

# SCHUYLKILL COUNTY

PENNSYLVANIA

---

## VITAL RECORDS

Genealogical and Historical Miscellany

Collected and compiled

by

Phillip A. Rice

and

Jean A. Dellock

FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY  
35 NORTH WEST TEMPLE  
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84150

US/CAN

974.817

H2 r

V. 2

## Volume 2

SOUTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA GENEALOGICAL SERVICES

*Pennsylvania's Oldest Genealogical Publishing Company*

Laughlintown, Pennsylvania

1991

7a

- Witnesses: Jacob SCHWALM & Samuel CARL
- E-352 - GIST, Daniel (a farmer), Barry Twp., written, Dec. 23, 1873, probated, Feb. 22, 1875.
  - wf. Catharina to live on the farm and have pers. prop.
  - after her death divide equal among c/o except 3 youngest get \$60.00 more
  - Executor: bro. John GIST
  - Witnesses: Samuel (his mark) MORGAN & W. HOCH
- E-25 - KESSLER, Michael, Hegins, written, Dec. 21, 1878, probated, Apr. 8, 1879.
  - wf. Catharine to live in house, gets rooms, pers. prop., cow + \$200.00
  - to sell grist mill and lands thereto
  - 13 c/o + 1 share to Charles OVERFIELD; 14 shares
  - Executors: 2 s/o; William & Elias
  - Witnesses: Francis HOWER & William HOCH
- E-106 - KLINGER, Jeremiah, Barry Twp., written, May 9, 1855, probated, Feb. 10, 1880.
  - everything to Catharine RICKERT, after death of his wf.
  - signed with his "mark"
  - Executor: Daniel KLINGER
  - Witnesses: William HOCH & Isral DEITRICH
- E-610 - LAUDENSLAGER, Daniel, Hegins, written, July 7, 1883, probated, July 27, 1883.
  - bury Church of God Cem., Valley View
  - to wf. Lydia, house & lot in Valley View, wf. to receive the dower out of the estate sold to John KLOUSER & Benjamin HAAS, resp.
  - to gdd/o Emma; d/o son Jacob J., dec'd \$1,000.00 when 21 yrs
  - after wf's death, sell real & pers. prop. divide equally c/o: Catharine, w/o John KLOUSER; Mary, w/o Joel G. RESSLER; C. I. LAUDENSLAGER; Eliza, w/o Benjamin HAAS; Emma, d/o son Jacob J., dec'd.
  - Executor: son C. I. LAUDENSLAGER
  - Witnesses: Elder S. SMITH, Wm. LEBO & Alfred KLINGER
- E-358 - LEXO, Sophia, Barry Twp., written, Dec. 9, 1879, probated, Jan. 17, 1881.
  - \$127.00 to gd. son Rudolph LEXO
  - \$100.00 to gd. son Charles LEXO
  - to dau.-in-law, Rega, wid/o son John LEXO; her home & prop of 8 acres.
  - rest to gdson. Rudolph
  - signed with her "mark"
  - Executor: not named
  - Witnesses: Samuel STROHECKER & George S. KEHLER
- E-407 - OSMAN, George, Upper Mahantongo Twp., written, Dec. 16, 1881, probated, Apr. 6, 1882.
  - wf. not mentioned
  - \$300.00 to d/o Sarah
  - rest divided equal to Heirs of: dau. Sarah; dau. Elisabeth RABUCK; dau. Jane HAN; son Isaac OSMAN; dau. Angeline MAURER; son Henry; son Cornelius. (PAR - directed to heirs of each of above)
  - 1 share to d/o Catharine SLAPPIG
  - Executor: Frederick S. SCHWALM, Esq.
  - Witnesses: H. M. MAURER & E. STIELY
- E-357 - REHBOCK, Jacob, Eldred Twp., written, Apr. 26, 1878, probated, Dec. 1, 1879.
  - wf. Elizabeth

He is a director of the Minersville Safe Deposit Bank, formerly the Minersville State Bank. During the last ten years he has traveled extensively, visiting Canada, the New England States, Florida, Texas, and California. The following are the children: Clarence Raymond, born in 1902; Myrtle Marie, born in 1905; Floyd Allen born in 1909; Fhenie Irene, born in 1911; Eva Mae, born in 1915; Clevant Charles, born in 1916, and Helen Vera, born in 1917. Of the children, Clarence Raymond is married, and is a prominent meat dealer at Hargins; Myrtle Marie received the B.S. degree in music from the New York University in 1935, and is a teacher in the public schools at Llewellyn; Floyd Allen is married, and has two children, Floyd Allen Jr., born in 1932 and Darye Patricia, born in 1936; Fhenie Irene is married to Stewart ROWLAND, and has one child, Eleanor Jean, born in 1934.

