

THE FRANTZ NAME IN COLONIAL AMERICA

The Three Frantz Brothers

The earliest ship arrivals of the Frantzes in Pennsylvania, as recorded in the *Pennsylvania Archives*, are as follows:

Michael Sr.	Age 40,	<i>Ship Molly</i>	Sept. 30, 1727
Balser Frantz	Age ,	<i>Ship Adventure</i>	Oct. 2, 1727
Christian Frantz Sr.	Age 47,	<i>Ship Samuel</i>	Aug. 11, 1732

These three were no doubt brothers, indicated by the fact that they were from the same locality, having been born in the small town of St. Jacob near Basel, Switzerland. With other Swiss Mennonites, they accepted the invitation of Elector Karl Ludwig of the Palatinate to settle in his territory in order to escape the religious oppression of the Mennonites and other Anabaptists, which was then going on in Switzerland. In 1717, Michael was paying six (6) florins protection money in Hassloch, as shown by Mennonite records. He continued to pay six florins annually until 1720 when he left for Krefeld, Germany, where he became a friend of Alexander Mack and Peter Becker, both 'Brethren' ministers. Probably about this time, he became a member of the Church of the Brethren*. He arrived in Pennsylvania in 1727, accompanied by his son Michael, and settled along the Cocalico Creek in Lancaster County.

Christian and Balser left Switzerland about the same time and also settled in Hassloch, a short distance from Neustadt an der Weinstrasse. Both Neustadt and Hassloch are about twenty to thirty miles west of Heidelberg, while Hassloch is also about twenty-five miles northeast of Strasbourg. This section today, part in Germany and part in France, contains many Frantzes and seems to be the ancestral home of most of the people of that name. This is in the Rhineland Pfalz area, not far from Zweibrucken (Deux Ponts) in the Saar, and Strasbourg in Alsace. Both the previously mentioned Swiss and French Huguenot families of the Frantzes seem to have met in this area.

Records show that both Balser and Christian paid their six (6) florins of tribute money annually. The name of Balser did not appear on the lists after 1726, and in 1727 he arrived in Pennsylvania. Christian kept paying taxes or tribute money until 1731, when his name also disappeared from the list, and in 1732 he landed in Pennsylvania. Both were Mennonites and apparently continued as such until they changed to the Church of the Brethren when they arrived in Pennsylvania, probably due to the influence of Michael.

The Christian names of the descendants of all three brothers were similar, and one reason for the difficulty in securing the family data was because of the frequency with which the names Christian and Michael appeared. Some of the descendants of these two brothers remained in Pennsylvania; others moved to Virginia; those of Balser remained in Pennsylvania.

* not so named until 1908; earlier called German Baptist Brethren, or Dunkers.

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