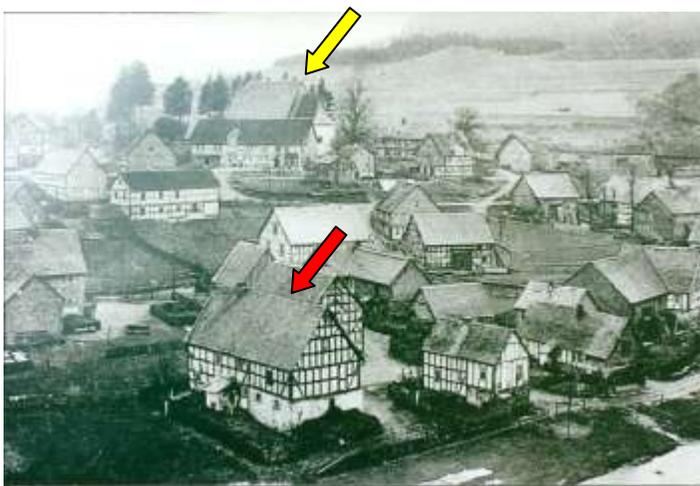


Dreisbach Family Association

September 2012 Newsletter©

Martin Dreisbach, Part one:

From Wittgenstein to Berks County. This is the first of two issues of the DFA Newsletter which will document the life of Martin Dreisbach. Born in 1717 in Wittgenstein, he immigrated to Pennsylvania in 1751. There he had farms in Cocalico Township, Lancaster County, in Alsace Township, Berks County, and in Buffalo Township, Union County, Pennsylvania. In this issue we follow Martin until he moves to Buffalo Valley at the age of 56. The rest of his life will be covered in an upcoming issue of the DFA Newsletter.



View of Raumlund where Martin was born. Red arrow – Martin's home, "Leye", in the foreground. Yellow arrow – St. Martin's Church. The river Eder is shown in lower right corner.



View of Raumlund about 120 years later. Red arrow – Martin's home, "Leye". An addition has been built in the foreground. Yellow arrow – St. Martin's Church which now has a small steeple.

Martin's early life: Martin was born in Raumlund on 23 May 1717 and was baptized in St. Martin's Church,

near Bad Berleburg, on the 26th of May, 1717¹. He was the youngest of nine known children born to Anna Elisabeth (Leyendecker) and Hans (Johann) Georg Dreisbach. His mother died when he was only one and a half years and it's uncertain where he was raised.

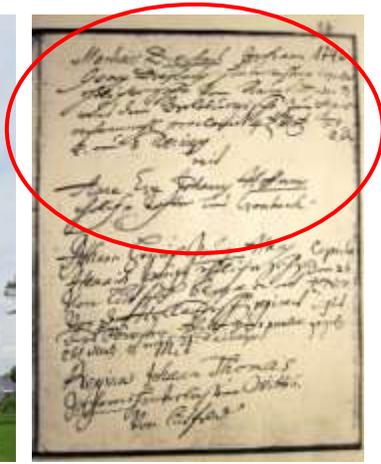
The house where he was born, Leye, was one of the largest houses in Raumlund. It was built beside the river Eder by Conzgen Sniders in 1521². His son, Arnold Sniders, inherited the house followed by Daniel Neiding, who died in the 30 Years War (1616-1648). The house then passed to Tillman Leyendecker. His oldest child, Anna, would be the next to inherit the house.

Anna married a man from Balde, Hans George Dreisbach (b. 1670, d. 1734). When her father died, Hans became the householder. Once more, a Dreisbach had "married the house" as Dreisbachs were wont to do³.



The house, Leye, as it appeared in 1998. It is part of a complex of buildings including a smaller and a larger barn, not visible in this picture. Photo from Lee Dreisbach.