The ARTZs are of German descent. Among the records in the archives at Philadelphia are the following:

"September 23, 1732, fifty-seven Palatines, who with their families making in all one hundred forty-five persons, were imported here in the ship "Adventure", Robert CURSON, from Rotterdam, but last from Cowes." Among the names on this list was Johannes ARTES (ARTZ), aged 5 years.

And also the following:

"Tuesday, September 24, 1751, the foreigners whose names are underwritten, imported in the ship Neptuna, John MAGON, commander, from Rotterdam, and last from Cowes, did this day take the usual qualifications and suscribe them." On this list was Johann Jacob ARTZ.

The members of the ARTZ family, with few exceptions, have been and are members of the Lutheran Church. Studying the church records of the ARTZs in Berks County, we found that all of them were Lutherans. Philip ARTZ and Michael ARTZ of the third generation were on the building committee of the old log Friedens Reformed and Lutheran Church at Hargins, built in 1817. Very many ARTZs appear on the church record at Sacramento. The church at Sacramento is named after the ARTZs, and is sometimes called ARTZs' Church. Frank ARTZ was a charter member of the Lutheran Church at Fountain. In the Friedens Church at Hargins, Jonas ARTZ was an elder and sons and grandsons have been and are on the official board, and David S. ARTZ was on the building committee of the Friedens Church, Hargins, built in 1874.

The ARTZ family is noted for their determination and perseverance. They belong to a thrifty, honest and industrious family. They believe in having things well managed. They believe in leaving a heritage for the following generation better than they received it. They find work or make it by going into some enterprise. They hate hypocrisy and sham. They have mechanical ability and believe in learning a trade. Jonas ARTZ and his boys were not only good farmers, but also good mechanics. Most of them belong to the Democratic party, but they are not interested in politics to the extent of seeking public office.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN HEGINS TOWNSHIP

The beginnings of education in Hargins Township is hidden in the dim and misty past. Very few reliable records are available. At the formation of Schuylkill County, in 1811, Lower Mahantongo Township comprised the territory from the top of the Mahantongo Mountain south to the Pinegrove Township line; and from the Barry Township line west to Dauphin County. In 1840, Porter Township was separated from Lower Mahantongo. This left the beautiful valley, drained by the Deep Creek and the Pine Creek, as Lower Mahantongo Township. The region was covered with tall pine trees, interspersed with oak, chestnut, maple and spruce. It was known as "The beautiful pine valley." Pine Grove received its name from the pine forests along Pine and Deep

Creeks. Prior to the formation of Lower Mahantongo Township this region was a part of Pinegrove Township. Into this region came Pennsylvania German settlers from beyond the Blue Mountains. They followed the "Tulpehocken Trail", some settling along the "Trail" between Sacramento and Klingerstown Gap; others built their log huts along Pine Creek near Rausch Gap. Many settled in the Kesslers and Fountain regions. They brought with them no schoolmasters nor preachers. But they believed in education and were devout churchmen. To them education and religion went together, and education was a function of the Church. They brought with them the Holy Bible, the Heidelberg and the Lutheran Catechism, the Book of Prayers, and Arndst's True Christianity.

