, a strong northwest wind blew the fire into an open field to the southeast, away from Orrtanna homes and the two-room schoolhouse near Orrtanna Can-

ning Company property. Unfortunately, the fire started in the most northwestern end of the factory. All the fruit-processing buildings comprising the office were engulfed in flames. One disconnected building upwind, storing finished canned goods, was spared. Had the harshly cold, windy day happened a few days later, the 1942 processing year would have ended, and the water lines drained.

On December 3, 1942, the *Gettysburg Times Newspaper* reported forty-mile-per-hour winds with a wind chill of negative seventeen degrees. Gettysburg, Fairfield, and Cashtown fire companies responded but were largely ineffective when they arrived because the water froze in their pumps and hoses. By noon, three fire engine lines were pulling water from Little Marsh Creek to cool smoldering rubble and ashes. The *Gettysburg Times Newspaper* stated that the fire burned fiercely for three hours after 7:30 a.m. when first discovered.<sup>20</sup> Orrtanna Canning Company was granted priority by the United States government to buy building materials to rebuild. Canned food for the armed services was, of course, a United States government's priority. C. H. Musselman Company processed cherries in Biglerville, and Knouse Corporation processed apples in Peach Glen under Orrtanna Canning's label for the 1943 crop year.

As noted above, the post-war economic downturn severely impacted smaller canneries. Orrtanna Canning Company found itself with a large finished goods inventory it could not sell except at a loss, with no buildings to store more finished goods and no cash reserves to pay growers for the new crop year. Having narrowly recovered from the disastrous 1942 fire, Orrtanna Canning Company had to restructure the company to recapitalize substantial debt and stay operational. I remember a time of intense family discussions about whether to buy into the idea of a fruit growers' cooperative that Milton Knouse was attempting to organize. Howard, particularly, was in favor of supporting this initiative. I. Z., with a deep-seated dispassionate conservative opinion, was not so sure but recognized that something needed to change to support fruit-growing stability in the region. After a meeting with M. E. Knouse, I. Z. did agree to sell Orrtanna Canning Company's assets in

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18. *Gettysburg Times Newspaper* (January 9, 1984). Donald Horst and Thomas Piper, *Down Memory Lane with Members of the Adams County Fruit Growers Association, Vol. II* (Biglerville, PA: National Apple Museum, 1994), 36-42, a complete list of C. H. Musselman Company acquisitions from 1907.

19. <https://www.dfamilk.com/our-products/our-brands>, Pet Milk itself came to an end in 1995 when acquired by Pillsbury, later a subsidiary of General Mills. The Pet Milk brand was revived in 2001 by Dairy Farmers of America.

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20. The Roth family, living about one mile west of Orrtanna, was quarantined because their son Daniel was diagnosed with scarlet fever. In a brilliantly clear sky, Arthur Roth observed a huge black smoke plume in Orrtanna's direction. He rushed to his car and the scene. He died in 1977 believing the fire his fault; if he had been on hand that morning at 6:30 as usual to supervise, the fire would not have happened.





Structural fire destroyed the Orrtanna Canning Company property on December 3, 1942. The company had no buildings to store finished goods and no cash reserves.



early 1949 and kept his orchards. Elected to Knouse Foods' board, he served until he died in 1963. Howard Musselman joined the Knouse Cooperative as assistant sales manager, and Arthur Roth came on board as purchasing director.<sup>21</sup>

Farmer-owned marketing cooperatives were not a new idea though generally not structured as corporations. In 1929, Pennsylvania enacted Cooperative Agricultural Law, which granted cooperatives the right to incorporate. In 1932, John B. Peters organized a fresh fruit packing and sales cooperative, Mt. Orchard, Inc., at Aspers. In 1948, M. E. Knouse managed two apple canneries for the National Fruit Product Company in Winchester, Virginia. National Fruit, too, was operating at a loss and looking for a buyer for two Pennsylvania plants, one at Peach Glen, and the second at Chambersburg.<sup>22</sup>

A new era in Adams County fruit processing began in 1949. M. E. Knouse restructured the fruit-processing industry following the pioneering John and intrepid C. H. Musselman. Following 1949, the fruit-processing industry in southcentral Pennsylvania greatly expanded a second time, taking on new life to the present day.

### Notes on early canning production in Adams County

Taking a practical approach, John and his son C. H. aimed to provide processing for surplus apples, as in fallen apples from the ground, apples not otherwise saleable, or blemished fruit cosmetically unsuited for fresh market channels. To process these salvaged apples into apple butter was their first inclination. Implicitly, pricing was commensurate to waste products. That is, less than the cost of production. Pricing leverage was on the Musselman side in those early start-up years. But within a few years, this approach

morphed into processing as a value-added proposition. Simply stated, growers started growing apples specifically for the cannery.<sup>23</sup>

The years around World War I brought competitors into the apple-processing field. The war created a demand for processed food, and prices rocketed upward, with nothing but blue skies ahead. In 1917, a factory was built at Peach Glen, managed, then later purchased in 1925 by a corporation controlled by Milton Knouse and Albert Fohl. Fruit Products Company at Aspers opened in 1919–1920. Apple products across the spectrum for C. H. Musselman Company were apple butter, sliced apples, apple juice, apple vinegar (the early 1920s), and apple sauce (1929).<sup>24</sup>

York Imperial apples were in plentiful supply and worked best for slices. The York Imperial variety was first propagated in 1828 in York County. Thus, the name York and Imperial because it stores well, staying firm longer than other varieties when stored in a cool, damp environment.

In 1920, conditions suddenly changed from feast to famine. First, the federal government flooded the market with surplus canned goods from World War I at prices far below canners' cost. The Canners Association wanted to purchase the surplus to prevent a slump in prices. Still, the plea and offer were ignored.<sup>25</sup> Second, western fresh apple imports to eastern markets intensified as transportation costs declined, creating an apple overabundance for processing in eastern apple producing states. The variable open to processors for protecting their net income was lower prices to apple growers. Fruit Products Company in Aspers reorganized, but when the dust settled, their doors were closed.

