

AN INCOMPLETE GENEALOGY OF THE FAMILY OF JOHN BRETZ
OF FAIRFIELD CO., OHIO, WITH A PARTIAL HISTORY OF
ONE LINE OF DESCENT IN THIS FAMILY

J Harlen Bretz
University of Chicago
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Foreword

The endeavor to establish the genealogy and history of this John Bretz has met two unsurmountable obstacles; the lack of early written records, and the difficulty or impossibility of identifying those of the many John, Jacob and Philip Bretzes of the Pennsylvania archives who were members of this family. A third difficulty, of less consequence, has been the apathetic attitude of older living Bretzes, due in part to their advanced age at the time of this investigation but also to a life-long lack of interest in family history. Dates, events and relationships, never recorded have simply been forgotten. Outstanding exceptions have been Allen Bretz and two others, H. F. Pennington and Anna B. Seitz, whose mothers were Bretz-born. To them we owe the establishment and preservation of a considerable part of the family tree down to about 1912 in the manuscript record called the "Bretz Register". However, Allen's claim that John's father was Jacob Pretz, the immigrant of 1732, is obviously in error.

Another Bretz genealogy, that of Ludwig, immigrant of 1750, apparently has been more successful in tying that family to an ancestor born in Germany but has failed to trace Ludwig back of 1750. Attempts made by Geo. Z. Bretz, of Brooklyn and by Harry Bretz, a descendant of Ludwig, both of whom visited the Rhine and Moselle valleys with the hope of finding documentary records of pre-Revolutionary date, have been unsuccessful. Only the later Bretz immigrants, (for there are German-born Bretzes living in America today,) appear to know in what parts of Germany their progenitors lived.

Every promising source of information known has been investigated in this study. The unimaginative habit of repeating given names through the generations, true of almost every line of Bretzes, and the limited variety in those names, has rendered hopeless any further unravelling of early family relations. At least 32 Johns, Philips and Jacobs are recorded in America. Thirteen male descendants of our John have carried his name!

Attempts to add to the "Bretz Register" of the early 1900's have been unsuccessful, except in a few lines. Among living Bretz descendants of John, the apathy concerning their derivation indicates the task as largely impossible. Probably the cousinships are too distant to be worth establishing in a family so careless of its history.

GERMAN ORIGIN

The monosyllable "Bretz" obviously is Germanic. Variants make it impossible to relate or differentiate, by spelling alone, families carrying the names of Bretz, Britz, Brett, Britts, Kreitz, Bretzius and Pretz. The oldest records, dating back almost to Charlemagne, use only the two forms, Bretz and Pretz. An attempt has been made to connect these early Germans with a Fabius Bretius, or Britius, a Roman "Magister Equitum" (cavalry general) in the 18th Roman Legion, who came from the district of Capua and Tarento in southern Italy; married Ulfa, daughter of a German tribal "duke"; was head of a family in the Roman city now called Trier or Treves on the Moselle, about 224 A.D.; and died 263 A.D. The information is said to have been taken from "Genealogical Tables of the German Nobility" and "Books of Heraldry" in the City Library of Vienna. It is also stated that the descendants of Fabius Pretius, writing their name Bretz or Pretz, constituted a family of knights in the region for several centuries although no names are reported until Hugho Pretz appears in the time of Otto the Great. In 951, Otto "renewed" Hugho's "old title of nobility and family escutcheon and established them with instruments of writing at Augsburg", apparently as a reward for Hugho's valor in the battle of Leochfelde, (950) when Otto definitely disposed of the Magyar menace from the east. Hugho's wife was Bertha of Martensleben. He had two sons, Claudius and Adolf.

Rome held the Teutonic tribes along the Rhine in subjection until the fifth century when the weakening Empire lost the last of its holdings in Gaul. Thereafter the Teutonic tribes warred among themselves; Saxons, Franks and Alamanni struggling for domination until Charlemagne imposed one authority in law and religion, and unified Germany for the first time. Only the existence and survival, through these vicissitudes, of a "coat-of-arms" could have made possible the family connection that is indicated across seven centuries. Where the record of royalty is questionable, what is the likelihood of direct tracing among lower social orders?

Claudius, a son of Hugho, was a prebendary in the Dome Church at Cologne, and without descendants. Adolf, another son, lived at Pretzenburg, a fortified castle built by Hugho on the Moselle near Trier. He was a magistrate of the Lower Rhine. His wife's name was Clara Von Waldeck. He was killed in a duel, A.D. 1019 with a Rhineland knight named Viet Von Basserhaus. His four sons are reported to have distinguished themselves in some of the Crusades. The name of Conrad alone is recorded (died 1312) and he must have been several generations removed from Adolf. Conrad's name is spelled "Bretz".

Conrad was a "military man" under Rudolf of Habsburg. He had two sons, Eulogius and George Bretz.

