

Dreisbach Family Association Newsletter

June 2015©

Previously we followed Simon Dreisbach Jr from birth in Wittgenstein, through adulthood in Germantown, PA (1733-1761).¹ Next we met Simon Jr as a land owner in Lehigh Twp., Northampton Co., PA. where he got a taste of political life and helped establish Zion Stone Church. That period (1761-1773) closed when his wife, Maria Dorothea, died in childbirth on 8 July, 1773.² We begin this issue just after that event.

As a new widower in the summer of 1773, Simon Jr's family consisted of a 20 year old son, a nearly 18 year old deaf son, 15 and 14 year old sons, a deaf 12 year old son, an 11 year old daughter, a deaf 9 year old son, a 7 year old deaf daughter, and three small daughters ages 5, 4 and 2 1/2. With 12 people in the household to be fed and tended to, Simon Jr needed to find a wife and helpmeet, and quickly.

He was a fairly good catch - a well-to-do, 43 year old man, a landowner, a farmer and a man of many interests, one of which was financing the building of Zion Stone Church.³ Simon took on the difficult job of administering the building fund, asking people to pledge money toward the new church. While doing this he met Daniel Gucker who made a significant monetary pledge. Unfortunately soon thereafter Gucker fell ill. He died in May 1773, leaving behind a widow, 38 year old Anna Maria Fuchs Gucker, no children and 100 acres of land.

Simon and Anna Maria marry. Two months after Gucker's death, Simon's wife died in childbirth. Within a short time, the childless widow and the widower with many children, discovered they were compatible. They married late in 1773 (the exact date is not known).

It's hard to imagine how Anna Maria coped. Within a single year she lost her husband, met a man, married him and became stepmother to his many children - children who no doubt were missing their own mother. With no children of her own, it can't have been an easy transition!



Fig. 1. Women and children dressed for the period when Anna Maria became a stepmother to Simon Jr's children.

Where did Simon and Anna Maria live after marriage? Anna Maria had inherited the land of her husband, Daniel Gucker, in Allen Township, Northampton County, PA. There must have been a house on this property but it was unlikely to have been large enough for thirteen people! So we can be reasonably sure they began married life in Simon Jr's house in Lehigh Township.



Fig. 2. Simon Jr's land holdings in Lehigh Twp. in orange, at top. Bottom right, in red, the tract inherited by his wife in Allen Twp. which Simon Jr formally acquired in 1774. Blue line is Lehigh River. Red lines are old stagecoach roads. Yellow 'tack' (arrow) is site of Zion Stone Church which lies on the border between Lehigh and Allen Townships. Google Earth.

Simon becomes a Judge: On March 9th 1774, John Penn and the Provincial Council appointed Simon as a Justice of the Court of General Quarter Sessions of the Peace, and of the County Court of Common Pleas for Northampton County.⁴ That his name was put forward and accepted for this position indicates the high standing he had in the community, as well as his knowledge and his intelligence.

Simon gets title to Gucker's land: In May 1774, after Gucker's will was probated, Simon Jr got title to the Gucker land.⁵ A bit more than a year later, sometime in mid-1775, Simon, Anna Maria – and most of his children moved to Allen Twp. Simon's two oldest sons had married in the intervening time and at least the oldest son remained on Simon's property in Lehigh Twp.



Fig. 3. 1775 Tax list of Allen Township, PA. showing Simon Jr's name added to the final list (blue arrow) and giving his occupation as tanner (green arrow).⁶

We know Simon moved in the middle of 1775 because his name was squeezed onto the 1775 Allen Township Tax record, indicating he was not living in Allen Twp. when the list was made but took up residence after the final list was compiled.

Simon moved more than a year after acquiring the Gooker land. He must have used the intervening time to build a house for his family in Allen Twp. The building he erected was “wood”, had two stories and measured 35’ X 22’, a generous size for that time.⁷ Although we have no proof, it probably was covered with clapboards. A man who sometimes has “Esq.” attached to his name was not likely to be living in a log cabin - especially not in the more settled area that was Allen Township. As a Commissioner (in 1770) and a Justice of the Court of Quarter Sessions, the term “Esquire” could be added after Simon's name as a token of respect (at that time ‘Esquire’ did not signify that a person was a lawyer).