Besides these they had, to guide them in the planting of their crops, a copy of the Lancaster Almanac. The various phases of the zodiac and the change of the moon were judiciously followed in the planting of corn, potatoes and garden trucks. Fence posts were set and shingles were put on in the "down-turn" of the moon so they would not "turn-up". All their books were in German and education for many years was in that language, and in many instances the parents were the teachers. There must have been a school in the Kessler's district as early as 1800, for the records say that in 1801 Rev. Mr. RILEY of the Reformed Church organized a congregation in the log school house on the seven-acre plot of ground situated on Deep Creek, donated by Michael KESSLER for church and school. Isaac BETZ is mentioned as an early schoolmaster. The parents of the children of several families usually employed some one, often an itinerant schoolmaster to give instruction in reading, writing and "figuring" for a few months in the winter - reading, to read the Bible and the Catechism; writing to sign their names and enter accounts; and "numbers" to compute the price of the few things they sold.

When the members of the Reformed Church united with their Lutheran brethren, in 1817, and built the log church at the present site of the Friedens Evangelical Lutheran Church at Hegins, provisions was made for a Church School. Valentine SAVIDGE was one of the early schoolmasters. He was a land surveyor and served as Justice of the Peace. He was a beautiful penman.

In the western part of what is now Hegins Township, prior to the establishing of the free school, Andrew SCHROB and a few of his neighbors employed a New England schoolmaster to teach their boys to speak, read and write the English language. The sessions of the school were held in a tannery north of the present town of Valley View. As English speaking people settled other parts of Schuylkill County, those advocates of English realized that knowledge of that language was needed to carry on trade with those people.

This brings us to the time of the struggle for the free public schools in Lower Mahantongo Township (now Hegins and Hubley Townships).

The Free Public School Act became a law in Pennsylvania in 1834. Many people were opposed to the free school. Among the most bitter opponents were the Pennsylvania Germans, who constituted a large part of the inhabitants of Schuylkill County, almost forming the entire population of the farming townships. The attempts to establish schools in an entire township failed in nearly every instance. "Education is the function of the church or of the individual parents," they said. "Why should the man without children be taxed to educate the children of his neighbor," who was often a bitter enemy of his. Furthermore those pioneer Germans were jealous of their language, and many were afraid that English would become the language of the people, if the common schools were established.

There were other reasons. Jonathan KREWSON, the first County Superintendent of Schools in Schuylkill County, in his report for 1855, when there were still many sections of the County without free schools, says: "The opposition of the free school is based not so much on a misconceived opinion of the value of education as on the conviction of

their inability to defray the expense incident to it. Through an unwillingness to acknowledge their poverty as the real cause of their opposition, they resorted to every fictitious objection which the subject and the circumstance could suggest. Hence they said that an education makes a man lazy, dishonest, a counterfeiter, and so forth; and that it makes their daughters proud and indolent. These objections have grown up with the people and their arguments are impregnable."

Not being able to have a majority of the citizens of an entire township vote in favor of free schools, the law permitted the voters of a part of the township to petition the State Legislature for permission to hold an election, and if a majority favored schools, to elect directors, levy taxes and select teachers. In 1840 Lower Mahantongo Township comprised what are now Hegins and Hubley Townships. A large majority of the people of the entire township were against public schools. In the eastern end of the township, now better known as the Fountain district, lived the following citizens in 1840: Jacob BRESSLER, Jacob BRESSLER Jr., David BRESSLER, Peter BRESSLER, Solomon BRESSLER, Michael BRESSLER, Joseph BRESSLER, George DINGER, Isaac ENGLE, Daniel FIDDLER, John GEHRES, George HABERACKER, Daniel HABERACKER, John KUNTZELMAN, John MINNICH, Abraham MORGAN, John MORGAN, David OTTO, Jonathan OTTO, William OTTO, Peter OTTO, Philip REED, Philip REED Jr., Abraham REED, Joseph SNYDER, Peter STUTZMAN, David STUTZMAN, Peter STUTZMAN Jr., Michael STUTZMAN, Christian STUTZMAN, David SCHUCKER, George ZERBE. Among those were some ardent advocates of the free school. By taking a "straw vote" the champions of the public school saw that by cutting out the HABERACKERS, living near what was later the WHITE farm, (where there were two votes against school), and going west as far as the foot of the Little Mountain, they could carry the election for free schools. An application to the State Legislature was made, and the following Special Act was passed and approved by Governor David R. PORTER, June 5, 1840:

"That from and after the passage of this Act, the qualified citizens of Lower Mahantongo Township, Schuylkill County, residing within the following limits, to wit: Beginning at the Barry Township line, on the north side of the Broad Mountain, in said township; (in the vicinity of the farm of the late J. Claude WHITE. The eastern part of the present Hegins Township was then a part of Barry), thence along the said mountain, so as to include the house of John KUNSELMAN; (where Wm. H. ARTZ now lives) thence across the said township of Lower Mahantongo in a line so as to include the house of Joseph SNYDER; (where Charles FETTEROLF now lives) thence along the said township line, as to include the house of Daniel FIDLER; (where John SCHROPE now lives) thence along the south side of the Little Mountain, so as to include the house of John GEHRUS; (house no longer standing), thence along the said mountain to a point, in a direct line to the Barry Township line aforesaid, shall form a separate school district, subject to the same provisions and restrictions in the Act entitled "An Act to establish a general system of education by Common Schools," passed April 1, 1834, and its supplements. The first election of School Directors to be held at the house of Peter STUTZMAN in said township, under the direction of Peter STUTZMAN Jr., Peter BRESSLER and Peter DINGER, who are hereby required or a majority of them, to give public notice of the time and place of the holding such election at least ten days prior thereto."

Under this act, a public school was opened in the school house erected opposite the present Christ Lutheran and Reformed Church, at Fountain. The directors examined the applicants for teaching. The teachers taught whatever books the pupils brought to school. Many had no books and the teacher taught the letter from the chart. Many studied German books. The entire yearly cost of operating the school for many years was \$100.00 for teacher's salary for four months, and about \$10.00 for fuel and contingencies. About the year 1860, the East Hegins school house was built, at the junction of the Pottsville road

and the road from Jacob KAUFMAN's. It was known as No. 2, or HERB's School. It will be noticed that the boundary of the school district only mentions houses, none of the uninhabited mountain land was included. Later this worked to the disadvantage of the district. The valuable coal lands of the township were outside the school district. The town of Lambertson, founded in 1888, was found to be on the territory of the Lower Mahantongo School District and the directors paid tuition for its pupils to the Hegin Township School District.

A large majority of the voters of the remaining portion of Lower Mahantongo Township (Hegin and Hubley) were opposed to the free public school, and it required a campaign of education before any part of the township could carry an election. Among the advocates of free public schools living in the western part of what is now Hegin Township were Andrew SCHROB, Daniel LAUDENSLAGER, Ruben HUNTZINGER, George RESSLER, Valentine SAVIDGE, Joseph OSSMAN and Abraham SCHWANK. In the part of the Lower Mahantongo Township which is now Hubley Township there were many friends of public education. On April 13, 1841, the following Act was passed by the State Legislature forming the Coal and Pine School District:

"That all that part of Lower Mahantongo Township in Schuylkill County, lying within the bounds hereinafter mentioned, to wit: Beginning at a black oak corner of Porter, Lower Mahantongo and Pinegrove Townships; thence along the dividing line of the latter townships north fifty-one degrees east 442 perches to a pine, and north sixty-seven degrees east 781 perches to a corner in the line of Branch Township; thence along a line of Branch and Barry Townships north fifty degrees west to the southeast corner of the new school district in said townships (the Lower Mahantongo District) thence along the south boundary of the said district westward to the southwest corner; thence northwardly to the northwest corner; thence eastward so as to include the farm of John KESSLER (farm where William LANDER now lives) thence northwardly to the division line between Upper and Lower Mahantongo Townships; thence along said division line to the Dauphin County line; thence along said county line to Porter Township to the place of beginning, be and the same is hereby erected into a separate school district to be called Pine and Coal School District.

"That the farm of George HABERACKER in Lower Mahantongo Township be attached to the Lower Mahantongo School District, to be considered as part of said district for all common school purposes."

This Act authorized the establishing of public schools in all of Lower Mahantongo Township except the eastern part of what was later known as the KESSLER district of the township. There may have been a public school in that district prior to the passage of the Act creating the Coal and Pine District. Under this Act three schools were established in what is now Hubley Township and they were continuous unto the formation of that township out of Lower Mahantongo Township in 1853, and continued thereafter under the name of Hubley Township School District.