Eulogius was magistrate of Mark Brandenburg under Emperor Albrecht (Albert of Habsburg). He lived in Lübben on the Spree, about 40 miles south of Berlin, and had descendants there, listed in

the blue-blood register, as late as 1702. Joseph and Claus Bretz are named as heading "the principal families in the time of Frederick the First". Since Frederick the First died in 1190 this statement must be in error.

George Bretz, son of Conrad, "took possession of the property on the Rhine" (not the castle built on the Moselle by Hugh, for the place is wrong and the time is 400 years later). He married Anna Von Rheineck. Their numerous descendants "were almost totally destroyed during the Thirty Years War". Only one lineal descendant is indicated as surviving; Daniel Bretz, a merchant at Coblenz on the Rhine. He "had long since discarded the old title of nobility". He died in 1681. His two sons were Felix and Cristof Bretz, but there is no further information about them.

The foregoing account has been supplied by Harold Pretz of Allentown, Pa. It has been in possession of the family a long time and he believes that it was obtained by his grandfather, Christian, though from what source he does not know. It is very fragmentary and is inconsistent or incorrect in places. It involves an enormous break between 224 and 951, and bridges those seven centuries of political, military and religious flux by means only of a "coat-of-arms". Where predatory raids, conquering invasions and sacking of cities were so constantly recurring but so poorly recorded as those among the Teutons and their neighbors, little probability attaches to this purported connection between Fabius Pretius and Hugh Pretz. It seems very probable to the critical writer of the present account that professional genealogists collected the names and dates, and added their own vague statements about the "illustrious family of knights" with the name Bretz or Pretz which "flourished" (without a single individual name on the record!) in the Rhine Valley for 726 years.

From Hugh to Daniel is another 700 years, with only three successive father-son connections definitely stated. A complete record of this span would contain more than a score of them. It is not even clear, from the record, that Bretz and Pretz were optional spellings of the same name. All that can be considered established is that the name Bretz goes back as far as the 13th century and that most bearers of that name lived along the Rhine.

If there is a line of descent in the Rhenish records, it should be written as follows.

- 1-Hugh (died 983)
- 2-Claudius (no descendants)
- 2-Adolf (died 1019)
- 2+x-Several generations missing.
- (2+x)+1-Conrad (died 1312)
- (2+x)+2-Eulogius
- (2+x+2)+y-Several generations missing
- (2+x+2+y)+1-Joseph
- (2+x+2+y)+1-Claus
- (2+x)+2-George
- (2+x+2)+z-Several generations missing
- (2+x+2+z)+1-Daniel (died 1618)
- (2+x+2+z)+2-Felix
- (2+x+2+z)+2-Cristof

The "coat-of-arms" which Emperor Otto "renewed" for Hugh is described as "a lion holding a crown on his head (with one paw?) and a sword in his claws (of another paw?), which denotes noble descent and war-like spirit. On his helmet he (Bretius) wore three stars which denote success". Heraldry did not begin until after the Norman Conquest (1066). Apparently family badges, escutcheons, etc. are here called coats-of-arms.

If "Bretz" is of Germanic origin and not a Latin corruption, it is a word modified by long usage as a personal and place name until its original form is uncertain. It may be traced, with equal success, to three different root words. "Bretzel", "Brezel", or in High German, "Bretze", means cracknel or pretzel. "Brett" means board or plank and an older allied meaning is forest or brushwood. "Wildbret" means wild game or venison. Thus the surname Bretz may belong to that large class of names derived from trades, akin to the various English names; Baker, Carpenter, Sawyer, Wood, Hunter, etc., which cover the range above indicated.

That names of such character should originate in different localities is altogether probable but, as far as known to the writer, Bretz as a place name is limited, with one exception, to an area within a hundred miles of Heidelberg. This includes all or part of the provinces of Hesse, Baden, Wurttemberg, Bavaria and the Rhenish Province of Prussia. The accompanying list gives the location of these places in Germany and Switzerland.

Bretz. Dorf in Rhine province of Prussia, Colbenz Regierungsbezirk.
Nine English miles NNW. of St. Goar, left bank of the Rhine.
Pop. 340.

Bretzen. Weiler in upper Landgericht of Bavaria. Nine miles SSW.
of Ebergberg. Pop. 20.

Bretzenacker. Dorf in Neckar district of Wurttemberg. 6 3/4 mi. ENE.
of Waiblingen. Pop. 240.

Bretzengarten. Weiler in Mittelfranken, Bavaria. Landgericht of
Nuremberg. Pop. 14.

Bretzenheim. Parish dorf in Rheinhessen, Hessen. 2 1/2 mi. SWS. of
Mainz. Pop. 1300.