Fig. 4. Engraving of a clapboard covered farm house probably similar to that built by Simon Jr in Allen Township, PA. Wikipedia.

Location, location, location? Simon moved from his large farm of nearly 300 acres in Lehigh Twp. to one in Allen Twp. that was just a bit over 100 Acres in size. Why would he do this? The 1775 tax list shows Simon as a tanner for the first time. If Simon was going into the tanning business, the larger population and better roads of Allen Township would be important. If he was already considering becoming active in provincial politics it was vital to live in an area where he could establish useful political connections and where English was spoken. English was far and away the predominant language of both politics and Allen Township. It also was a center of revolutionary sentiment.



Fig.5. Former Presbyterian Church⁸ which served the Scotch-Irish settlement in Allen Twp. This is the third church built on this site. Constructed in 1813.⁹ Photo: M. Falconer.

Remaining in Lehigh Township gave Simon none of the above advantages. Lehigh Twp. was populated almost entirely by Germans and German was the everyday language. It was more rural, the roads were abysmal and most of the German inhabitants were not interested in the politics of the Pennsylvania government or in the politics of revolt. They wanted to be left alone to farm.¹⁰

Land, Tax assessments and lists: The 1775 tax list shows that Simon Jr's new farm in Allen Twp. consisted of 40 acres of wooded land, 60 acres of cleared land, 3 horses, and 3 cows. His tax assessment compiled later that same year indicates he soon obtained more land. Within a few months he had 120 acres, 90 cleared acres, 10 of which were cultivated, 2 horses, 3 cows and 4 sheep.¹¹ There is no record of Simon Jr buying land until 1784, so acquisition of this extra land must have been done 'with a handshake'.

Things heat up: While Simon Jr was dealing with the death of his wife, making a new marriage and coordinating a move to Allen Twp., events leading to the Revolutionary War were taking place with increasing frequency and intensity. News of the events was widespread and although Simon was occupied by personal business, he certainly knew what was happening.

Boston Tea Party: The Boston Tea Party took place on 16 Dec. 1773 (shortly after Simon's marriage, and while Simon and Anna Maria were still living in Lehigh Township). Dressed as Mohawk Indians, 150 men boarded three British ships anchored in Boston harbor and dumped their cargo of tea (worth \$1,700,000 today) into the bay. News of the raid reached England by January 20th 1774 and reaction was swift – on June 20th Parliament passed the Intolerable Acts. Intended to punish Boston and restore British authority, the Acts removed the Boston government and closed the port of Boston.



Fig. 6. *The Destruction of Tea at Boston Harbor.* By Nathaniel Currier, 1846 lithograph. Library of Congress.

The First Continental Congress. The 13 colonial governments all agreed these actions of the British Parliament were, well, intolerable. Their response was to send two representatives from each colony¹² to a meeting in Carpenter's Hall in Philadelphia to discuss what could be done. Called the *First Continental Congress*, it met between Sept. 5th and Oct. 26th 1774.

Among its accomplishments were: writing a Declaration of Rights (forerunner to the declaration of independence), establishing a boycott of all British goods, and most importantly for our story, telling every county to create a *Committee of Observation* in every county to monitor the boycott.

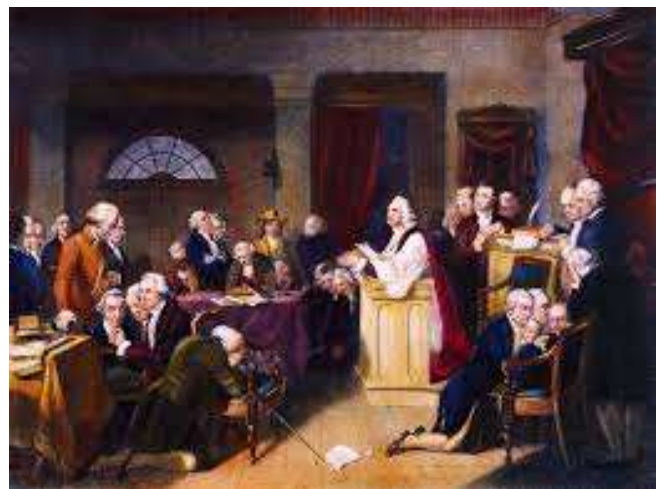


Fig. 7. *Chaplain Jacob Duché leading the first prayer at the First Continental Congress, Carpenter's Hall, Philadelphia, September 1774, artist unknown, 1848.* Wikipedia.