Martin Weds: Martin must have left Raumlund and gone to the town of Krombach, perhaps to find to work as a blacksmith. There Martin met Anna Eva Hoffman (1722-1789), the daughter of Johannes Hoffman and Elisabetha Hadem. Anna's father was a respected man in Krombach. He had served as the official schoolmaster for a period of time, and was also a church elder.⁴ Martin and Anna Eva were married in the Evangelical Reformed Church in Krombach on 9 November 1742 when Martin was 25 years old and Anna Eva was 20.⁵



Left: Krombach Evangelical Reformed Church built about 1250 and restored in 1706. In this church Martin and Eva were married, their first five children were baptised and two of their babies were buried. Right: Circled, church record of Martin and Anna Eva's marriage.

Martin and Anna Eva continued to live in Krombach for the next nine years. Five children were born to them during this time. Two of them died, one as a three month old infant, the other as a three and a half year old child. The birth and death dates of these children are found in the register of the Krombach Evangelical Reformed Church⁶. (Deaths in PA. are not recorded in the Krombach Church book but are included here for completeness.) They are:

- Johann Henrich: b. 25 June 1743 – d. 11 Oct 1743 in Krombach
- Elisabeth: b. 15 Oct 1744 – d. 5 Feb 1748 in Krombach
- Martinus: b. 5 Nov 1745 – d. about 1763 in Cocalico, PA.
- Margaretha: b. 4 Dec 1748 – d. about 1825 in Lewisburg, PA.
- Johann Jacob: b. 7 Dec 1750 – d. 1804 in Mifflinburg, PA.

Off to Pennsylvania in 1751: Martin and Anna Eva made the momentous decision to immigrate to Pennsylvania taking with them a 6 year old, a 3 year old and a 7 month old baby. They sailed on the “Queen of Denmark”⁷ which left Rotterdam on the 8th of July, 1751 with about 316 people on board.⁸ Almost three months later, on the 4th of October 1751, the ship landed in Philadelphia, PA.

We don't know anything about the specific voyage made by Martin and his family. But the general information about trans-Atlantic crossings at that time is sufficient to get the picture of a very difficult trip. Bunks were crammed into a hold with a between-decks space often only 4 or 5 feet high. The ships were designed for cargo and the sleeping area had little or no ventilation. Beds were wooden shelves stacked closely together. To maximize profit, people often were allotted less space per person than on a slave ship. Men and women were crowded together, sleeping on their sides “spoon fashion”. The bunk space allotted to an adult was 6 feet long by 18 inches wide which would not allow room for a man to lay on

his back, moreover children under five had to share their parents' bed space.

Before laws were enacted in 1765, beds might be stacked with less than 2' separating a bed from the one above it. Washing was done with pails of sea water but most people went unwashed for the entire journey. After a voyage of 3 months or more, body lice were thick. Disease spread easily. Food went bad or was consumed so that by the end of the journey it would have been sparse and of extremely low quality.

Passengers brought ‘sea chests’ containing food, medicines, clothing and tools as well as personal belongings. Theft was always a problem, both from other passengers and a more organized form where the sea chests were not boarded with the passengers, but were put on another ship and plundered.



Photo of an unknown ship similar to The “Queen of Denmark” on which Martin and family arrived in Philadelphia on 4 Oct 1751. She was a large ship of 240 tons carrying 316 people. Unlike most immigrant ships, she made only one known trip to Penna. As part of the fleet owned by the Stedman Company she would have had a crew of 12 to 16 men and 12 to 14 guns to fight off pirates. ‘Wokeck’ pp. 240-254

Encountering storms on a voyage of 3 months was a certainty. Moreover, most of the voyages were made between June and October, which includes part of the hurricane season in the Atlantic. The combined horrors of a pitching ship, no space, no air, overcrowding, sickness, poor food and drink were the norm. Although we can read about such trips, the smells, sounds and sights that Martin and his family – and almost all other immigrants of the time – must have endured cannot be imagined⁹.

The mortality rate for very young children on these voyages was quite high. Martin and Anna Eva must have made exceptional preparations for their voyage and had good luck as well because everyone in the family survived including the infant Johann Jacob.