Bretzenheim. Parish dorf of Rhein province of Prussia.
Regierungsbezirk of Coblenz. 2 mi. NE. of Kreuznach, left
side of the Nahe. 10 km. S. of Bingen-am-Rhine. Pop. 970.

Bretzin. Hof in Wendischer region, Mecklenburg-Schwerin. 4 1/2 mi.
E. of Beitzburg. Pop. 110.

Bretzingen. Hof in Jaxt district of Wurtemberg. 2 mi. SE. of Hall.

 Rauen. The same weiler 3 mi. N. of Gaildorf. Pop. 190.

Bretzkobel. Waste in Lower Bavaria. Landgericht of Vilsbiburg.

Bretzenheim-am-Main. 3 km. SW. of Mainz-am-Main.

Bretzfeld on the Brettach. 18 km. NEE. of Heilbronn.

Bretzfeld on the Neckar. 170 km. N. of Bodensee, Neckar Kreis,
Wurtemberg. A church dorf of 470 pop., 9 mi. ENE. of Weinsburg.

Bretzingen in Baden. 35 km. N. of Bretzfeld.

Bretzwil. 20 km. S. of Basel, Switzerland.

Further, all Bretz immigrants into the United States, whose former home is known, have come from this portion of Germany. Hence the Bretz tribe and the Bretz name appear to be limited to the High German portion of the Fatherland, lying between the Alps on the south and the Low German plain on the north. It includes the headwaters of the Danube and that portion of the Rhine Valley richest in historic associations and most famed for scenic beauty.

Recorded arrivals of Bretz immigrants in America date back to 1732. Bretz people now living in America represent the entire gamut, from German-born immigrants to the seventh and eighth generation of American-born. The family with which this account deals has descended from one of the earliest immigrants.

THE EMIGRATION MOVEMENT FROM GERMANY IN WHICH THE EARLY BRETZ IMMIGRANTS SHARED

Causes of the Palatinate Emigration

Europe was racked by devastating wars for the whole of the seventeenth century. Political oppression and religious persecution ground down the common people to an abject physical and spiritual poverty. By the political rulers, to whom the accomplishment of their own ends and gratification of their own ambitions was paramount, the peasant was regarded as of little greater importance than his cattle.

In consequence, there developed a strong spirit of unrest, which was especially notable in Germany. The suffering people had endured cruel and oppressive conditions for so long that they could see no glimmer of hope for betterment.

An endeavor in western Germany to escape from these intolerable conditions started an immigration movement into England in 1708. But there was no opening for a new people in an already crowded

England and the reason for the movement toward England is unknown. Great efforts were made by the English to shelter, feed and clothe the thousands who, with no money and no property, poured across the Channel. It took a year or more to check the exodus from the Palatinate and several more years to secure an economic balance through absorption of some into the English industrial life and a return of others to the Fatherland, followed by emigration to America.

Opportunely came the grant of Penn's Woods, and the efforts of the great Quaker to people his land. The down-trodden, liberty-loving Germans of the Palatinate and the new country across the sea needed each other. Penn had travelled through the Rhine provinces (the Palatinate) in 1671 and in 1677, preaching the doctrines of the Quakers, and had found a people whose religious tenets were not notably different from his own. To these he now sent agents who scattered booklets broadcast, describing his country and inviting immigration.

Rarely has news been more acceptable and inspiring than the message in these booklets to the Rhenish people. The English preacher who had recently taught them doctrines alien to their own now owned a magnificent domain in the New World. To this he invited them to come; there to live without wars or religious persecutions, under laws in the making of which they would share.

There is no record of the names or numbers of these earliest German immigrants. Recording did not begin until 1727 when the new Registry law required the signature of every male immigrant to an oath of allegiance to "His Present Majesty King George the Second" and to the laws of the province. This record of immigrants into the port of Philadelphia extends from 1727 to the American Revolution. Rupp has published it in his "Thirty Thousand Names of German and Swiss Immigrants, etc."

During this time more than seventy different ships were engaged in transporting the German immigrants, and other ships were bringing in British colonists. Some made a regular business of it. The "Loyal Judith" made five voyages for this purpose. The average tonnage of the ships whose dimensions are recorded was 178 tons, and the average number of passengers was 300! The principal port of embarkation was Rotterdam, at the mouth of the Rhine.

This immigration from the Rhine provinces fell off notably during and after the Revolution and the outbreak of that war may be taken to mark the close of the period of dominant German migration into Pennsylvania.