Back in Northampton County the activist faction was anxious to comply with the suggestion of Congress. A notice was sent out announcing a meeting in Easton on Dec. 21st (1774) to select members to form a Committee of Observation as instructed. On that cold wintery day "a very respectable number" of people turned out, including Jost Dreisbach, the older brother of Simon Jr. People crowded into the Court House to vote and among the men chosen to form the Committee of Observation was Jost Dreisbach.¹³

Simon and his brother Jost. There must have been very interesting family conversations after Jost became a member of the Committee of Observation, because subsequent actions, show only Jost and Simon Jr were sympathetic to the idea of

independence. The other brothers, Adam, George and John, apparently had little interest in politics. This was true of many German farmers who felt that the conditions they currently had were far better than the conditions “back in the old country” – and they were in no hurry to change things!

The first military encounters occurred on April 19th 1775 at Lexington and a day later at Concord, Massachusetts. News of the events traveled fast - but not always accurately. Only six days after the Massachusetts battles a Philadelphia newspaper, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*,¹⁴ put out an inflammatory account of these events.¹⁵ By April 27th, the news of the attacks reached the radical Committee of Observation in Easton and the equally radical Scots-Irish of Allen Township. The result was a predictable blaze of events.



Fig. 8. *The battle at Lexington. Painting courtesy of Independence Hall Association in Philadelphia. www.ushistory.org.*

But back to Simon for a minute: It was just about at this time that Simon Dreisbach Jr and his family moved to Allen Township - right in the middle of the uproar!

Simon’s new neighbors, the Scots-Irish, were completely different from the German farmers of Lehigh Township. Protestants from Northern Ireland had settled Allen Township as early as 1728. These Ulster-Scots came from an area where there was no love of the English or the King.¹⁶ They were the driving force behind the early movements toward independence and now they were fervent supporters of the revolution!

Simon Jr moved right into the middle of these fiercely independent and formidable Presbyterians and one of them was to become particularly important in his life, his neighbor, Neigal Gray.¹⁷

Neigal Gray’s lands bordered Simon Jr’s on the south and we can assume Neigal had been acquainted with Daniel and Anna Maria Gucker. Now that Anna Maria had remarried and returned with her new husband, Neigal must have come to visit.

In Neigal, Simon found an educated and like-minded friend. From this point on, we see Simon Jr and Neigal Gray working together. They were both strong supporters of independence at a time when this was dangerous. If Pennsylvania lost in a war against England – and to many people this seemed a good probability – then Simon and Neigal would lose everything, possibly even their lives.



Fig. 9. *Shown in red is Daniel Gucker’s land, later that of Simon Dreisbach Jr. To the south, in white, is the land of Neigal Gray. The Northwest to Southeast road is the old Howertown Road; the West to East road running through Gray’s land is today’s Route 329 (Nor-Bath Pike). Both roads existed when Simon lived there.*

May 6th (1775), the newly formed Northampton Committee of Observation met to discuss the attack at Lexington and Concord and resolved that each township in the county should form an armed militia.¹⁸ On the 15th of May, the men of Allen Township, most of them firm supporters of

independence, gathered to voice their opposition to the Pennsylvania government.

The government then was composed of an elected Assembly and a Governor, John Penn, who was also the hereditary Proprietor (and grandson of William Penn, Pennsylvania's founder). The Assembly was dominated by conservative Quakers and wealthy business men. Both the Governor and the Assembly were opposed to any military actions and actively opposed anything that might lead to separation from Britain - which would result in great financial loss.

The Scots-Irish and other activists totally ignored the stance of the Pennsylvania government and on May 22nd 1775, in an unorthodox, if not outright illegal move, formed the Northampton county militia. Simon's neighbor, Neigal Gray, was elected Captain of Allen Township's 120 men¹⁹. At this same time, in a meeting held in Lehigh Township at Peter Anthony's tavern, Jost Dreisbach was elected Captain of the Lehigh Township militia.²⁰

On May 10th 1775, in response to Lexington and Concord the Second Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia in the State House (now called Independence Hall) and within a month had established the Continental Army with George Washington at its head. The Congress also sent instructions to all Pennsylvania counties to form a more organized military presence.