C. H. and I. Z. were somewhat different in temperament. C. H. was daring, progressive, and a force to be reckoned with. I. Z. was laid back, conservative, and circumspect.

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21. Knouse Foods Cooperative, Inc. archives, Peach Glen, PA, *Peach Glen Plant History*. M. E. Knouse envisioned a strictly marketing cooperative, one vote per member, regardless of landowner size. The corporation would not own orchards, acting solely as a processing and marketing agent. M. E. responded to the sentiment of 260 Appalachian fruit growers who were reacting to C. H. Musselman Company's raw fruit price manipulation.

22. Marketing cooperatives reduce the number of cost centers (by a factor of 1) between the grower and consumer. Organizing a cooperative to buy the plants for sale was M. E.'s savvy method for preserving his job! Records show his election as coop president by 280 members was unanimous.

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23. Adam Boyer, 9.

24. Yifei Zhang, *Influences of the Musselman Family*, Gettysburg College Library (Gettysburg, PA, 2014), 11.

25. *History of Canning in Adams County*, author and date unconfirmed, Adams County Historical Society. The same wholesale distributors handling canned goods also sold sugar which glutted the markets following World War I, and compounded low pricing for canned apples.

*Leonard Gross explores evidence that men and women were involved in writing the Schleithem Confession.*

## The Role of Women in the Creation of the 1527 Schleithem Confession

*By Leonard Gross*

The Schleithem Confession remains our first and greatest Anabaptist confession of faith. It became a powerful testimony that peace as a way of life is the only option for those attempting to live faithfully as a people of God. As John W. Miller states: The Schleithem Confession “was ahead of its time. It’s still ahead of ours. All that is really necessary is to read it and put it into practice.”<sup>1</sup>

The Confession came together in 1527 and is, in effect, a summary of the faith of the founding members who brought Anabaptism into being two years earlier. Had the Schleithem concensus not taken place, and its outcome in the form of a written confession not circulated far and wide as a published document, the new faith of Conrad Grebel, Felix Manz, George Blaurock, and others would have been lost to history. About 1560, the confession was translated into and published in Dutch and reprinted in 1565, indicating its broad acceptance within Dutch Anabaptism.

Of the greatest significance is the fact that men and women, together, were in on the process that led to the formulation that came about during the formal Anabaptist gathering in Schleithem, Switzerland, on February 24, 1527. It was the culmination of a process that had begun in Strasbourg, France, some months earlier, within the Swiss Anabaptist group that had been meeting there. This small Strasbourg congregation identified five of the seven points of what later would become known as the Schleithem Confession. The discernment process used to determine these points was congregational, with the direct and active participation of both men and women.

We know that women were equally involved with men in this congregational process based on an epistle Michael Sattler had sent some weeks earlier,

while in Strasbourg in late 1526 or early 1527, to the Strasbourg Reformers, Martin Bucer and Wolfgang Capito. Indeed, five of the seven points that a few weeks later would provide the framework for the Schleithem Confession were identified there in Strasbourg by those gathered, men and women, as Sattler pointedly notes. A passage to Bucer and Capito reads as follows:

As I recently spoke with you in brotherly moderation and friendliness on several points, *which I together with my brothers and sisters* have understood out of Scripture, namely out of the New Testament, . . . namely with baptism, the Lord’s Supper, force or the sword, the oath, the ban, and all the commandments of God.<sup>2</sup>

This took place most likely in late 1526 or early February 1527, when, as can be seen, “brothers and sisters” came to a consensus on five articles crucial in delineating the substance and spirit of a New Testament faith for these Swiss Anabaptists. A few weeks later, these same five articles were incorporated into the Schleithem Confession.

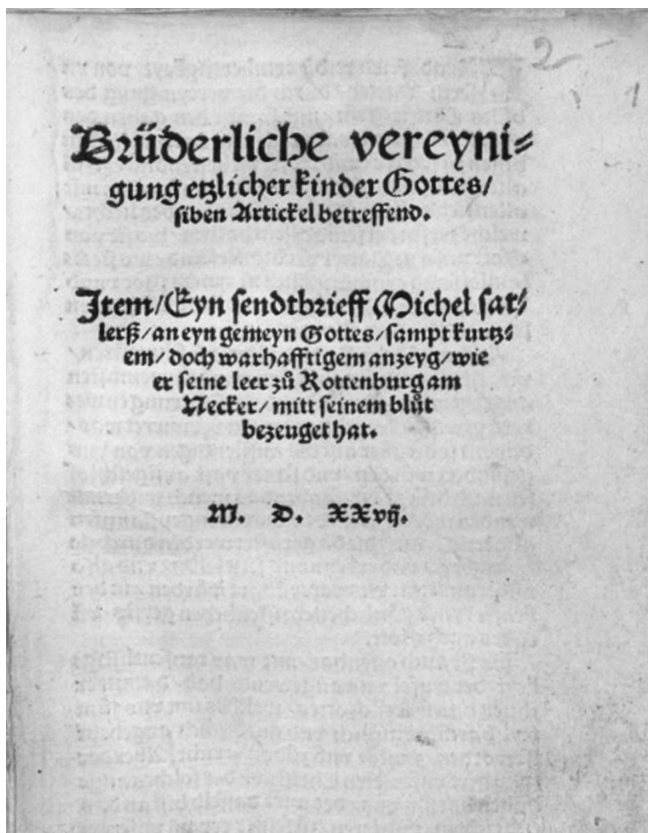
It has been said that Michael Sattler brought a draft to Schleithem, which was then reviewed, reworked, and finally accepted in total unity, and this is true. Yet what has not been recognized broadly is that the draft Michael took to Schleithem was not his alone but, as just noted, the conjoint work of a gathered community of men and women. This suggests the likelihood that women, too, were part of the Schleithem process that would culminate in the “Brotherly Union,” now known as the Schleithem Confession, brought together by a gathered community that together wrestled with the ideas and the wording of these ideas, until unity was reached, on February 24, 1527.

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1. *Gospel Herald* 70 no. 8 (February 22, 1977): 166.