Character of the Journey

The character of the journey undertaken by the immigrant from High Germany to America is known from several sources, chief among which is the narrative of Gottlieb Mittelberger. He came to America in 1750

and returned in 1754, and his quaint observations were written soon afterward. He states that his chief reason for writing is to warn intending immigrants of "the wretched and grievous condition of those who travel from Germany to this new land, and the outrageous and merciless proceedings of the Dutch man-handlers..." He states that before he left America, he was implored "with tears and uplifted hands, and even in the name of God, to make this misery and sorrow known in Germany so that ... the common people ... might learn how they had fared, to prevent other innocent souls from leaving their fatherland, persuaded thereto by the Newlanders, and from being sold into slavery. And so I vowed to the great God, and promised those people, to reveal to the people of Germany the pure truth about it, to the best of my knowledge and ability" Mittelberger obviously believed that the Devil of continued living in Germany was preferable to the deep blue sea of callous greed spawning from the opportunity offered by this push toward a Promised Land. Penn appears to have had no control over this vicious exploitation by the shipmasters, if indeed he was aware of it.

Mittelberger followed the same route that the great mass of Germans took in coming to Pennsylvania during this migratory movement. They all took boat at the earliest opportunity, and journeyed down the Rhine to reach Holland. The trip from Heilbronn to Holland is estimated by Mittelberger to have required 200 hours for a continuous passage. But the presence of 36 customs houses enroute and the leisurely examination of baggage aboard the Rhine boats lengthened the trip to four, five and even six weeks. At Rotterdam, at the mouth of the Rhine, the emigrants embarked on the ships which were to carry them to Pennsylvania. From eight days to four weeks were consumed in reaching Cowes, in England, across the North Sea. Eight to fourteen days were spent here, loading cargo, then the ships headed for America. With most favoring winds, the German immigrants were seven weeks enroute between Cowes and Philadelphia. With head winds the trip might be lengthened to ten or twelve weeks.

Quarters on board these early sailing ships were amazingly restricted. "One receives a place of scarcely two feet width and six feet length in the Bedstead". Every one, sick and well alike, slept in his clothes, wrapped in his own blankets, in the common bed. People died, and babes were born, in this bed. There was no privacy whatever. Herding is the only fit word for these accommodations.

Warm food was served but three times a week. The provisions were old and spoiled, very salty and almost impossible to eat, even though the people had exhausted their own stock of provisions and were suffering from hunger. "In a whole biscuit there was scarcely a piece the size of a dollar which was not full of worms and red spiders nests." "The water which is served out on these ships is often very black, thick and full of worms, so that one cannot drink it without loathing, even with the greatest thirst."

The long voyage down the Rhine and the long stay in England in many cases exhausted the small store of money which the immigrant had brought. On those ships where food was served only for cash, not included in the fare, the poor immigrant without money and at the end of his own supply of provisions faced a most critical situation. Many actually died en route, of starvation!

Crowded quarters, wretched food and polluted water inevitably bred sickness. Mittelberger says that 32 children died on the ship he was aboard, and that children from one to seven years of age rarely survived the journey. Childbirth on board usually meant death for the mother and babe alike. From the "Hoch Deutsche Pennsylvanische Berichte" of Philadelphia, dated February 16, 1745, the following note is taken. "Another ship reached Philadelphia with 400 Germans aboard, and it is said that not many over 50 remain alive. They received their bread ration every two weeks and many ate it in four, five or six days. And when they get no cooked food for eight days, their bread is so much the sooner (gone)". "... Another man who had eaten all his week's bread asked the captain for a little bread, but in vain. He then came to the captain and requested him to throw them (himself and wife) overboard at once, rather than allow them to die by inches. He brought his meal sack to the captain and asked him to put a small quantity in it. The captain took the bag, put in some sand and stones and returned it to the man. The latter shed some tears, laid down and died, together with his wife."

The voyage of the Mayflower has been sung as the acme of fortitude and endurance for the sake of liberty. Song and story have magnified the heroism of these English immigrants. But the trial was not so severe by far as on many of the German immigrant ships. No one died on board the Mayflower, and physical sufferings did not exceed, if indeed they equalled, the fearful experiences which German immigrants underwent. If we look for the severest test of human character in submission to hardships for liberty's sake, we will find it in the experiences of thousands of Palatinate Germans who braved the known terrors of that ocean voyage.

**BRETZ IMMIGRANTS WHO LANDED AT PHILADELPHIA AND TOOK THE
OATH OF ALLEGIANCE BETWEEN THE YEARS 1727 AND 1789**

From Rupp's "Thirty Thousand Names ..."
Pennsylvania Archives, 2d Series, Vol. 17

Sept. 25, 1732 Palatines imported in the ship Loyal Judith of
London, Robert Turpin Master, from Rotterdam,
last from Cowes.

Jacob Pretz
114 men named. No women or children mentioned.

In the original list (Penn. Archives) the name is spelled Rats, and nowhere is it spelled Bretz. That this is a misspelling is possible for the name of Pretz or Rats does not appear elsewhere in Rupp's book, nor in all the colonial or revolutionary records of the vicinity of

Philadelphia. Harold W. Pretz, of Allentown, Pa. indicates that his family is descended from a post-Revolutionary immigrant.