Martin's Arrival Date is Confirmed: The arrival date and the ship that Martin came on have been discussed for years. Two men with essentially the same name arrived a year apart. A Mardin Dreisbach came on the

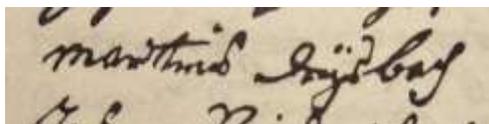
ship "Brothers" which landed in Philadelphia on 24 August 1750. Another Martin Dreisbach came on the "Queen of Denmark" and landed a year later on 4 October 1751. Which one was *our* Martin?

The Krombach church documents recently passed on to us show that Martin's son, Johann Jacob, was born in Krombach in December 1750. Thus *our* Martin, who was still in Krombach in the summer of 1750 awaiting the birth of his child, cannot be Mardin who came on the ship "Brothers". Unfortunately we know nothing about this other Mardin Dreisbach.

Martin's grandson, the Rev. John Dreisbach, wrote a short history about his grandparents in which he said the family came in 1746.¹⁰ We now know this is incorrect. The births of Martin's two children in Krombach in 1748 and 1750 are proof that Martin was still living in Krombach well after 1746.

Martin Swears and Signs the Oaths of Allegiance:

Once the ship, "Queen of Denmark" landed in Philadelphia, Martin and the other able-bodied males on this ship, over the age of 16, walked from the wharf to the Courthouse where they signed two separate Oaths of Allegiance promising to be faithful to the British Crown¹¹. Walking on solid ground after three months at sea must have presented its own challenges, not to mention dealing with English speaking officials. We are fortunate that Martin's signature, indicating he took the oath(s), has survived and can be seen in the ships' lists (see below).



Signature of Martin Dreisbach. It is written in old German script in which alphabet letters were formed very differently than they are in English. It reads: Martinus Dreisbach¹².

The Ships' Lists - What were they? By 1729 the influx of German immigrants became so great that the governing body of Pennsylvania feared the numerous Germans might pose a threat to their government. In response, the Legislature of Pennsylvania passed an act stating that all males age 16 and upwards must, within 48 hours of arriving in Pennsylvania, go before a judge or other responsible person and swear two oaths.

In the first oath they swore allegiance to the King of England and renounced the belief that the Pope had any power within the Realm of Great Britain. In the second oath they swore to support the then current

King of England and not the pretender to the throne, James the Third.

The benefit to us, the descendents of these German immigrants, is that they also had to *sign* a document saying they had sworn the oath(s)¹³. The lists of these signatures are called the "Ships Lists" and provide wonderful documentation of the names, penmanship and arrival dates for a very large percentage of all German immigrants to Pennsylvania! By this means we have copies of their signatures. Not only is this proof that Martin was not illiterate it also shows us how he wrote his name! Those who could not write marked an "X" where a clerk wrote their name.

Martin Dreisbach's Cocalico lands: It's not known where Martin and his family were between their arrival in Philadelphia on 4 Oct. 1751 and the baptism of Henry, said to have taken place in 1755 in Cocalico Twp¹⁴. Since Martin is on the Cocalico tax list of 1756¹⁵, we can assume he was settled there by about 1754, or earlier, on land that Martin probably assumed was not yet warranted (owned) by anyone else.

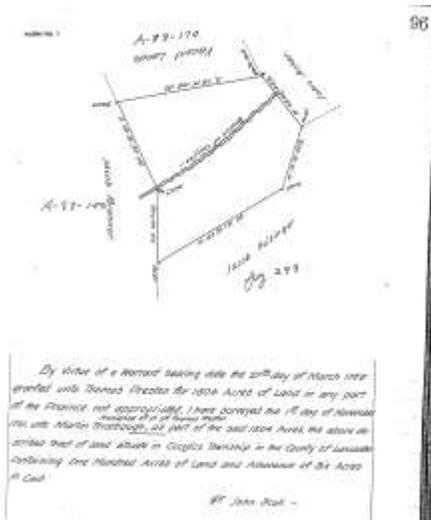
Background of the land Martin warrants in 1761:

In 1755 a certain Thomas Preston, was granted 1504 acres "in any part of the province not appropriated" (quoted from text of Martin Dreisbach's survey map C234-96)¹⁶. Preston began selling off parts of this land in 1761, the first sale being 100 acres in Cocalico Twp. sold to Martin Dreisbach.



