

Martha Compleman
w/ birthday card

Thursday, July 18, 1996

Dear Martha,

I'll start a letter between phone calls at work. I have an awful lot of "spare time" to write letters, etc. I used to do a lot of "proofing" during my quiet times (at work). I don't have "proofing" any more because the books are finished (praise the Lord!).

It is such a relief to have the books completed and distributed. I have one more delivery: Salt Lake City Utah Family History Center (L.D.S. F.H.C.). I'll be there this time two weeks from now. I plan to take a set to the Acquisitions Department and attempt to get the old microfilm(s) removed from distribution, and the old book removed from the library shelf.

I've been "toying" with the idea of attending the annual summer seminar at Brigham Young Univ., at Provo. I finally made up my mind and sent in my reservation. I received a confirmation a few days ago, and made my plane reservation yesterday. I can't afford the trip but will do it anyway. Putting it on plastic with all the other expenses.

There are over 100 classes offered for four days, July 30 thru August 2nd. I'm taking classes re: researching your ancestors in Germany (and Switzerland), resources, etc. Now I want to attempt to find information about my immigrant Michael Frantz. I don't know why other researchers haven't found that info other than very expensive to hire someone in Europe. I'm hoping to find the resources in the U.S. to search the records that may have been filmed, published, etc.

My immigrant Michael Frantz was apparently an educated man. He was a leader in the early Brethren Church; he wrote proverbs and hymns. Maybe there is a record of him in a university in Germany. Finding that information will become my next major project but I won't be a "fanatic" about it.

Since I typed the above, I've been out to pick up my plane tickets, checked about a rent-a-car, and talked to the Acquisitions Dept. in Salt Lake. They are delighted that I'm bringing... & they will remove the other films and books from circulation and shelf. They really don't want a set of books (the new books) that take 9 inches of shelf space. I personally prefer that Salt Lake City researchers use microfilm just like everyone else.

I can charge all this expense (classes and library research) to business expense. After all the out-of-pocket expense, I guess this is my "reward" -- a trip to Provo and Salt Lake.

-- over --

To be honest, this whole summer is turning out to be one long vacation charged to "business expense." The mileage to Modesto to deliver 17 sets of books. Not much expense during that week but can claim the mileage. Next, on the spur-of-the-moment, I decided to go to Dayton, Ohio, to the Studebaker family reunion. That was great! and my only expense was airfare. I stayed with a couple of cousins, one night each, and I stayed at the Studebaker "homestead" for three nights. (I was in an authentic old log cabin that had been moved in and had a modern bathroom and kitchen added. Nice!)

On Saturday, June 23rd, I saw an Old German Baptist Brethren lady at the Studebaker reunion. I walked up to her and said: "Didn't I see you in Modesto a couple of weeks ago." Well, yes, I had and she had picked up a set of books that she had ordered months before. She is another "cousin" -- and her husband is a "cousin" too. Well she wanted me to go home with her that night but I wanted to stay for all the Studebaker activities the next day. Vera and George came back the next day and I went home with them (which was OK with the "cousin" that I was supposed to go home with.)

Sunday evening we talked and talked and they (Vera & George) said they wanted me to come back when I could stay longer. I said I would because I eventually wanted to get to Richmond, Indiana, and visit Earlham College where a Quaker grandmother attended in the 1800's. I didn't know that Richmond was only about 20 miles from their home and they do their shopping there all the time. Vera insisted that we go the next day; I protested. We went and had a wonderful time. I got to see the beautiful campus. I hastily purchased five books about the Coffin family, Levi Coffin and "the Underground Railroad," etc., from the college bookstore. We went to the archives and I was zipping around just looking at the books on the shelves. I saw one titled "Women of Guilford County, North Carolina" and opened to the index and found my great-great-grandmother in a biographical sketch. I rushed upstairs to a copy machine and made a copy. We stopped at Bethany Theological Seminary on the campus (Church of the Brethren " ") and I learned some things important to my research. Had lunch in a beautiful old home converted to restaurant. Finally about 4 p.m. Vera got me to the home of Alvin and Ruth Funderburg.

Delightful visit with another "cousin" that has published the Funderburg family history that is intertwined with Frantz families. I had never met them but had corresponded. When I had the impulse to attend the Studebaker reunion I phoned him and asked if he would be there. "Yes" and they would be glad to have me as a guest and pick me up at the airport. They did pick me up and take me back to the airport. Because I didn't have transportation, and because I wanted to spend every minute at the Studebaker reunion, the Studebaker's said I could stay in one of the cabins.