Sept. 5, 1743. Foreigners imported on the Snow Charlotte, John Mason Master, from Rotterdam, last from Cowes.

Wilhelm Bretz

Jacob Bretz

48 men named, no mention of women or children.

Oct. 20, 1744. Foreigners imported in the ship Phoenix, Wm. Wilson Captain, from Rotterdam, last from Cowes.

Philip Bretz

120 men named, no women or children mentioned.

Aug. 15, 1750. Ship Royal Union, Clement Nicholson Captain, from Rotterdam, last from Cowes.

Henry Bretz

Ludwig Bretz

Wendel Bretz

} Sick at time of landing

238 men named, no mention of women or children.

Aug. 21, 1750. Ship Anderson, Hugh Campbell Captain, from Rotterdam, last from Cowes.

Johannes Bretz

Johan Cristobal Bretz

84 men listed, no women or children mentioned.

Oct. 14, 1787. Ship Dorothea, from Rotterdam, Serverus Dalsted Master.

Henrich Bretz

EARLY ENVIRONMENT IN PENNSYLVANIA

The Institution of Bond-Servitude.

The gloomy picture of the ocean voyage is not replaced by brighter lighting after the landing in Philadelphia. Mittelberger's message covered two great evils, the second of which he referred to as "man-handling". It was the institution of selling oneself into bondage for a specified time, a well-known feature of the early colonial days of Pennsylvania. Many German immigrants to America took passage without the necessary 60 florins (about \$50) to pay for the trip, doing so in response to the opportunity offered by the shipmasters to pay for their passage by becoming bonded or indentured servants after arriving in America.

This proposition was presented to the Germans along the Rhine by the "Newlanders", or as Mittelberger expressed it, the "traffickers in men's souls". The Newlanders were agents of the ship owners and others financially interested in securing large numbers of immigrants. They dressed extravagantly, pretending to be men of great wealth, and told fabulous tales of the richness of the new country, and the highly favorable conditions under which the immigrant would live. They were also named "Soulsellers" since by false pretenses they persuaded the poor to leave the Fatherland and sell themselves into service to pay for their passage.

In the terms above, the suffering caused by this system does not appear. Apparently a man simply mortgaged his future to the extent of about 100 florins worth of working time. But the outcome was not that simple. The long delays in the journey down the Rhine and in England, and those caused by contrary winds, ran up the expenses greatly, and rarely allowed one to escape for less than 200 florins. Further, sickness weakened many of the immigrants, and they consequently made poorer bargains on landing in Philadelphia. This involved signing a contract for a longer period of service to discharge the debt to the shipmaster. Still further, the newlanders commonly deceived the German peasants as to the term of service which would be required to pay for passage, and many in ignorance also signed for service often twice the customary period. Yet further, families were broken up by this institution, and many children were parted from their parents forever by the separation which took place at Philadelphia. If members of a family died en route, the cost of passage for the deceased, if not paid in advance, had to be paid by the rest of the family. This might double the period of service of the bereaved.

Mittelberger writes as follows on this "traffic in men's souls". "Englishmen, Dutchmen and High German people come from the city of Philadelphia and other places, ... go on board the newly arrived ship... and select among the healthy persons such as they deem suitable for their businesses, and bargain with them how long they will serve for their passage money, which most of them are still in debt for". "... adult persons bind themselves in writing to serve three, four, five or six years for the amount due by them. Very young people, from ten to fifteen years of age, must serve till they are twenty one. Many parents must sell and trade away their children like so many head of cattle, for if the children take the debt on themselves, the parents can leave the ship free and unrestrained..."

The merchants selling these unfortunates into service received 60 to 80 florins a person from the purchasers. Advertisements in the early newspapers of Philadelphia throw some light on this institution. From the American Weekly Mercury, May 22, 1729: "Just arrived from Scotland, a parcel of choice Scotch servants; Taylors, weavers, Shoemakers and Ploughmen, some for five years, some for seven years; imported by James Coult, they are on board a sloop lying opposite to the Market Street Wharf, where there is a boat constantly attending to carry any one on board that wants to see them". From the Pennsylvania Gazette, June, 1742: "To be sold. A likely servant woman, having three years and a half to serve. She is a good specimen".

How large a percentage of the German immigrants began in America as "redemptionists" or bond servants is not known. It was sufficiently large, however, to have been a great evil of the times. In the early tax lists, the indentured men, who apparently paid a poll tax, constitute perhaps a fifth of the total taxed male population. None of the Bretz men in these lists were indicated as indentured, although this is no affirmation that they had not been indentured earlier.

Physical Environment of the German Settlements.

The German type of settler was most needed by the young colony in Penn's Woods. Racially, the Germans have loved big spaces since the dawn of history. Julius Caesar said, regarding the Teutonic barbarians, "they think it the greatest honor to a nation to have as wide an extent of vacant land around their dominions as possible". The German race did not early develop cities, but lived in the forests or tilled the soil.

