

## Elder Joseph Frantz

Joseph Frantz was born in Botetourt County, Virginia on November 30, 1813. He was only one year of age when he came to Clark County with his parents, David and Elizabeth Garst Frantz. He was the great-grandson of Elder Michael Frantz, the first resident elder of the Conestoga Congregation of the German Baptist Brethren in Pennsylvania.

Joseph Frantz was elected to the ministry at an early age in the Donnels Creek Church, Clark County, Ohio. The records show that he was an ordained minister before he performed the marriage ceremony uniting John Garst and Mary Bogart on October 19, 1835 in Clark County, Ohio.

In the early 1830's he left Clark County and moved into the wilderness in what is now Defiance County, Ohio. There he met and married Nancy Hornish on June 18, 1834. She was the eldest daughter of the pioneer family of John and Catherine Ely Hornish. Soon after their marriage he purchased some farm land from her father in Adams Township.

He was one, if not the first, farmer ministers of the North Poplar Ridge community. He performed the marriage ceremony uniting Jacob Lehman and Philopena Fries on November 15, 1846. This was Jacob's second marriage, as his first wife, Mary Baer, had died.

Joseph and Nancy were the parents of four sons and two daughters. All of the children, except the youngest daughter, Catherine, died as children. Two of them, David and Eli, died within two days of each other in the summer of 1842. Nancy died soon after the birth of their youngest daughter, Catherine. Her body was the first to be interred in the Adams Ridge Cemetery.

Joseph, after the tragedy in his home and after his pioneer experience, decided to return to Clark County. He sold his home in Adams Township in 1847.

When he returned to Clark County he purchased a farm near the Donnels Creek Church and continued in his ministry. He also remarried, taking for his wife Catherine Neher, who became the mother of their three children; namely, Henry, Samuel N. and Susannah.

Catherine, the daughter of Joseph and Nancy, returned with her father to Clark County. Her grandfather, John Hornish, mentioned her in his will and testament.

Catherine was married to William Brown of Clark County. They started west to homestead in Kansas but she was stricken by fever on the way and was buried in Missouri. They had one daughter, Nancy, who became the wife of Joseph Grisso on December 21, 1894, and was the mother of three sons and four daughters.

Joseph Frantz died in Clark County on March 2, 1866, age 52 years, 3 mo. 2 days.