No schools were established under this Act in the territory of what is now Hegin Township, including the villages of Hegin (Renntown) and Valley View (Ossmantown). The persons mentioned above as friends of public schools now began a most aggressive campaign, and on February 18, 1847, the State Legislature passed an Act to erect parts of Lower Mahantongo Township in Schuylkill County, into a separate School District. The Act follows:

"That all that part of Lower Mahantongo Township, Schuylkill County, lying within the boundaries hereinafter mentioned, viz: Beginning at a black oak, corner of Lower Mahantongo, Porter and Pinegrove Townships, thence along the division line of the last two townships, north fifty-one degrees east 442 perches to a pine, thence north sixty-seven degrees east 781 perches to the line of Branch Township; thence along the line of Branch and Barry Townships north fifty degrees west to the south-east corner of the new school district in said Township (the

Lower Mahantongo District); thence along the south boundary of said school district, westward to the southwest corner of said district; thence northwardly to the northwest corner; thence westward for a new corner, so as to include the farm of Samuel HEETER (where Charles ECKLER now lives); thence northward to the point at which the main road crosses the Mahantongo Mountain, and on the dividing line of Upper and Lower Mahantongo Townships; thence westward along the line of the said townships to a corner, so as to include the property of Wm. HOFF; thence southward a straight line so as to strike what is called Jones' line, and then to follow the same to the line of Porter Township; thence eastward along the said division to the corner of Porter Township; thence southwardly to the place of beginning, be and the same is hereby erected into a separate school district, to be called Well Made School District.

"That John SHROB, senior, be appointed Judge, and John HERRY and W. R. HOWER, be and they are hereby appointed inspectors, to hold an election at the same time and place at which the township election is held, for the purpose of electing directors for the above mentioned school district."

The boundaries of this new district were almost identical with what later became the boundaries of the Hegin School District.

At the election held in accordance with this Act, Philip OSMAN, Andrew SCHROPE, Peter STUTZMAN Jr., Elias ARTZ, Jacob STEIN and Samuel SHADE were elected the first school directors of the Well Made School District. Three school houses were erected and schools opened - one at the site of the BOSSLER motion picture house, at Valley View; one just east of the Lutheran Church, at Hegin, and the third at the mountain road on the BLYLER farm.

How did the public school begin in the Kessler district? As stated above there was a church or subscription school in this section as early as 1800, and it is probably that this school was continuous unto the time of the Free School Act, in 1834, and that soon thereafter the school was recognized as a free public school, by general agreement of the citizens of that part of the township, and the school later located on a site near KESSLER's mill. After the separation of Hubley Township from Lower Mahantongo in 1853, the name of what was left of the original Lower Mahantongo Township, was, by Act of the Legislature, February 9, 1854, changed to Hegin Township.

In 1856 the name of the Well Made district was changed to Hegin district, and the Lower Mahantongo Township (Kesslers') district was to be annexed to Hegin district. We now turn to the Court records for the boundaries of the Lower Mahantongo Township (Kesslers') district:

"At the Court of Quarter Sessions of the Peace in and for the said County held at Pottsville in and for the said County on the fifth day of December A. D., 1856, before the Judge of the same Court, upon the petition of sundry inhabitants of the part of Hegin Township in the said County setting forth that they desire to remain a separate school district called Lower Mahantongo Township, as they were heretofore with the same bounds and metes, they occupied heretofore, being part of said Hegin Township, whereupon the Court upon due consideration had, in the premise, do order and appoint Hiram KIMMEL, Jacob ARTZ Jr., and John UPDEGRAVE, commissioners to view and report &c....."

Report of the commissioners:

"We, the persons appointed by the within order of Court to view a separate proposed school district and of a part of Hegin Township school district in Schuylkill County, and after being duly sworn according to law in pursuance of said order we have viewed the proposed bounds and metes for the separate school district to be called Lower Mahantongo Township school district, do report that we do return the same as a separate district; to wit, Beginning at a post on line of Andrew DIETRICH (now Oliver SAVIDGE on line of farm of Charles ECKLER) and others north 30 degrees west 500 perches to a post on the Eldred

FUCHS. In that he is listed as having served as a 1st Lt. in Penna. This holds out with his pension application, which reveals several tours of duty at various times and one of them as an Officer.