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2. John H. Yoder, *The Legacy of Michael Sattler* (Walden, NY: Plough Publishing House, 2019), 21-22.



Title page of the Schleithem Confession (Credit: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich)

### Further sources on the role of women within Swiss Anabaptism

If the Sattler letter to Bucer and Capito were the only source we have, noting the direct role women played in church matters, it would be sufficient to corroborate the fact that men and women were equally active in the process of discerning matters of faith. But numerous additional sources greatly strengthen this thesis. In a cover letter to the Confession itself, there are instructive suggestions on how the Confession should be carried out. To be sure, those leaders gathered at Schleithem had seen themselves as comprising a synod. The cover letter begins:

Dear *Brothers and Sisters in the Lord*; these are the articles which some brothers previously had understood wrongly. Now that you have abundantly understood the will of God as revealed through us at this time, you must fulfill this will, now known, persistently and unswervingly.<sup>3</sup>

Sometime after the Schleithem event, Sattler was apprehended, imprisoned, and then stood trial, which took place in May of that year. After the charges had been read, Sattler requested a *consultation with his brothers and sisters*; this was granted to him. After

3. *Legacy*, 42.

speaking with them for a short time, he took the floor and fearlessly answered: “Concerning the articles which have to do with me, and with my brothers and sisters, please consider the following brief statement.”<sup>4</sup>

For Sattler, the process for a New Testament church resided in interaction among gathered disciples. He thus needed the counsel of fellow believers to make sure what he would be saying was in line with the sentiment of his gathered faith community, both women and men.

Other references to women may be found in the Congregational Order attached to the Confession. “Brothers and sisters” is mentioned four times in this short Order, a completely extraordinary occurrence not in character with the times when women were generally admonished to be silent in worship services and encouraged to be good mothers and wives:

We should observe the new commandment in love one toward another, so that love and unity may be maintained, *which all brothers and sisters of the entire congregation should agree to hold to.*

*The brothers and sisters* should meet at least three or four times a week to exercise themselves in the teaching of Christ and His apostles and heartily to exhort one another to remain faithful to the Lord as they have pledged.

*When the brothers and sisters are together*, they shall take up something to read together. The one to whom God has given the best understanding shall explain it, the others should be still and listen.

*Of all the brothers and sisters of the congregation*, none shall have anything of his own, but rather, as the Christians in the time of the apostles held all in common and especially stored up a common fund, from which aid can be given to the poor, according as each will have need, and as in the apostles’ time permit no brother to be in need.<sup>5</sup>

### Involvement of Swiss Anabaptist women

As documented above, Sattler believed that interaction among gathered disciples, both male and female, was of the very essence of the gathered church. Yet, I believe, the elected congregational leadership was to include both male and female, as Sattler writes to the congregation of Horb, Germany while in prison and anticipating martyrdom. He answers the implicit question as to who will provide leadership in the future as follows:

The Lord, however, can certainly raise up for himself another laborer to complete his work. Pray that reapers be sent out into the harvest, for the

4. Leonard Gross, ed., *Golden Apples in Silver Bowls* (Lancaster, PA: Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, 1999), 53.

5. *Legacy*, 44-45.



time of threshing is close at hand. The abomination of desolation is visible among you. The elect servants of God, *male and female*, will be marked on the forehead with the name of their Father."<sup>6</sup>

"The elect servants of God" comes from Revelation 7:3: "until we have marked the servants of our God with a seal on their foreheads" (NRSV). This verse simply refers to "the servants," whereas Sattler adds the three words "male and female," consciously interpreting this to include both male and female.<sup>7</sup> This observation is significant for understanding women's role within Swiss Brethren Anabaptism at this time.

### **Margaretha Sattler, Anabaptist woman archetype: one of those brothers and sisters**

We know little about Margaretha Sattler, wife of Michael Sattler. We do know she was a Beguine before embracing Anabaptism, a movement originating in the Low Countries in the twelfth century. At the core of the Beguine movement lay the *vita apostolica* (the apostolic life): an imitation of the New Testament Apostolic church, both in its communal aspects of mutuality and in consciously reaching out to the needy.<sup>8</sup>

The Beguines were not bound by vows, including the vow not to marry. They emphasized the humanity of Christ. Theirs was a spontaneous, non-hierarchical women's movement, each community autonomous. Their goals included simplicity and freedom. They had no founder, rule, or constitution. Some of them also preached, their message being a return to Apostolic precepts. They were never an approved religious order, generally in conflict with the established church.

Given her former faith setting, so closely aligned to that of the Anabaptists, Margaretha Sattler, too, was most probably influential in the further developments within Anabaptist history surrounding the 1527 Schleithem conference that led to the Schleithem Confession. In Strasbourg, she was certainly one of those "brothers and sisters" that Michael Sattler mentions in his communication to the Reformed leaders concerning the processing of the five articles that a few weeks later became the backbone of the Schleithem Confession.

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6. *Golden Apples*, 51.

7. Revelation 7:3, in German, reads: "... bis daß wir versiegeln die Knechte unsers Gottes an ihren Stirnen" (Luther); "biß das wir versiglend die knecht unsers Gottes an iren stirnen" (Froschouer). There is no reference in Revelation 7:3 to male and female.

8. See *Wikipedia*, "Beghards and Beguines" ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beghards\\_and\\_Beguines](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beghards_and_Beguines)); Elizabeth T. Knuth, "The Beguines" (<https://www2.kenyon.edu/projects/margin/beguines.htm>); and Ernst W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture: With Special Emphasis on the Belgian Scene* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1954).

It is likely that Margaretha also had been part of the discerning process that would culminate in the Schleithem Confession. The gathered community together wrestled with the ideas and the wording of these ideas until they reached unity.

Margaretha may have also been one of those brothers and sisters Michael conferred with before proceeding to give answers to the charges leveled against him at his trial.

Consequently, although we know little about Margaretha, what we do know suggests how close she was to a happening that would prove to be the core event determining the course of our Anabaptist-Mennonite movement, which continues to this day.