Google Earth view of Martin's land in Cocalico shown in red. Many of the field outlines are still visible. Combined with the survey maps, we can determine where the lots were located. The green triangle (white arrow) is the land given to Swamp Church and the location of the old cemetery. The town of Rheinholds is now located in the lower half of what was Martin's land. The large plot to the left of Martin was owned by Jacob Brunner. The plot to the right was owned by Martin's friend, George Schnyder.

Martin's first land in Cocalico Twp: The 1756 tax record for Cocalico Twp. shows Martin taxed at £8 for 50 acres¹⁷. Martin does not yet officially own this land but the tax collector considered Martin the rightful occupant and taxed him accordingly. The tax records for 1757 and 1758 show Martin being taxed at first 10 Shillings and then at 15 Shillings. We don't know if the increase in tax is due to Martin purchasing more land, making improvements on the land he already had, or if the tax rate just went up. It does show that Martin is considered to be the owner of the property he is living on although he does not get legal title to it until 1761.



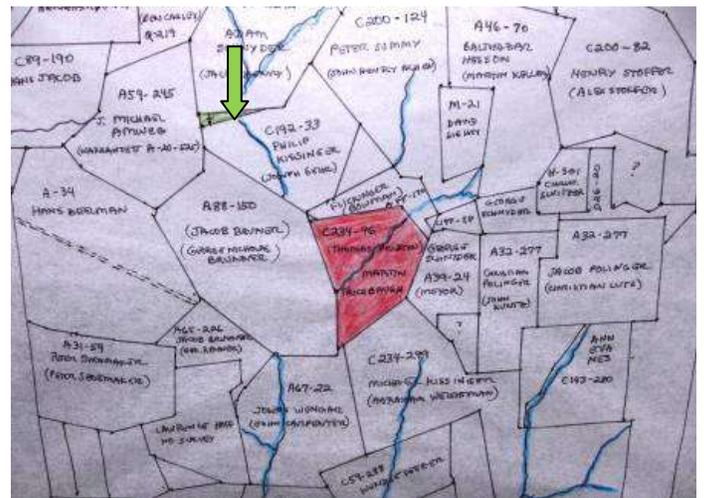
Survey done 1 Nov 1761 for the land Martin and his family lived on in Cocalico Township. A survey was required to complete the formal purchase of the land. Compare this tract outline with red shape in Google Earth map on previous page and with the map to the right.

Was Martin taken by surprise? Did Preston, or more probably a representative of his, appear in the late 1750's and inform Martin that he was occupying land that was rightfully Preston's? However that may be, Martin came to an understanding with Preston or his representative and called in a surveyor. On 1 November 1761 John Scull surveyed Martin's 100 acres, noting in his text that Martin was the "Assignee" of Thomas Preston. A copy of the surveyor's map is shown above. By 17 April 1762 the purchase was completed, and Martin's 100 acres, previously warranted by Thomas Preston, were now recorded as belonging to Martin Dreishback, in patent AA-3-255¹⁸.

Martin's second and final land purchase in Cocalico Twp: Martin made one more land purchase in Cocalico Twp. at a time when he may already have moved to Alsace Twp. in Berks County. The patent AA-6-310¹⁹ to Martin Triesbaugh made on 1 July 1765 was for land lying between Martin's own 100 acres and the land of long-standing occupants Philip Kissinger and others. This land was owned by John Bowman and when surveyed on 5 July 1764, doubtless in view of

Bauman selling the tract, was found to contain 48 acres and 60 perches. Almost a year later, on 28 June 1765, the tract was officially "returned", and was thus ready to be sold. Seven days later, Martin obtained the patent. After land had been officially patented, later transfers occurred by sale of deeds. Thus, to follow the further fate of Martin's land, research would need to be done in the Lancaster County deed books.