The German immigrant into Pennsylvania rarely remained near the coast. The forefront of the human advance upon the wilderness was the German stock of the colony. Bancroft says that, because of the mild and generous dealings of the Quakers with the savages, "not a drop of Quaker blood was ever shed by an Indian". Diffenderffer retorts that the cordon of German pioneers flung out between the Quakers to the East and the Indians to the West is the better measure of the immunity of the peaceable Friend. "Instead, the tomahawk and the scalping knife found sheath in the bodies of the sturdy children of the Palatinate. Let the sacrificed lives of more than 300 men, women and children from the Rhine country, who fell along the Blue Mountains between 1754 and 1764 give the true answer to the Quaker boast".

Lancaster County was the most completely Germanized portion of Pennsylvania by the Palatinate and Swiss immigrants. They virtually possessed the region in its entirety, and the language, customs, religious sects and agricultural methods made a little Germany of the county. This was the locus of development of the so-called Pennsylvania Dutch, a people who have remained perhaps more German than American for six or seven generations.

Lancaster County is as typically a German agricultural community today as it was several generations ago. Lineal descendants of original settlers are in some places still tilling the original farm. Three generations of Michael Bretzes held the farm in Pinegrove Twp., Schukill Co., following the day of Captain Michael Bretz of the American Revolutionary Army. The spirit of these German immigrants; love of liberty, of husbandry, of home, made them a dominant part of the agricultural development of the state of Pennsylvania. This spirit was carried westward by the descendants of Pennsylvania Germans and is exemplified now in many communities throughout the middle northern states. The influence of the dominant German element in the agricultural communities was a vital element in the strength of William Penn's colony, and justified his statement to Lord Halifax: "I must without vanity say I have led the greatest colony into America that ever any man did on a private

credit, and the most prosperous beginnings that ever were in one, are to be found among us".

Lancaster County lies west of Philadelphia and east of the Blue Mountains, the easternmost ridge of the Appalachian Mountains. Its fertile agricultural land is a part of the Piedmont Plateau, a country of moderate relief between the Appalachians and the low coastal plain. These mountains held the increasing population to the eastern side for a century. Their importance in the early development of the nation is well recognized. By the time the population had grown so dense that the human tide began to break over the physical barrier, the overwhelming German immigration had ceased, and it was the first and second generations of American-born Germans who shared in the subduing of trans-Allegheny country.

PENNSYLVANIA DOCUMENTARY DATA

Tax Lists from Penn. Archives

Berks County

Pine Grove Twp.

1779 Michael Bretz, grist mill, saw mill, 2 horses, 2 cattle,
married, 300 acres.
1780 Michael Brez Same property
1781 Michael Brezius " "
1784 Michael Bretzius " " , except 400 instead of 300 acres.
1785 " " " " , as 1784

Tulpehocken Twp.

1779 Jacob Bretz 70 acres, 2 horses, 3 cattle, married
1780 " " As above
1781, 1784, Jacob Bretz, As above. Not listed after 1784.

Lancaster County

Rapho Twp.

1772 John Bretz 150 acres, 3 horses, 3 cattle, married
1773 " " As above, except 4 cattle
1779 " " 226 acres
1782 " " 150 acres, 4 horses, 4 cattle.

1779 Nicholas Bretz 100 acres, 2 horses, 3 cattle.

Manheim Town. included in Rapho Twp.

1773 Philip Bretz, a joiner. No property taxed.

Warranties of Land, from Penn. Archives

Dauphin County

1815 Anthony Bretz Jr. 48 acres. May 30
1816 Jacob Bretz 50 acres Feb. 26
1830 John Bretz 15 acres May 4

Northampton County

1802 Philip Bretz 39.22 acres Feb. 25

Berks County

1798 Michael Bretz 50 acres Sept. 26

BRETZ NAMES IN THE RECORDS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY ARMY

Anthony Bretz. Private in Capt. Thos. Robison's company, 7th battalion, Lancaster Co. militia. 1782.

Ludwig Bretz. Sergeant in Capt. Martin Weaver's company, 4th battalion, Lancaster Co. militia. 1778 and 1781.

Lodwick Bretz. Private in Capt. Albright Deibler's company, 4th battalion. 1776. Also listed from Capt. Murray's company, as one of a group to be paid for loss of guns, etc. Presumably the Ludwig listed above.

Jacob Bretz. Private in a drafted company from Forks Twp., 5th battalion, Northampton County militia. 1778.

Philip Bretz. Sergeant in Capt. Noah Ceasey's company, 7th battalion, Lancaster Co. militia. 1781, 1782, 1783.