Margaretha was tried and executed by drowning on May 22, 1527, two days after Michael was burned at the stake. Margaretha resolutely declined all offers of mercy made on the condition that she recant. A report on her death grants further significant insights into the history and character of Margaretha:

[Michael's] wife had been a beguine, such a refined and comely little woman that the wife of the imperial regent, the Countess of Hohenzollern, undertook to draw her away from her confession and to keep her alive, keeping her in her court. This was useless, for she persisted in saying that the crown she wanted was the one her Lord Jesus would give, and that she wished to hold Christianly the pledge which she had spoken to her Christian husband. On the eighth day, she courageously let herself be taken to the Neckar and be drowned. She would rather have gone into the fire with her husband. These [two] would have nothing to do with recanting.<sup>9</sup>

Another report appropriately celebrates and rounds out the life and death of Margaretha:

Michael's wife was taken out on the waters of the Neckar. She could not be turned away from her faith by any human grace [that would be granted to her if she would recant] or words. In great joy and strong faith, she accepted and suffered death. God be praised! Thus she was drowned.<sup>10</sup>

### **Concluding thought**

The above quotations regarding the role of women all have to do with Michael Sattler. But in each instance, Sattler is simply reflecting the nature of the active process, within the congregation at Strasbourg and at the gathering at Schleithem, to have included everyone present, both men and women.

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9. *Legacy*, 80.

10. *Legacy*, 79.

*Experiences shared by Merv Stoltzfus as a featured storyteller at Mennonite Life's August, 8, 2022 Annual Storytelling Night.*

## Stories from My Life

*By Merv Stoltzfus*

### **Life is fragile** (1963)

I grew up in a highly active family with five children. Summertime was a season we all loved; we spent much of the time outside playing games, running around, riding bicycles, making tents, and all kinds of child play! There were some quiet times too. Most of us enjoyed reading, and we brought home a stack of books from the Bookmobile each week. Because we had a large garden, much to our annoyance, we had to complete quite a few gardening chores before playtime.

The summer I was seven, my mother had the courage to make our home available to a girl from New York City through the Fresh Air Child program. Within a day or so, my mom became aware the girl had an infected, painful splinter that she obviously had been dealing with for some time. My mom had to get us into the car and drive to the doctor's office—five overactive children, from two to eight years old, plus a Fresh Air girl.

We made it to the doctor's office, our new friend had the splinter removed, and I am quite sure my mom breathed a sigh of relief as we left the office unscathed and started the drive home. It was not a long drive, and soon we would be back home, but life is seldom that easy. There is often "the rest of the story." My youngest twin siblings were in the front seat, and there were four of us in the back seat of our 1956 Chevrolet sedan before the days of seatbelts and car seats.

My youngest brother was in the front by the door. Because it was a sweltering hot, humid day, we had all the windows turned down. About halfway home, my brother suddenly got up like a flash of lightning, leaned out the window, and began pushing in on the outside doorknob. The door opened, and there was an instant gasp from the rest of us as the door swung wide open with him hanging on for dear life—his bare toes dragging on the roadway! My mom, a very calm person, immediately braked and stopped the

car. As the car stopped, my brother lost his grip and dropped to the ground.

Mom quickly came around the car, picked up my brother, and got him back into the car. We turned around, and off we went, a second trip to the doctor to bandage my brother's severely scuffed and bloodied toes. We finally returned home with a life story and the knowledge that "life is fragile."

### **"Put your hand up"** (1968)

By the latter 1960s, the tent revival events were slowing a bit. They had been inspiring to some but created trauma for others. Other spiritual teachings were being pursued; one was prayer, particularly for healing.

I was intrigued by the subject, and, as a twelve-year-old boy with a disability, I probably considered the subject more than others. When I started sixth grade in Pequea Valley School District, I wore a brace intended to help my situation. It was a long brace, worn on one leg for a week and then the other. It was not how I wanted to attend school, but there was no choice. The brace was cumbersome and squeaked as I walked the halls of sixth grade. Rather embarrassing, but I found a way to deal with it.

I enjoyed participating in many sports, being outside, and taking the brace off whenever possible to enjoy the fun with family and friends. While life was good, and there were many things I could participate in, there was a keen awareness that physical healing was something I wanted.

One of the traditions was to have annual father-and-son banquets. The keynote speaker was John Smucker, a preacher from New York City. He was a dynamic speaker, and I liked him. He had the courage to live and minister in treacherous New York City. I thought he must be for real. At the end of his talk, he asked if there was anyone who wanted to be prayed over for healing.

My evening became quite uncomfortable. Did I want to be prayed over? There was a lot to take into consideration. My peers and other boys I did not know as well were there. Yes, I wanted the prayer, but not the embarrassment of all the attention with people gathering around me, laying on hands, praying. What if I was healed? I enjoyed many sports and would be able to compete at a higher level. But what if I was not healed? I thought about what I would do with that outcome. Would that have meant I did not have enough faith? Did God want to heal me? These thoughts and many others flashed through my mind.

At the end of my internal processing and after several other persons had been prayed for, my hand went up. I believed God could heal but was content to leave that up to God. I decided my part was to receive the prayer and leave the rest for God. If God healed me, great. If not, that would be okay. God was still God. I felt that I would be able to deal with whatever happened.

John came over, laid his hands on me, and prayed. I hoped to feel some sort of new strength flow through my legs but did not. Then, as we left, I thought that maybe overnight, it might happen. But morning came without change. Nonetheless, I had a strange peace about the whole experience; I had followed through with what seemed right.

Some years later, I realized that more had happened that night than I had recognized. Healing of personhood took place, which has proved to have incredible value over the years. In reality, the healing of personhood was a better healing and continues to offer so much more than the physical would have offered. So yes, I do believe that I received a healing that night! It just came in another form that I did not recognize at the moment.

### **I had to find that girl! (1973)**

I met a girl in middle school who captured my affection. We had a typical relationship of early teens that was on and off during the school years of seventh to ninth grades. Sometimes I was elated by her response, and other times, I was crushed. There were valid reasons for her responses to me, but I was naive and did not have any idea what she was working through.