Fig. 10. 1776 view of the Pennsylvania State House in Philadelphia, now known as Independence Hall. Arrow shows west wing where the Continental Congress met. Print by Currier, Wikipedia.

Back in Northampton County: The Committee of Observation had taken on the role of county government and on October 20th 1775, gathered in

Easton to define militia districts and to form militia Battalions. Neigal Gray was re-elected by his troops, as Colonel of the Allen Twp. militia and Jost Dreisbach was similarly was re-elected as Colonel of the Lehigh Twp. militia.²¹

On May 15th the Second Continental Congress, following the general mood of the country, passed a resolution which said that all governments deriving their authority from the crown shall be totally "suppressed" (i.e. removed). It also said that any colony which did not have a proper revolutionary government should form one - one that will see to the happiness and safety of its people! This was outright rebellion.



Fig. 11. Members of the Continental Congress stand outside the hall discussing events. Simon Dreisbach Jr would have fitted in well with these men. Picture from a sign in front of Carpenter's Hall. Photo by M. Falconer.

Call for a Provincial Conference: Within three weeks "all 12 counties in the state responded to a summons from Philadelphia to send representatives to attend a newly called Provincial Conference for two purposes: 1) to declare independence and 2) to establish machinery for a convention which would draft a new constitution for Pennsylvania."²² In Easton, the Committee of Observation met to select the representatives from Northampton County. They chose Neigal Gray and five others. Simon Jr was not one of them, but he would soon be included in a larger event.

The Provincial Conference of 1776: in which Simon Jr had a role, deserves to be better known. It played out in two parts. The pre-conference meeting opened on June 18th 1776 in Carpenter's Hall,

Philadelphia and ran for only six days.²³ The practical parts of its job were to establish the conditions and the date to call a constitutional conference and also to determine the mechanism by which Pennsylvania would set up a new government.

The more daring part of its job was to draw up Pennsylvania's own declaration of independence to be ratified at the upcoming conference. Benjamin Franklin chaired the meeting and a special committee was set to work exclusively on this.



Fig. 12. Carpenter's Hall, Philadelphia, PA. Site of the First Continental Congress in 1774 and site of Pennsylvania Provincial Convention of 1776. Photo by M. Falconer.

On June 24th the final draft of Pennsylvania's declaration of independence was read out loud to the approval and cheers of all in attendance.²⁴ It was signed and sent to the Second Continental Congress which was meeting in the State House. It, along with a similar declaration made by Virginia, were among the documents upon which the United States Declaration of Independence was based!

Speed was needed! The members of the Provincial Convention felt the urgency of the situation and had an all-day meeting on Sunday, June 23rd. At this time they chose July 8th as the date to vote for representatives to the constitutional conference.²⁵ All of Pennsylvania had to be made aware of the date of the upcoming election just 15 days hence – at a time when information traveled at the speed of a horse!

Simon named a 'Judge of the Election'. On July 6, 1776, as instructed by the Provincial Convention, Northampton's governing committee met in Easton to get ready for the important election two days hence. Voting places were chosen – and for the third district, which included Allen, Lehigh, Moore, Penn, Chestnuthill and Towamensing Townships, voting would take place at Peter Anthony's Tavern.²⁶ Judges to supervise the elections were appointed. As a Justice of the Quarter Court, Simon Jr was appointed to be one of the "Judges of the election".²⁷ His duties were to list every man in the township who paid tax - which in turn determined who could vote. Simon also oversaw the election and the counting of ballots. The three men who received the most votes would represent Allen Township at the Constitutional Convention.



Fig. 13. Square in front of Easton Court House where the Committee of Observation met and where votes were tallied. <http://eastoneeccentric.blogspot.ca/>

It was imperative to get people to vote! The election on July 8th was to elect the people who would form the new government of Pennsylvania. But how to convey the importance of this vote to the scattered people who lived all over the state? The committee, which had planned the election, read a moving speech to all the township representatives and asked them to deliver this same message as far and wide as they could. Although no evidence exists, it must have been posted in public places and probably read from pulpits. There are many great words in the documents from those days, but these words, I feel, should be read by us all. They remind us of the honor and privilege ordinary people had at

this time and the honor and privilege we continue to have today.