Michael Bretz. Capt. of 5th Company, 6th battalion, Pennsylvania Volunteers. Under Lieut. Col. Geo. Miller in 1777 and later under Col. Henry Spicker, then Berks Co. militia. The 5th battalion joined the army after the battle of Brandywine, serving to Jan 5, 1778.

(Penn. German Society, Vol. 3, p. 167)

Correlation of the preceding lists

Sergeant Ludwig Bretz was one of the three brothers who landed in 1750, according to Parthemore, in "The Genealogy of Ludwig Bretz".

Private Jacob Bretz from Northampton Co., 1778, probably was not one of the immigrant Jacobs. If the immigrants of 1732 and 1743 were 25 years old at time of landing, they would have been 60 and 71 respectively in 1778, too old to have been in the army. The Jacob who appears in the Berks Co. tax lists in 1779 may have been Private Jacob. Possible relations of this Jacob to Jacob, son of John, are discussed later.

Captain Michael Bretz was probably the Michael Bretz found in the tax lists of Berks Co. 1779-85 because the enlisted Michael disappeared from the army in 1778 and the farmer Michael appeared in the tax lists in 1779. He is said to be the Michael whose descendants (named Michael) held the same place for three generations. Information from Geo. Z. Bretz, Brooklyn.

Among John's sons was a Philip, a John, Jr., a Jacob and an Anthony, all names appearing in the Pennsylvania records. Of these four, a birth date is known only for Philip; 1765 and John, 1768. Philip was therefore eight years old when Philip, the joiner, appeared in the record and only 16 when Sergeant Philip was first recorded in the Continental Army. He was not the joiner and very probably he was not the sergeant. John Jr.'s oldest child was born in 1803 and the John of Kapho Twp., married by 1772, cannot have been

John Jr. The birth date of only one of Jacob's four children is known; 1802, 24 years after Jacob, the private in the Northampton Co. militia, was listed. It is therefore unlikely that Private Jacob was John's son.

If Anthony, son of our John, was an early child in John's family of 16, he was old enough to have been Private Anthony. Anthony, Jr. paid taxes in Dauphin Co. (1815), the county where Anthony, son of John, was living when John's estate was settled (1820). He could have been a grandson of John.

Sergeant Philip Bretz may have been the Philip found in the Lancaster Co. tax lists. The joiner in Manheim town paid taxes in 1773 and the sergeant's record begins in 1781. But the immigrant Philip, of 1744, if 25 at the time, was 62 when the sergeant was first reported. Possible relations of these Philips to the family of our John are discussed later.

JOHN BRETZ

The earliest record of the John Bretz with whom this account is concerned seems to be in tax lists for Rapho Twp., Lancaster Co., Pa. for 1772. After paying taxes on a farm for ten years, the record comes to an end and only family narratives carry across an intervening 30 years to the next record, John's gravestone in Berne Twp., Fairfield Co., Ohio. He died in 1812 and, figuring from his age, 74 years and 9 months, he was born in 1737. The narratives, reported as coming from John's sons, agree that almost the entire family left Lancaster Co. Pa. early in the 1800's and settled in Fairfield Co., Ohio. The family may not have moved as a body. The reported dates range from 1800 to 1809.

Identification of the Rapho Twp. John as the John buried in Berne Twp. is based on the two following facts. 1) Immigration records show no John Bretz entering Philadelphia after 1750. 2) No other John Bretz is listed in the Pennsylvania tax records during the Revolutionary period.

Allen E. Bretz published a pamphlet in 1894 entitled "Genealogy of Jacob Bretz who was born in Germany A.D. 1702". It contains lists of families of female descendants as well as those of the males and the maiden names of the wives of the Bretz men, as far as the facts could then be collected, but has no birth or death dates. The only history it contains is as follows:

Jacob Bretz, his wife and two sons, (Jacob and John), with one hundred and thirteen other families embarked in the ship 'Loyal Judith' of London, ship master Robert Turpin, from Rotterdam, set sail for America, landed at Philadelphia September 25th, A.D., 1732. They settled in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. About A.D. 1800, the younger son John, with his family, removed to Fairfield County, Ohio, where they became tillers of the soil, serving, as

it were, homes from the wooded wilderness. Four of this family died in infancy. Those growing to maturity were Jacob, Conrad, John, Martin, Philip, Anthony, Valentine, Henry, Christena, Catherine, Margaret and Barbara. In 1822, Philip removed to Seneca County, Ohio, and settled on the farm where we are assembled in Re-union today, Aug. 30, 1894. In 1825 Martin removed to Richland County, Ohio. Conrad removed to Wyandot County, Ohio, A.D. 1834. The remainder died in Fairfield County, Ohio, except Anthony and Barbara, who remained in Pennsylvania.

There is no documentary evidence for the statement that John was a son of the Jacob Bretz, Pretz or Rats who came to America in 1732. There is arithmetical evidence that Allen's statement is incorrect because information on John's gravestone, in Berne Twp., Fairfield Co. shows that he was born in October, 1737. In correspondence with the writer of this present account, Allen wrote, in 1913, that his source was Rupp's "Thirty Thousand Names..."