While with Alvin, he brought out a large Christopher Saur 1776 Bible with the name Johannes Frantz on the front cover. Because of my Frantz books (which he had ordered pre-publication) he had figured out who had owned the Bible. I think

it is very possible that the Bible might have belonged to my immigrant Michael Frantz's son, Michael Frantz. He would have been a contemporary of Christopher Saur. It was a thrill to hold this Bible printed and published in 1776. I'm photographed with the Bible.

Other photographs were taken of me in one of my pioneer dresses, with a sunbonnet, in an old Studebaker covered wagon. However, there wasn't a canvas cover on the wagon. The Studebaker family had a parade on Sunday afternoon with old cars, wagons, etc. Lots, and lots, of fun. (Studebakers and Frantzes are inter-married but they are not interested in their Frantz heritage. Very little interest in my books. The Studebakers talk about "Samuel and Nancy Studebaker" and I'll bet most of them don't know that Nancy's maiden name was Frantz.)

Now, I'm planning for ten days in Utah. I was going to drive but it is 1100 miles up there. I think I'd spend a lot more on gasoline for 2200 or 2300 miles than the \$123. round trip ticket. Plus not having to spend four days driving!! I'm feeling "free as a bird." Well, that will end soon because I'm running out of vacation time -- and I ought to put on the brakes and try to pay for last years cruise and this years trips. Right!?!?

There has been a big emotional let-down now that the books are done. Gosh, I have all this time on my hands. I don't have to rush home and turn on the computer. I don't have to sit here at work and "proof" pages. (For all that proofing, I found a minor mistake last night that had been overlooked.) There really is a void in my life. I am back to the computer trying to "catch up" with stuff that piled up. I've pulled weeds; and done some housecleaning to "reorganize the clutter." The mobilehome is still a disaster because I still have Xerox boxes of paper (pages) sitting around. I've ordered some more binders but they haven't arrived. Sometimes I wonder if I'm destined to live forever in that over-crowded mobilehome. Sometimes I just want it neat and tidy!

I've been gathering up "stuff" and giving it to a local thrift shop. I went through my closet and got rid of stuff I don't wear. I'm going through cupboards, too. I've thrown away lots of printout pages, too, that are no longer necessary. Every day I'm thinking, "Do I need this?" I'm even to the place (almost) where I don't go to thrift shops because I might be tempted to buy something I don't need. (Almost, but not quite! After all, I can't go shopping at Mervyn's, or Penneys, or Sears -- or the Mall. I can't afford them.)

Well, I'm going to take this out of the typewriter. It's almost 4:00 and I havn't done much Los Angeles County work today. I've answered the phone -- and that's about all. I get absolutely bored to death with this job. I'd die of boredom if it weren't for my own projects!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Before I forget it; I'll be staying with another "cousin" in Provo. She has phoned & corresponded with me in the past. She lives in Provo so I called and asked if her invitation still stood. "Is the welcome mat out?" She is a Showalter "cousin" -- my mother's maiden name. So I'll get another flavor of family history. The variety is very nice!

9:30 a.m. Friday, July 19th. I've finished all my filing and miscellaneous. Right now there isn't a thing left to do except answer the phone if it rings. I think it will be a long, boring, day. I have some reading material....

I've figured out why I have a spastic colon. During the last several months, I have been drinking very little Kombucha because I was traveling, etc. etc. I didn't want to start a batch. However, I did have a number of bottles full in the refrigerator and would drink occasionally. While I was on vacation -- away from home -- I did not have a single incident with my colon. The books were finished so I couldn't blame the problem on stress. Well, would you believe?, the minute I'm home and have to return to work, the colon starts kicking up. I've decided the problem is my job -- specifically stress on my job. I was feeling anxiety because the boss might "chew me out." Furthermore, the boss is on vacation this month and I'm not having any problem. When I return from Salt Lake, I'll start brewing Kombucha again because I really believe I had a lot more energy when I was drinking it. I'm glad I was able to identify the source. (Of course, it might have been stress about completing the books.)

I love my van! However, it's a gas-hog. I'm getting about 17 mpg on the open road and less around town. It sure came in handy to move all the pages of the books (about 50 Xerox boxes full). Then about 40 boxes were transported to the Post Office. The boxes are quite large and shipping weight was 21 pounds. It has a trailer hitch and electric brakes but it may be several years until I pull a trailer. At this point I'm figuring it will be three and one-half years until retirement.

I didn't mean to wait so long to mail a birthday card to you. I knew it would have to be forwarded so I intended to get it in the mail early. So now I have to wish you a Happy BELATED Birthday. Hope it was very happy!

Are you settled now? When you have time, bring me up-to-date.

John
Johnson