There was a developing relationship during ninth grade, just not the girlfriend type. My grandson describes such a relationship as, "I have a friend, and she's a girl." After that summer, when I had no interaction with her, I returned to my tenth-grade year, and she was nowhere to be found! After a few days, I found out that her family had moved to Millersville over the summer. Now what?

Over the next couple of years, short glimpses of her confirmed my interest was not fleeting at all! Many other happenings distracted me, like attending Brownstown Vo-Tech School for cabinetmaking, working, being involved in youth group events, and hanging out with friends who started a music group called "Daybreak." I enjoyed hanging out with them at their practice sessions Sunday afternoons.

Sitting at a Daybreak practice session one Sunday in mid-September of my senior year of high school, I kept thinking, *Why am I sitting here? I should just get in my car, drive to Millersville, and try to find Janet.* It seemed ridiculous. I did not have a street address, never had been in the town of Millersville, and really what if she had a boyfriend, or worse yet, totally had forgotten about me?

The thoughts swirled in my mind for another hour or so, and then I just gave in to the idea. *Why not take the chance?* I was miserable anyway, and it seemed like that would not end until I pursued my crazy obsession to find where she lived and say, hello.

I got to Millersville and knocked on doors to see if someone could point me to the Mellinger family home. The first three places resulted in nothing. I was about half ready to give up, but on the fourth door knock, someone thought the Mellinger family might live on Circle Drive.

I drove to Circle Drive and stopped at a home just a few doors down the street. The person who answered the door said, "Yes, they live down at the end of the street, right on the corner!"

One of Janet's sisters answered the door; Janet was at work until later in the evening. Her sisters were quite intrigued that some guy from Pequea Valley had shown up looking for her, and soon all three were on the front porch talking about the days they had lived in the Kinzers area. I headed home with two important nuggets of information: Janet's phone number and the knowledge there was not another boy in the mix.

In time, the "puppy love" moved into a lifelong commitment and many more opportunities to step into the unknown.

### **We bought a building (1999)**

In the mid-eighties, ACC (Atlantic Coast Conference) collaborated with Discipleship Ministries and established a second YES (Youth Evangelism Service) site in Baltimore, Maryland. ACC partnered with Eastern Mennonite Missions to enlarge the opportunity and found a suitable building in Baltimore.

The building purchased had once been beautiful. Lingered underneath many coats of paint was



solid oak trim, stairways that circled to the next level, beautiful cove moldings, and huge matching doors. YES teams in training assisted with the maintenance, and each team removed layers of paint to reveal the beautiful wood underneath.

I served in ACC as the Conference Youth and Young Adult minister and for many years served on the Discipleship Ministries Board, representing the interests of ACC.

The program directors usually rented a building across the street or nearby. An issue that became quite challenging was landlords who were not always very responsible, and it was common that a utility would be turned off due to the landlord not making payments.

I started entertaining the idea of making a purchase and quickly dismissed it as ridiculous. We still owed much on our own home, and I had no experience in property ownership, particularly in a large city! However, each month while I was in Baltimore, the reminder of this imposing need was there begging for action. Eventually, Jan and I decided to take out a home equity loan against our property and do the unthinkable—buy a brownstone on Eutaw Street, Baltimore. A daunting decision that came with significant challenges, yet we had an intense sense of peace about jumping into it.

We began to relax as our tenants seemed to be doing well, and the building was seemingly sustainable. It felt good to be contributing to the YES program. We have many fond memories of that partnership, the risk of purchasing a building, and the sense of contentment that comes from faithfulness.

### **A sabbatical experience (2002)**

In 2002, ACC offered me the opportunity to have a sabbatical. It was very much appreciated after many years of a demanding schedule. One of the elements of the time away was to travel for a couple of weeks in the Canadian Rockies. Jan and I flew to Seattle, Washington, rented a vehicle, and drove north into British Columbia.

It was wonderful: no schedule to keep, choosing from day to day what to do and see. We meandered east toward Calgary. The Canadian Rockies are ever so amazing, filled with endless beauty, and we enjoyed driving, hiking, and eating in one beautiful location after another. The sky was immense, and the brilliance of the stars was exhilarating!

As we traveled, we began noticing what seemed like military persons stationed here and there in the distance. It seemed a bit odd, but we did not make much of it. We also kept seeing billboards advertis-

ing what seemed like an amazing resort some miles ahead of us. We were intrigued, to say the least.

We finally reached the exit to the resort and decided to take a look. At the end of the ramp, we made a right turn and began heading toward the resort. We only went a short distance and noticed a significant group of military personnel at the stop sign.

Several men stepped into the roadway and stopped us. They wanted to know our purpose for being there and where we were traveling. We said we had seen signs for a resort and just wanted to take a look.

The man questioning us said, “You could continue, but I highly recommend that you turn around now and head back to the highway! If you continue onward, you will most likely be stopped, strip searched, and detained.” That gets your attention!

Hmmm. I said, “Thank you, sir, we will definitely turn around and head back to the highway.”

When we reached our destination in Calgary and got a hotel for the night, we settled in and turned on the news for the first time in weeks. The news reporter was very excitedly discussing the major world event of the G-7 Summit of World Leaders meeting that day at the resort. It was a tense Summit, the first one after the devastation of September 11, 2001, and security was at its highest form. And we clearly were not invited to the meeting! We were sure we had made the right decision when we turned around. After that, we paid a little more attention to the news.

### **The Scary Bennett (2011)**

Early in the summer of 2011, a friend called to inform me that an interesting spiritual director’s certification program was available beginning in the fall. It was tempting and possibly could work with my schedule, but it would take a significant two-year commitment. Several years before, I had begun reading about contemplative spirituality, being still, and using silence to develop a deeper foundation of being with God. I was intrigued by the concept of *being* instead of always *doing*.

For some years, I had been seeking, reading many books and articles about spiritual formation, and participating in some silent retreats and other events. One of those retreats occurred in Nashville, Tennessee, at the Scarritt Bennett Center.