The Cocalico Years: Martin and Anna Eva were settled in what is now West Cocalico Township. Martin had purchased good farmland in a small valley with a branch of the Cocalico running right through the middle of his land. Here Martin farmed, worked as a blacksmith and eventually built a small grist mill and a saw mill²⁰. He was not farming in isolation. All around him were German speaking neighbors, many of whom must have been his friends and co-religionists. These seem to have been good years. Martin was prospering and the family was growing. Three more children are known to have been born to Martin and Anna Eva while they lived in Cocalico. They are:
Henry b. 1755, d 1814 in Pickaway Co., Ohio
Catherine b. 1759 d. probably in Lewisburg, PA. area
John b. 1762, d. 1823 Mifflinburg, PA.



Map showing Martin's land (red) and surrounding neighbors. Green arrow points to location of Swamp Church and its land. Blue lines show streams as indicated on original surveys, but not all streams were shown on surveys so some are missing from this map. The first owners of each piece of land are shown with their names in brackets.

Martin Swears an Oath of Allegiance: After 7 years of residence in Pennsylvania, German immigrants, such as Martin, could secure the legal rights of 'natural born subjects of Great Britain' by swearing an Oath at the Court House - provided the person had taken the Sacrament within the last three months! Martin and his neighbors, Michael Amweg and George Schneider took their all-important Oaths of Allegiance together on 10 April 1760.²¹

Cocalico Church: Martin's family was growing and so was the area. This was no longer the frontier. There were enough people to form a Reformed congregation and the Swamp Reformed Church (now Swamp Christian Fellowship Church) began holding services in Michael Amweg's house. Shortly after this, a log church was built near Martin's farm (ca. 1755) and it may have been in use in time for the baptism of Martin's next child, Henry (b. 1755). It was certainly in use by the time Catherine (b. 1759) and John (b.1762) were baptized there by Rev. Waldschmidt. Sponsors for Catherine were Martin's friends and neighbors, George Schneider and his wife, Catherine, for whom the baby was probably named. Sponsors for John were Jost and Elizabeth Walter.²²

Conditions for worship and socializing were both improving. The nearby Black Horse Hotel was opened by a John Cones about 1759. It was probably the first hotel in the area and was a landmark for at least 100 years. Rev. John, in his biography of his grandparents, refers to the tavern as being near Martin's farm.



Swamp Christian Fellowship Church, Rheinholds, PA. Built 1806. The church was founded in 1749 and met in the house of Michael Amweg until the first log church was built.

Tragedy Strikes: Martin and Anna Eva's oldest son Martin Jr died suddenly. He would have been 17 or 18 years old at the time of death. We don't know the cause or the date but he must have died before 12 July 1764 - the date when their baby son was born and given the name, Martin, indicating that the older son was no longer alive.

According to his grandson's essay²³, the senior Martin was so distressed by the death of his son that, in 1763, he moved his family to a farm in Berks County.

Perhaps his son had died in an accident that occurred on Martin's property, maybe in the grist mill or smithy, and Martin was reminded of this each time he saw the building - hence the decision to move away. The date of the move is also unknown although it seems to have been shortly after their son's death. By the time Martin's son died, a log church existed at the site of the present day stone church. We can assume that a cemetery also existed and that his son was buried there. Although no tombstone has been found, one may be hidden under the grass.



View of the old cemetery of Swamp Church in Rheinholds, PA. Martin's eldest son is most probably buried here, but his marker has not been located.

Martin moves to Berks County: In sorrow, Martin re-established the family on a new farm along the current route 222 in Alsace Township, Berks County - about 3 miles east of the growing town of Reading, PA. Closer to markets, and on an important road, this land may have been more valuable than the farm in Cocalico. By 1767 Martin has 240 acres, 2 horses 4 cattle, and no sheep. A year later, by 1768²⁴, he has 200 acres, 4 horses, 4 cattle, and 0 sheep. Perhaps he traded 40 acres for 2 horses?