In obedience to the power we derived from you, we have fixed upon a mode of electing a convention to form a government for the province of Pennsylvania, under the authority of the people.

Divine Providence is about to grant you a favor, which few people have ever enjoyed before, the privilege of choosing deputies to form a government under which you are to live. We need not inform you of the importance of the trust you are about to commit to them; your liberty, safety, happiness and every thing that posterity will hold dear to them to the end of time, will depend upon their deliberations. It becomes you, therefore, to choose such persons only, to act for you in the ensuing convention, as are distinguished for wisdom, integrity and a firm attachment to the liberties of this province, as well as to the liberties of the United Colonies

*Fig. 14. Address To The People of Pennsylvania written by Dr. Benjamin Rush and Col. James Smith and delivered 23 June 1776 to members of the Provincial Conference. Simon Dreisbach Jr was one of those chosen to help form the new government.*²⁸

Simon elected to the Pennsylvania Constitutional Convention! Apparently there was nothing prohibiting an election judge from also being elected as a representative, because the voters chose to send Simon Dreisbach Jr as well as Neigal Gray to the convention.²⁹

Events of the Revolution unfolded quickly. On the 2nd of July, the United States Declaration of Independence was proclaimed and on the 4th of July it was adopted and by the Continental Congress.³⁰ Four days later, it was read out loud for the first time - on the steps of the Easton Court House (see Fig. 13). We can be reasonably certain that Jost Dreisbach was present at this event, and possibly Simon Jr as well. Simon may even have been honored at the event as one of the Northampton

County representatives chosen to attend the upcoming Pennsylvania Constitution Convention.

The Constitutional Convention convened in mid-July and Simon needed to be in Philadelphia. He must have arranged things at home as best he could, boarded the stage coach for Philadelphia and found lodgings near the State House. When the Pennsylvania Constitutional Convention opened on July 15th, the representatives from Northampton County: Simon Dreisbach, Neigal Gray, Jacob Arndt, Peter Buckholder, Peter Rhoads, Jacob Stroud, Abraham Miller and John Ralston met the other one hundred plus representatives, made their introductions and got down to business.

On Tuesday, July 16th, 1776 Simon Jr was seated in the west meeting room of the State House when a roll call was taken for the Convention. He cast his vote, unanimously with all the other members, to choose Benjamin Franklin as president of the Convention. Simon, and everyone else, then took the prescribed oath and profession of faith.³¹



Fig. 15. Assembly room in the west wing of Independence Hall. Simon Dreisbach sat here as part of Pennsylvania's General Assembly. Courtesy of National Park Service.

Simon votes to approve the Declaration of Independence! On Thursday, July 25th, 1776, Simon Jr and all the other members of the Constitutional Convention voted unanimously to accept the following resolution formally declaring Independence! By doing so – Simon once again laid his life, property and fortune on the line.

“We, the representatives of the freemen of the state of Pennsylvania, in general convention assembled, taking into our most serious consideration the clear, strong and cogent reasons given by the honorable continental Congress, for declaring this, as well as the other United States of America, FREE and INDEPENDENT, do thereupon resolve...that we, in behalf of ourselves and our constituents, do unanimously approve of the said resolution and declaration of Congress... And we do declare before God and the world that we will support and maintain the freedom and independence of this and the other United States of America, at the utmost risk of our lives and fortunes.”³²

The Constitution of Pennsylvania is drawn up:

During the next two months, Simon sat in Carpenter’s Hall, taking part in the discussions, and debates while a sub-committee strove to produce a constitution for Pennsylvania. On September 28th (1776) all members present, including Simon Dreisbach Jr, voted to pass the proposed Constitution for Pennsylvania. He would have been there to hear Benjamin Franklin declare that “The frame or plan of government and preamble were ... compared at the table, and being bound up with the declaration of rights, (they) were passed and confirmed unanimously!”³³



Fig. 16. May 1776. Washington, Morris and Ross came secretly to Betsy Ross and asked her to sew the first flag. Courtesy of www.ushistory.org.