It was a week-long event led by Mike Yaconelli that included long periods of silence, group time, and individual time with spiritual directors. Mike had a hyperactive personality and had spoken a number of times at MC USA youth conventions. One of us was somewhat uncomfortable with the idea of extended

silence and affectionately named the retreat center, The Scary Bennett. As the week proceeded, we each found a place of deep blessing. It proved to be a good experience; we returned home blessed.

Now, Marlene was on the phone, inviting me to step into a certificate program for spiritual directors. I needed a few days for my discernment but chose to apply. I knew I needed the experience which would somehow change my life.

The stresses of ministry began to lessen, and I began noticing new freedom in my ministries with ACC and beyond. I soon found myself longing for the silent times when everyone stopped talking. It was amazing just to sit and BE!

Late in the first year, a group of three women invited Marlene and me to join them to debrief our experiences. What an amazing opportunity for me to experience their life journey and how the program impacted them. I was honored to be the lone other gender, something they all knew much about and had experienced throughout their lives.

Although we came from various ecumenical backgrounds, we had many similarities. We were all looking for deeper spiritual connections. Our lives had been full of color, moments of accomplishment, and moments of despair, and we began trusting each other with our life stories.

Upon completing the program, we all knew that we did not want to lose our life-giving support system. We began to meet monthly as a spiritual direction group of five and continue to meet today. I credit their impact on my life as one of the most important sustaining foundations that have blessed me deeply. In this day of challenges, oppositional opinions, and far too many controversies, they are a strong part of what keeps me grounded and breathing well.

### **That is not supposed to happen! (2017)**

I could not believe what my doctor was telling me; how could this be happening? I gripped the leather cushioning of the table I was lying on and got ready for what would not be fun.

The whole experience began many years before as my spine declined over time. Eventually, I was forced to eliminate many things I enjoyed to protect my lower back and manage the pain. Over the years, it was necessary to change many lifestyle enjoyments like playing softball, golfing, playing volleyball with youth, riding a bicycle, mowing the lawn, and even working in the wood shop. Even with all those efforts, I needed surgery to fuse a number of vertebrae in 2009. The surgery was successful, and after the usual recovery, I had some relatively pain-free years.

During those years of challenge, I had the opportunity to evaluate life and figure out how to make needed adjustments. They were not easy adjustments, but I was determined to live life and make the best of the situation. This was not easy, but like most of life, the only way to get through something difficult is to work your way through it.

In 2017, and after more years of struggle, I had another surgery fusing more vertebrae in the hope of reducing the level of pain that had returned. It seemed like the surgery had gone well, and I was sent home to endure the first week of recovery. Unfortunately, not all was well, and my incision did not seem to heal properly. The incision continued to ooze. We had checked in with my doctor once, and he encouraged us to hang in there and give it more time.

Following the standard protocol, a week later I had an appointment with my surgeon on a Friday to check my progress. As I lay on the table in his office, the standard procedure was to remove the staples and check the incision. But suddenly, everything changed. As he took out a staple or two, my incision started to open, and we were in crisis. Jan was sitting to the side, and my doctor turned to her with his eyes wide open in great concern, a look that she remembers vividly.

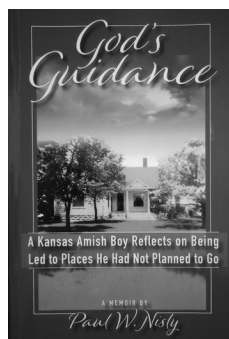
We were about to begin the unthinkable; I had to be sewn up right there, immediately, without anesthesia. Just a week after surgery, my skin was very tender, and it would be a challenge. We got through it, but I am fairly certain I left some fingerprints on the leather cushioning of the table.

I was sent home hoping the incision would heal but given my doctor's mobile number to call if it did not. By Sunday afternoon, it was clear the incision was not stable. I had to have the incision cleaned, recut, and completely start over. And again, I needed to dig deep and find the stamina to do something undesirable. It was an opportunity to avoid bitterness and anger and work through yet another unwanted situation.

The second surgery proved to be a blessing because opening the incision revealed an orange-sized blood clot just inside the muscle tissue. The clot apparently had been the problem all along and could have caused a completely different outcome. And so, we chose to see the events as a blessing, something to be grateful for even though never desired. It was another life experience that prepared me for the next challenge I would need to work through.

# Book Reviews

*God's Guidance: A Kansas Amish Boy Reflects on Being Led to Places He Had Not Planned to Go* by Paul W. Nisly. Author, 2021. 343 pp. Paperback. \$20.00. ISBN: 978-0-578-99445-1.



Some of us are goers; some are stayers.

Paul W. Nisly was a goer. He left his family. He left his beloved Kansas soil. He left the Beachy Amish church. He came back often to visit. He retained deep roots. But he did not stay.

I've been thinking about the goers and the stayers since reading Nisly's newly published memoir, *God's Guidance: A Kansas Amish Boy Reflects on Being Led to Places He Had Not Planned to Go*.

I wondered, as I read, what emotions he experienced as a young Amish and then Beachy Amish boy stepping away from the familiar folds of home into the head-exploding world of modern literature, which he explored on his way to earning his doctorate in English.

He stepped away from a setting of close-knit families and traditional churches, of strict dress codes and expected ways of doing things—not so different from my own background—to a more liberal, though still Mennonite, conference. I wonder why he switched and how he felt, with his sheltered background, to have his eyes opened to other worlds.

Nisly says little about his emotions or reasons for the change, choosing instead to reflect on broader questions of life and death and tensions in the country.

He tells about his marriage to his teenage sweetheart, his academic journey, his work as an educator at Messiah University, as well as his work as a pastor and bishop of Mennonite churches far from his childhood home in Kansas. He went to many places: to Grantham, Pennsylvania, to live; to Alaska, Israel, and Switzerland to vacation; and to Kenya to design a degree program. At the death of his daughter in her young womanhood, he went to a place of grief that still lingers.