Although Martin and his family lived near Reading, he continued to buy land adjoining his former farm in Cocalico (as discussed on previous page). He added another 48 acres to his holdings there on 1 July 1765.²⁵ Perhaps he had hopes of making it more valuable when he sold it.

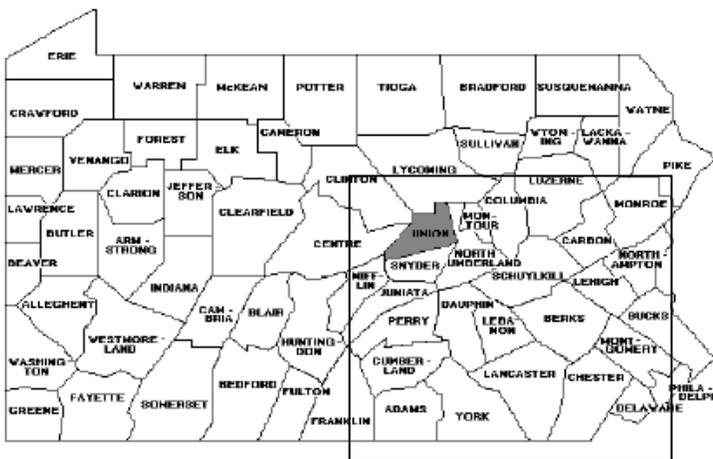
Then, in 1772 Martin's oldest daughter, Margaret, married Henry Aurand and the young couple settled on the frontier in Buffalo Valley, Union County, PA where, three years later, they had 15 acres, 1 horse and 2 cows.²⁶ In 1773, Martin also moved to Buffalo Valley and liquidated his Cocalico Twp properties.

Martin moves to Buffalo Valley: We don't know precisely when Martin moved but according to family tradition, by 1773 Martin was living in Buffalo Valley, Union County, PA, an area north and west of where he

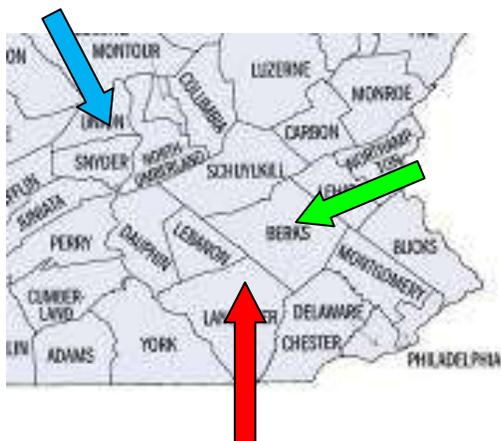
had been living. We also do not know why he moved to Buffalo Valley. However in 1769 a large amount of land, called the "New Purchase" and which included Buffalo Valley, was opened to settlement. Many Germans from Berks and Lehigh Counties took advantage of the cheap land and moved there.

Martin was then 56 years old and, one would assume, owned a good farm in an area fast becoming a hub of commercial activity. Why did he want to move to the frontier? The most likely reason is so that his sons could have farms of their own nearby. As Berks County became richer, land became more expensive and less available. The frontier with cheaper land and lots more of it must have looked good.

Where did Martin live in Pennsylvania? During his lifetime, Martin had three farms in three different counties in Pennsylvania. The maps below show them in relation to each other and to the state as a whole.



The current counties in Pennsylvania. Union County in darker grey. Box shows the area where Martin lived and is enlarged below.



Arrows point to where Martin lived.
 Red: Cocalico Twp, Lancaster Co., ca. 1755-1763
 Green: Alsace Twp, Berks Co., ca. 1763-1773
 Blue: Lewisburg, Union Co., ca. 1773 to 1799

The American Revolution and life on the frontier:

These topics will be covered in an upcoming issue of the DFA Newsletter when we follow Martin from his move to Buffalo Valley until his death there in 1799.

Marcia Dreisbach Falconer

Editor: Dreisbach Family Association Newsletter

Email: marcia.falconer@sympatico.ca

Thank you to the people who helped provide information for this issue: Martin Dreisbach of Kreuztal, Germany, Ann Wohlheuter, Bob Cody, Cynthia Marquet of the Calico Historical Society and of course my sister, Ardis Dreisbach Grosjean, without her help this newsletter would not be possible.