The Pennsylvania Constitutional Conference concludes:

After successfully framing the Constitution for Pennsylvania, the conference members thanked Franklin, took care of remaining business and concluded the convention.³⁴ Simon Dreisbach Jr was free, for a short time, to go home to his wife and children in Allen Township.

Format of the new Pennsylvania Government:

After ratification of the constitution, the new government of Pennsylvania had an executive branch, called the Supreme Executive Council,

which had 12 members (one for each county plus Philadelphia) with an elected President (i.e. Governor). It also had a General Assembly, composed of representatives from each county.

Simon elected to the new General Assembly.

Northampton had another vote on November 5th 1776, this time to choose representatives to the new General Assembly. Simon Dreisbach, John Wetzel, Jacob Arndt, Peter Burkhalter, John Ralston and John Vancampen won the election.³⁵ Although the General Assembly opened on the 28th of November, Simon did not attend until the 15th of January, 1777. He was the only one of the men elected from Northampton who was late in arriving, suggesting that things at home needed tending to.

Effects of the Battle of Brandywine:

George Washington spent the summer of 1777 waiting to see what the British would do. The answer was – they would attack Philadelphia. General Howe sailed up Chesapeake Bay with 15,000 troops packed on board hot ships in mosquito infested waters. Many were ill when they landed on August 25th but still ready to take over Philadelphia.

With a huge British force closing in on the city, it was dangerous for the government to remain there. On September 9th, the United States Congress packed up and left, forming a strange parade. Wagons carrying documents and other necessities, accompanied by members riding their horses or sitting in carriages, made their way along the dirt road from Philadelphia 60 miles west to the small town of Lancaster where they stayed for one day and then continued on to the greater safety of York, PA.



Fig. 17. York County Court House, built 1756, where United States Congress met from 30 Sept. 1777 to 2 June 1778. Photo from Pin It, waymarking.com.

As Congress was departing, Washington led his 11,000 strong army through Philadelphia to meet Howe's army. On September 11th, the Battle of Brandywine was fought, and lost - with 1300 of Washington's troops, killed or taken prisoner.

The General Assembly heads to Lancaster:

Meanwhile, even after Congress packed up and left, the Pennsylvania Assembly resolutely remained in Philadelphia carrying on their usual agenda. Until this news arrived: "An Account having been received that the enemy's army was in full march for this city, it was agreed that the general assembly should adjourn to the borough of Lancaster." On the 18th of September the General Assembly hastily adjourned and fled to Lancaster. On September 26th, the British arrived and occupied Philadelphia!



Fig. 18. The old court house in Lancaster – the place where the Pennsylvania General Assembly met after fleeing Philadelphia.

Simon as representative: Simon Jr's actions in the General Assembly, i.e. bills he voted for and bills he voted against, are too involved to include in this newsletter – and it is not at all certain that the records found are complete. Although he journeyed to Lancaster several times, it appears that Simon was absent fairly often in comparison with the other Northampton representatives, perhaps another indication that he was needed at home.

On July 2nd, 1778, both the Pennsylvania General Assembly and the United States Congress (which had been meeting in York, PA) returned to the State House in Philadelphia and resumed operations there.



Fig. 19. Street scene in Germantown, PA. as it would have looked about 1780.

Political scene is changing: By 1778, politics and political fortunes were changing. The Articles of Confederation were being written – a contentious issue for many.³⁶ Of the original eight Northampton representatives, only Simon Jr, Peter Rhoads and John Ralston were returned to the Assembly. The others were all new names. 1779 was the last year Simon was a representative. Only three year terms were allowed to representatives. Simon began serving in 1777, by 1780 Simon was out of office.³⁷

Council of Censors - Simon has another role:

When the Constitution of Pennsylvania was adopted, provisions were made for making changes or amendments to the constitution through a Council of Censors. The Council would meet every seven years beginning in 1783. Each county was to elect two men to serve on the Council and the Council was to exist for only one year and no longer.³⁸ Simon Dreisbach Jr and John Arndt were elected as Censors from Northampton County for the 1783-1784 session of the Council of Censors.

When the Pennsylvania Constitution was framed, there was the usual contention between conservative and progressive factions, but given the tensions of war, the progressives won a clear majority. They were also the majority of the committee delegated to write the Pennsylvania Constitution. This meant the conservative faction was unhappy with a number of

sections in the new Constitution. Now that seven years had passed and the Council of Censors had been called, the conservatives had the opportunity to propose changes and propose they did.