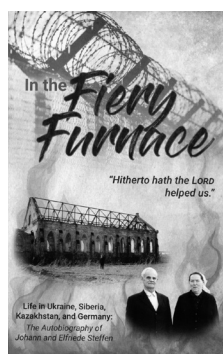
And that is the other realization I had as I read his book. Life is always loss. It doesn't matter, in that respect, if you are a goer or a stayer. In the end, you lose it all. Nisly quotes Douglas Gresham, stepson of C. S. Lewis, in saying all human relationships end in pain.

Nisly concludes, "Unless we enter deeply into Jesus' suffering, we miss the power of the resurrection miracle."

(Selected excerpts reprinted from *Anabaptist World*)

—Lucinda J. Kinsinger  
Oakland, MD

*In the Fiery Furnace: Life in Ukraine, Siberia, Kazakhstan, and Germany—The Autobiography of Johann and Elfriede Steffen (1917–2013)*. *Im Schmelztiegel* by Johann and Elfriede Steffen. Translated by John B. Martin, Ed Kline, and others. Narvon, PA: Frank Weaver, 2022. 256 pp. Paperback. \$14.95. ISBN: 978-1-7333266-6-7.



*In the Fiery Furnace* is the autobiography of Johann and Elfriede Steffen, who bravely suffered for their Christian faith under Soviet communism. Johann shared his life experiences at a Christian Aid Ministries Open House in 1992 and various speaking engagements afterward. Frank Weaver, from Narvon, Pennsylvania, traveled with the Steffens

and translated for them. After the Steffens wrote their autobiography in German (1996), Frank persevered in getting the Steffens' story published in English. *In the Fiery Furnace* resulted from a special friendship between Steffen of Russian Mennonite roots and Weaver of Swiss Mennonite roots.

As a six-year-old boy, Johann Steffen (born 1927) saw the family property being plundered and his father taken away, soon to die in prison. Johann, his mother, and his sisters were a part of the approximately 23,000 Mennonites who migrated from Ukraine with the fleeing German army in 1943, only to be captured and sent back into the USSR. Due to his collaboration with the Germans, he spent about seven years in forced labor and imprisonment, and there he committed his life to Christ. In February 2022, Ukrainians entered another time of indescribable suffering, about ninety years after the horrors of revolution, collectivization, famine, and imprisonment.

After Johann's release, he married Elfriede Wall, who had grown up in a Mennonite settlement in Central Asia. Eventually, Johann became a pastor, and the Russian Communists confined him four more times (about eleven years) for his Christian work.



The Steffens honored Jesus Christ as they wrote about their persecution, refraining from complaint, fanfare, and self-exultation. They lived according to 1 Peter 4:12, not considering their fiery trials to be strange, unexpected happenings. The theme verse and subtitle of the book was obviously real to them: "Hitherto hath the LORD helped us" (1 Samuel 7:12).

This account serves as primary source material for the historian, and it also provides inspirational reading for those who desire to follow the writers' lives without being overwhelmed with details of time and place. Since Johann and Elfriede wrote about the same events from their unique perspectives, a timeline helps clarify the sequence and context of these events. Ed Kline, the translator from Sugar Creek, Ohio, introduces the Mennonite experience in Russia, and other appendices describe the Steffens' special travels after they emigrated to Germany. The maps and the geographical footnotes will resolve at least some of the challenges of Eurasian geography.

This book will inform and inspire Mennonite readers of both Swiss and Russian descent as well as other immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Readers

can all benefit from knowing how our spiritual kinsmen suffered for their faith under communism. They can also be encouraged to be faithful to Jesus Christ in the "fiery furnaces" that life may bring.

A caveat to this review is the fact that I was involved in the final stages of completing the project. Therefore, I conclude with the impressions that Chester Weaver, historian and teacher, shared about this book. "A primary value of this book is the reality check which it provides us Westerners, who know very little of such true stories transpiring at the same time we have been going about our peaceful Western experience. We really need more of such stories. We tend to think that peace and prosperity will always be our experience in the West. The Russian Mennonites thought the same before World War I. Most Mennonites in the West are unprepared for deprivation and persecution. The book is not fiction; it is a record of actual, terrible events which have happened not all that long ago."

—James K. Nolt  
Ephrata, PA

## Research Tips

Readers are invited to share new research findings or photocopies of relevant heirloom or family records in their possession. Mail: Mennonite Life, 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, PA 17602-1499; electronic mail: pmh@mennonitelife.org.

Items in brackets are from secondary sources.

**LEFEVER:** The following family record, written in exquisite fraktur, was extracted from a Lefever family Bible published in 1856 by Jasper Harding in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Jacob Lefever, Dec. 19, 1826–July 16, 1903 (76-6-27)  
m. Nov. 15, 1849, Anna Kreider, Jan. 26, 1831–Oct. 20, 1902 (71-8-24)

Children:

1. Susanna Lefever, b. Jan. 29, 1851, Sign of the Goat [d. Jan. 21, 1921  
m. Henry L. Buckwalter, Oct. 31, 1847–Feb. 3, 1920]
2. Anna Lefever, b. Mar. 20, 1853, Sign of the Lion; d. Apr. 29, 1864 (11-1-9)
3. Abraham Lefever, b. Sept. 20, 1854, Sign of the Virgin [d. Dec. 26, 1899  
m. Annie Burkholder, May 9, 1859–Apr. 3, 1903]

4. Mary Ann Lefever, b. Mar. 25, 1857, Sign of the Ram; d. Jan. 26, 1861 (3-10-1)
5. Malinda Lefever, b. May 11, 1859, Sign of the Virgin; d. May 7, 1864 (4-11-26)
6. John Lefever, b. Aug. 17, 1861, Sign of the Goat [d. Aug. 20, 1942  
m. Luetta Buckwalter, June 17, 1862–May 7, 1935]
7. Benjamin Franklin Lefever, b. Dec. 8, 1868, Sign of the Libra [d. Nov. 25, 1958  
m. Mary L. Landis, Jan. 7, 1868–Mar. 24, 1950]

The Bible apparently passed to Susanna, for another page records the family of Henry L. Buckwalter as follows:

Henry L. Buckwalter, Oct. 31, 1847–Feb. 3, 1920  
m. Susan K. [Lefever] Buckwalter, Jan. 29, 1851–Jan. 21, 1921

Children:

1. Elam L. Buckwalter, Mar. 11, 1871–[Jan. 22, 1902  
m. Hettie B. Landis, Apr. 11, 1872–June 21, 1932]
2. Luetta L. Buckwalter, Mar. 30, 1872–[July 30, 1927  
m. Abram K. Lefever, Feb. 1, 1871–June 19, 1963]

3. Anna L. Buckwalter, Aug. 30, 1874–[June 15, 1971 m. Harry G. Wenger, Apr. 13, 1873–Aug. 25, 1934]
4. Benj. Franklin Buckwalter, Aug. 31, 1875–[Apr. 4, 1931 m. 1901, Lizzie Lawrence, Dec. 8, 1872–Feb. 17, 1955]
5. Amos L. Buckwalter, Nov. 7, 1877–[May 6, 1952 m. Annie M. Bowers, Jan. 20, 1878–Mar. 12, 1963]
6. Lizzie L. Buckwalter, Nov. 6, 1879–[Aug. 16, 1974 m. Elias K. Lefever, May 16, 1879–Oct. 20, 1963]
7. Jonas L. Buckwalter, Jan. 16, 1885–[1980, Ontario, Canada m. Anna M. Rohrer, 1883–1977]

A second Lefever family record was extracted from a Bible published in 1894 by A. J. Holman & Co. in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This carries the Lefever family forward another generation from the previous Bible record.

Abram K. Lefever, b. Feb. 1, 1871, Strasburg Twp., Lancaster Co. [d. June 19, 1963]  
 m. Nov. 22, 1894, by Bishop Isaac Eby, Luetta "Lettie" L. Buckwalter, b. Mar. 30, 1872, E. Lampeter Twp.; d. July 30, 1927

Children:

1. Walter B. Lefever, b. Mar. 15, 1896, E. Lampeter Twp.; d. Aug. 30, 1898
2. John B. Lefever, b. Jan. 21, 1898, E. Lampeter Twp. [d. Dec. 1, 1969]  
 m. Nov. 13, 1919, [Catherine E. "Katie" Brackbill, May 12, 1896–Feb. 4, 1985]
3. Mabel B. Lefever, b. Aug. 12, 1905, E. Lampeter Twp. [d. Jan. 15, 1994  
 Second wife of Abraham L. Gehman, July 6, 1887–Oct. 10, 1979]
4. Grace B. Lefever, b. Mar. 8, 1913, Lancaster Twp. [d. Oct. 12, 2012]

A handwritten note inside the Bible identifies the parents of Abram and Lettie (Buckwalter) Lefever.

Isaac D. Lefever, Dec. 18, 1844–Feb. 17, 1908  
 m. Elizabeth L. [Kreider], Oct. 24, 1845–Jan. 9, 1933

Henry L. Buckwalter, Oct. 31, 1847–Feb. 3, 1920  
 m. Susan [Lefever], Jan. 29, 1851–Jan. 21, 1921

**WEAVER:** The following family record was extracted from a Bible published in 1864 by William W. Harding, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Bible was sold as Lot 390 at the Mennonite Life book auction in July 2016.

John G. Weaver, Nov. 13, 1838–Mar. 5, 1919  
 m. Nov. 9, 1865, Annie Thomas, May 16, 1840–Feb. 20, 1917

Children:

1. Mary Weaver, Jan. 17, 1867–[Dec. 6, 1930]
2. Catharine Weaver, Nov. 28, 1868–Oct. 2, 1920  
 m. [Francis M.] Mylin [Mar. 18, 1873–Jan. 29, 1944]
3. Maris Weaver, Apr. 3, 1872–[Jan. 9, 1942, Illinois m. Emma F. Ebersole, Oct. 1877–Dec. 11, 1942]
4. Abraham Weaver, Jan. 25, 1874–[Dec. 2, 1942, Montana m. Jeanette Elizabeth Hodgson, Jan. 19, 1887–May 18, 1983]
5. Martin Weaver (twin), June 29, 1879–[Apr. 22, 1955 m.(1) Emma Elizabeth Harnish, June 27, 1883–Feb. 23, 1906; m.(2) Bertha Rohrer, 1884–1983]
6. Enos Weaver (twin), June 29, 1879–[Apr. 20, 1950, Illinois]

**HOSHAUER:** The following family record was extracted from the Hoshauer family Bible, published in 1886 by Globe Bible Publishing Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It was sold as Lot 391 at the Mennonite Life book auction in July 2016. Material in brackets is from other sources.

Samuel Hoshauer, July 20, 1870–[May 28, 1954]; son of Jeremiah and Susan (Hoffert) Hoshauer, Brecknock Twp. [Pennsylvania].

m. June 10, 1893, Emma A. Glassmoyer, Feb. 8, 1870–[Nov. 1, 1947]; dau. William and Christina (Ziegler) Glassmoyer, Cumru Twp.

1. Martha Hoshauer, Dec. 8, 1894–Feb. 10, 1927 (32-2-2)  
 m. Feb. 8, 1917, Henry J. Snavelly, [Apr. 20, 1895–June 22, 1959]
  - 1a. Samuel William Snavelly, Aug. 28, 1917–[Mar. 18, 1993  
 m. Mildred L. Buch, Mar. 1, 1917–Nov. 1, 2006]
  - 1b. Henry Dwight Snavelly, b. and d. Jan. 29, 1927

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- Steffen, Johann and Elfriede. *In the Fiery Furnace: Life in Ukraine, Siberia, Kazakhstan, and Germany—The Autobiography of Johann and Elfriede Steffen (1917–2013)*. Translated by John B. Martin, Ed Kline, and others. Narvon, PA: Frank Weaver, 2022. Originally published as *Im Schmelztiegel*. 256 pp. (Paperback). \$14.95. ISBN: 978-1-7333266-6-7.
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