¹ Photo copies of original records from the Krombach Evangelical Reformed Church are in the Kreuztaler Stadtarchiv, Gelbe Villa (Dreslers Park) Hagener Str. 22, 57223 Kreuztal, Germany. Courtesy of Mrs. Ria Siewert.

² "Raumland - Beiträge zur Geschichte unseres Dorfes", Herausgegeben von Fritz Krämer im Auftrag der Gemeinde Raumland, 1975, (c) bei Gemeinde Raumland
 Gesamtherstellung: Grafischer Betrieb Gebr. Zimmermann GmbH 5983 Balve/Sauerlandaumland

³ Dreisbach Family Association Newsletter, July 2012 issue.

⁴ Krombach Church Record Book, Kreuztaler Stadtarchiv, Gelbe Villa (Dreslers Park), Hagener Str. 22, 57223 Kreuztal, Germany.

⁵ Krombach Trauregister (Krombach Church Marriage Records). 1742. p.8.

⁶ Photo copies of original records from the Krombach Evangelical Reformed Church are in the Kreuztaler Stadtarchiv, Gelbe Villa (Dreslers Park) Hagener Str. 22, 57223 Kreuztal, Germany. Courtesy of Mrs. Ria Siewert.

⁷ Strassburger, R.B., Pennsylvania German Pioneers, A Publication of the Original Lists of Arrivals In the Port of Philadelphia From 1727 to 1808. Ed. by Hinke, W.J., Vol. I, 1727-1775, Pennsylvania German Society, Norristown, Pennsylvania, 1934.

⁸ Woceck, Marianne S. "Trade in Strangers, the Beginnings of Mass Migration to North America". Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, PA. 1999. p 244.

⁹ Woceck, M.S. op cit. pp 76-80.

¹⁰ Dreisbach, Rev. John, "A Short Family History and Genealogical Statement of Martin Dreisbach, Senior and his descendants". (See attached)

¹¹ Strassburger, op cit. Vol. I, pp. 475, 473.

¹² Strassburger, op cit. Signature Vol. pp. 557-559.

¹³ Strassburger, op cit. Vol. I, pp. xxvi, xxvii.

¹⁴ Dreisbach, A.G., Dreisbach, B.J., Dreisbach, Rev. C.V., "The Dreisbach Book, The Dreisbachs, Dresbachs, Driesbachs, etc. of North America and Their European Origins", Dreisbach Family Association private printing, 1998. Currently available at the D.F.A. website:

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~dreisbachfamily/boek.htm>

¹⁵ 1756 Cocalico Township Tax Record, original at the Lancaster (Pa.) Historical Society.

¹⁶ On line (<http://www.portal.state.pa.us>) Pennsylvania Archives, Land Records, Copied Survey Books, C234-96.

¹⁷ 1756 Cocalico Township Tax Record, original at the Lancaster (Pa.) Historical Society.

¹⁸ On line (<http://www.portal.state.pa.us>), Pennsylvania Archives, Land Records, Patent Index, AA3-255.

¹⁹ On line (<http://www.portal.state.pa.us>), Pennsylvania Archives, Land Records, Patent Index, ZZ6-310.

²⁰ Dreisbach, Rev. John, op cit.

²¹ Penna. Arch. Series 2 Vol II, p295 and p344.

²² "Baptismal and marriage records of Rev. J. Waldschmidt" in Penna. Arch. Series 6 Vol VI p.165.

²³ Dreisbach, Rev. John, op cit

²⁴ Penna. Arch. Series 3, Vol. XVIII, Proprietary Records for the County Of Berks. p26 and p96.

²⁵ On line (<http://www.portal.state.pa.us>), Penna. Arch., Land Records, Patent Indexes, AA6-310.

²⁶ Linn, J.B., "Annals of Buffalo Valley, Pennsylvania 1755-1855", Pub. 1877, Harrisburg, PA., p.73.