Conservatives and Constitutionals: The make-up of the Council of Censors was weighted toward reform of the Constitution, by a majority of 12 to 9. Their chief aim was to change the unicameral government of Pennsylvania into the bicameral version we know today – with a House of Representatives and a Senate. The opposition was against this saying it would amount to introducing a “House of Lords”.³⁹

There was much acrimony at the Council meetings. Simon Jr, having been present at the writing and implementation of the Constitution of Pennsylvania, was loathe to see it changed and consistently voted with the minority. The opposition recognized a possible problem: *“Is it that they were concerned in the framing of the constitution, and therefore cannot bear that any fault should be found with it?”*⁴⁰ they asked. As if in proof, John Arndt, the other representative from Northampton County, consistently voted for the changes to the constitution, but it was his father, Jacob, who had been at the Constitutional Conference, not John.

The meeting began on 10 November, 1783. By January 21st, 1784 the situation was deadlocked - but still gentlemanly. The frustrated majority, unable to raise the necessary 2/3’s votes needed to convene a new Constitution Conference, closed the Council of Censors until the next scheduled meeting in 1790 (at which time a greatly revised constitution passed which replaced the General Assembly with a House of Representatives and a Senate).

And what about Simon Jr? In 1784 Simon ran for, and was elected to, the position of “Commissioner” – an elected official charged with administering county government. As such he was charged to enact local ordinances and administer them, approve budgets, oversee spending and hire county employees.

A final note in Simon’s political career: In an article containing short biographies of members of the Constitutional Convention of 1776, written by William Egle, the collector and editor for a large percentage of the Pennsylvania Archives books, a short, unexpected fact was discovered. “Driesbach, Simon, of Northampton County... was a member of the House of Representatives for the session of 1793-4.” So Simon held yet one more public office.

Simon would have been 63, a respected senior who had held numerous positions. One can imagine that he had his personal affairs in order and was feeling the pull of political office. He may have been persuaded to run by friends, or perhaps decided to do it on his own. In any event, he was successful. He served for only one year and then retired from politics. However he still had his tannery to keep him occupied.

TIMELINE	
1774	- Simon appointed Justice of the Court of General Quarter Sessions
1775	- Simon moves to Allen Twp.
1776	- Simon appointed “Judge of Election” Simon elected representative to the Pennsylvania Constitutional Conference, Simon signs his approval of: Penna.’s declaration of independence Penna.’s own Bill of Rights Plan for a Government of Penna.
1777	- Simon elected to Penna.’s General Assembly Assembly flees to Lancaster
1778	- Simon member of Penna.’s General Assembly Assembly returns Philadelphia
1779	- Simon member of Penna.’s General Assembly
1780	- Simon out of office
1783	- Simon member of the Council of Censors to examine PA Constitution
1784	- Simon elected Commissioner for Northampton County
1793	- Simon elected to Pennsylvania’s House of Representatives

References:

- ¹ Dreisbach Family Association Newsletter, November 2013.
- ² Dreisbach Family Association Newsletter, March 2014.
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ Pennsylvania Archives, Colonial Records, Vol. X, Minutes of the Provincial Council, pp. 155-156.
- ⁵ Deed Book C1 page 114, and Deed Book E1 page 261, Northampton County Archives, 999 Conroy Place, Easton, PA.
- ⁶ Source: Allen Twp. taxes, Northampton County Archives, 999 Conroy Place, Forks Twp. PA.
- ⁷ US Direct House Tax for Allen Township, Northampton Co., PA. No. 1, United States Direct Tax of 1798; tax lists for the State of Pennsylvania, M372, microfilm, 24 rolls. Records of the Internal Revenue Service, 1791-2006, Record Group. Ancestry.com.
- ⁸ Located on the north side of Route 329, just east of Seemsville Road, Allen Township, Northampton Co., PA.
- ⁹ Heller, William J., *History of Northampton County (Pennsylvania) and the Grand Valley of the Lehigh*, Vol. 1, Am. Historical Soc., NY, 1920, p. 45.
- ¹⁰ Meader, Lewis, H., *The Council of Censors*, Vol. X, in *Papers from the Historical Seminary of Brown University*, 1899, p. 11.
- ¹¹ From *The Scotch-Irish of Northampton County, Pennsylvania*, ed. by Preston A. Laury et al., Vol. 1 of the Northampton County Historical and Genealogical Society's publications, Easton, 1926, pp. 27-31. Simon Dreisbach's 1775 assessment appears on p. 30.
- ¹² Georgia did not attend because Britain was supplying them with much needed supplies to fight Creek and Cherokee Indians.
- ¹³ Pennsylvania Archives, Series 2, Vol. XIV, Associated Battalions and Militia of the Revolution, Ed. by William H. Egle, 1888, pp. 591-593.
- ¹⁴ Philadelphia newspaper (broadsheet) owned and printed by Benjamin Franklin.
- ¹⁵ Verenna, Tom, American Propaganda (Fictional) Accounts of the Battles of Lexington and Concord, from April 13, 2015, in American History, American Revolution, Scholarship, on <https://historyandancestry.wordpress.com>.
- ¹⁶ Warden, Rosemary S. *Chester County*, in *Beyond Philadelphia, The American Revolution in the Pennsylvania Hinterland*, Ed. by John B. Frantz and William Pencak, Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998, p. 10.
- ¹⁷ Fritts, *History of Northampton County, Pennsylvania*, 1877, p. 34.
- ¹⁸ Pennsylvania Archives, Series 2, Vol. XIV, Muster Rolls and Papers Relating to the Associators and Militia of the County of Northampton, 1888, pp. 591-594.
- ¹⁹ Ibid. p. 550.
- ²⁰ Ibid. p. 553.
- ²¹ Pennsylvania Archives, Series 5, Vol. VIII, 4th Battalion Northampton Co. Militia, p. 350.
- ²² Karsch, Carl G., *Pennsylvania: From Colony to State*, www.ushistory.org/carpentershall/history/pa.htm
- ²³ *The Proceedings Relative to Calling the Conventions of 1776 and 1790*, 1825, pp 35-67. Downloaded from: <https://archive.org/details/proceedingsrela01convgoog>.
- ²⁴ Gibson, James E., *The Pennsylvania Provincial Conference of 1776*, in: "The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography", Volume 58, No. 4, 1934, pp 312-341.
- ²⁵ Op. cit. *The Proceedings Relative to Calling the Conventions of 1776 and 1790*, 1825, p. 40.
- ²⁶ Re: Peter Anthony's Tavern, see Dreisbach Family Association Newsletter, Feb. 2015.
- ²⁷ Ibid. pp. 560-571. Pennsylvania Archives, Series 2, Vol. III, Proceedings of the Conference of Committees of the Province of Pennsylvania, held at Carpenter's Hall, Philadelphia, from June 18 to June 25, 1776. Ed. by John B. Lynn and William H. Egle, 1896, p. 566.
- ²⁸ Op. cit. *The Proceedings Relative to Calling the Conventions of 1776 and 1790*, p. 41.
- ²⁹ Ibid. p. 571.
- ³⁰ Myers, Richmond, *Northampton County in the American Revolution*, Northampton County Historical Society publications, Vol. VI, Easton, Pennsylvania, 1976, p. 23.
- ³¹ Op. cit., *The Proceedings Relative to Calling the Conventions of 1776 and 1790*, p. 46.
- ³² Ibid. p. 49.
- ³³ Ibid. p. 767.
- ³⁴ Ibid. p. 783, 784.
- ³⁵ Pennsylvania Archives, Series 6, Vol. XI, Election Returns, Northampton County, 1756-1789, p. 249.
- ³⁶ Morison, Samuel E., *Sources & Documents illustrating the American Revolution 1764-1788 and the formation of the Federal Constitution*, 2nd Edition. Oxford Un. Press, 1929. pp. 178-186.
- ³⁷ Pennsylvania Archives Series 6, Vol. XI, Election Returns, Northampton County – 1756-1789. Ed. Thomas Lynch Montgomery, 1906, pp 243-274.
- ³⁸ Op. Cit. Meader, pp. 1-2.
- ³⁹ Op. Cit. Meader, p. 22.
- ⁴⁰ Op. Cit. The Proceedings Relative to Calling the Conventions of 1776 and 1790, p. 81.