BIXLER, CHRISTIAN served in the Penna. Volunteers from Berks Co., June 1780 in the Company of Capt. Michael WOLF. Ref: Penna. Archives, Series 5, Vol. 5, page 185

KESSLER, MICHAEL, Pvt, in the 6th Battalion of Berks Co. Militia under Col. Joseph HIESTER in the 1780 period. Ref: Penna. Archives, Series 5, Vol. 5, pg. 239

BOUM, HENRY and JOHN, both Pvts - served in the 6th Battalion of the Berks Co. Militia under Capt. Jacob MYERS. Ref: Penna. Archives, Ser. 5, Vol. 5, pg. 247

REDINGLE, ANDREW, Pvt, served in the Berks Co. Militia, Capt. KEEFERS Co. in 1782. Ref: Penna Archives, Ser. 5, Vol. 5, pg. 287

MOURER, MARTIN among those listed in Capt. EMERICH's Co., as paying a fine. Ref. Penna. Archives, Ser. 3, Vol. 6, pg. 282

STUTZMAN, CHRISTIAN is among those listed in the Company of Capt. BRETZ as having paid a fine. Ref. Penna. Archives, Series 3, Vol. 6, pg. 293

DINGER, PETER served in the 6th Battalion under Capt LESHER, Ref: Penna. Archives, Series 3, Vol. 6, pg. 318

STRONG, HENRY served in the Phila. Co. of Associators and Militia, the 5th Battalion, 8th Co. with Capt. Andrew CAMPBLE. Ref: Penna Archives Series, 6, Vol. 1, pg. 872

STRONG, JOHN, Pvt., 5th class in the Phila. Co. Militia, 8th Co., in 1781, served under Capt. Andrew CAMPBLE. Ref: Penna. Archives, Series 6, Vol. 1, pg. 853

OTTO, WILLIAM, Pvt., served in the 6th class, Lancaster Co. Militia, the 5th Batt. 7th Co., under Capt. Rudolph STATLER from Earl Twp. Ref: Penna. Archives, Ser. 5, Vol. 7, pg. 505

ARTZ, JACOB paid a fine in Capt. LESHER's Co. Ref: Penna. Archives, Series 3, Vol. 6, pg. 291

Lt. JOHN HOFFMAN, Pvt. MATTHIAS DEIBLER, Pvt. JOHN NICHOLAS HOFFMAN and Pvt. MICHAEL SOLLIDAY all served in Capt. ALBRIGHT DEIBLER's Co. in 1776. Ref: Penna. Archives, Series 2, Vol. 13, pg. 317

BECKLI, ULRICH took Oath of Allegience in Heidelberg Twp., Dauphin Co. 23 June 1778. Ref: Penna. Archives, Series 2, Vol. 13, pg. 426

BECKLY, ULRICH, Pvt., served in the 2nd Batt. of Lancaster Co. Militia in 1780 under Maj. SHOUFFLER with Capt. Baltzer ORTH in Command. Ref: Penna. Archives, Series 5, Vol. 7, pg. 120

STAHLMAN, JOHN, Pvt., 5th class in the Lancaster Co. Militia, 3rd Batt. in Company of Col. Alexander LOWRY with Capt. ARLHART, Company Cdr. Ref: Penna. Archives, Series 5, Vol. 7, pg. 206

KLINGER, ALEXANDER served in the Berks Co. Militia, 6th Batt. in Command of Col. Joseph HIESTER and Capt. Conrad SHIRMAN in 1780. Ref: Penna. Archives, Series 5, Vol. 5, pg. 242

KLINGER, PHILIP, Jr., served in the Berks Co. Militia while guarding prisoners at Reading in 1781. Under the Command of Ens. Nicholas CONRAD. Ref: Penna. Archives, Series 5, Vol. 5, pg. 291. Also, he served under Sgt. George EISENPEIS, guarding prisoners in 1781. Ref: Penna. Archives, Series 5, Vol. 5, pg. 292

KLINGER, JONATHAN, served under Lt. Joseph GLEAVES in 1782, guarding prisoners. Ref: Penna. Archives, Series 5, Vol. 5, pg. 293