No connection can be established between any of the Bretz immigrants there listed and our progenitor John. Since names of only males more than 16 years old appear on the passenger lists of the immigrant ships, John was not the Johannes or the Johan Cristobal Bretz landing in Philadelphia August 21, 1750. If our John was German-born, he entered before he was 16. Assuming that, if this were the case, he accompanied his parents, our John could have entered in 1743, aged 6; in 1744, aged 7 or in 1750, aged 13.

John may have been American-born. If so, the immigrant Jacob Pretz, entering five years before John's birth, might be thought of as his father except for the fact that Jacob brought a son John with him, past 16 years old. It seems more probable that, if American-born, John came from parents who entered before 1727, the year the records were begun.

Although there is no record of John during the 18 to 27 years preceding the migration into Ohio, that patriarchal shift with seven sons, three daughters and some grandchildren indicates that the group must have retained close connections in Pennsylvania during this interval. John and his wife were aged 63 and 58 respectively in 1800. One readily conceives that the move was initiated by the older sons and that the father and mother were taken along, instead of being left behind in Pennsylvania. But why all, except one son and one daughter, left Pennsylvania is unstated in any of the oral narratives.

EARLY DAYS IN FAIRFIELD COUNTY

In 1797, Col. Ebenezer Zane completed a new road, Zane's Trace, from Wheeling, W. Va. to Maysville, Ky. A large number of German settlers are reported to have traversed it in 1800 and closely following years. Zane laid out a section of land for a town in Fairfield Co. Ohio, and in honor of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, arrivals, he named it New Lancaster. It became the county seat. Some time between 1800 and 1809, John and his family joined this exodus to a new forefront

of settlement, close upon the withdrawal of the Indian inhabitants.

There were two wagon roads leading westward from Philadelphia across Pennsylvania in 1800, one to Pittsburgh by way of Bedford and Fort Legonier, the other branching off at Bedford and reaching Wheeling on the Ohio by way of Fort Cumberland on the Potomac and Brownstone (Redstone Old Fort). The route to Bedford on the headwaters of the Juniata River was through Shippensburg and Strassburg. Freight and passenger traffic moved in the canoe-shaped and canvas-covered Conestoga wagons which, loaded, grossed seven tons. The journey from Lancaster, Pennsylvania to New Lancaster, Ohio was 400 to 450 miles long.

Life in Fairfield County in the early 1800's was primitive. Houses were cabins, made of logs of course, roofed with split sticks (shakes). Fireplaces were built of mud and sticks, houses often had no floors except hard-packed earth. Many were built without an ounce of iron in the construction. Windows were made of oiled paper, doors were fastened with wooden latches, the string always hanging outside. Cooking was done in pots hung in the fireplaces, suspended from an iron or wooden hook. Bedsteads were built by boring two-inch holes in a log in the wall for insertion of the two end pieces of the bed. These were supported by legs out in the room, and connected by the side rail. Cooking utensils consisted of a round pot, one or two frypans and a 10 to 12 gallon kettle. A wooden bucket, a few pieces of tinware, bone-handled steel knives and forks, pewter spoons, gourds for drinking cups; these constituted the kitchen and table utensils of the average family.

The menu consisted of corn pone, dodger, ash cake, johnny cake and meat. Corn was prepared by being pounded in a hole burned in the end of a hardwood log; finer for flour, coarser for hominy. Salt sold for five dollars a bushel.

Clothing consisted of homespun, dyed black, brown or drab. Every home had its loom and spinning wheel. Buckskin figured in the men's garb.

Ranthers killed some people around Lancaster in those days. There were many wolves. Squirrels were a great pest of the corn crop. There were wild hogs on the hills south of Lancaster for years.

There were dozens of stills in Fairfield Co. before it was five years old. Everybody drank; it was respectable, even fashionable. Excess in liquor in Lancaster, however, had its penalty. A public whipping or a sentence to dig out one stump from the streets of the town followed every public drunk.

The population of Fairfield Co., by 1820, was 1358. There appears to be no record of the sale of any of New Lancaster's town lots to any Bretz during the opening of the townsite in 1800, 1801 and 1802. John's farm lay approximately in the southeast quarter of section 11 of Berne Twp., about 8 miles southeast of town. This is according to C. D. Hoffman, grandson of Catherine Stoneburner, whose

father was Valentine, one of the sons of John. The Lancaster topographic map, however, shows the cemetery, which John donated from his farm, as lying in the north central part of section 14, just across the line from section 11.

C. D. Hoffman of Fairfield Co. Board of Education wrote (to J. H. B.) in 1913 as follows:

I am thoroughly conversant with the location of the John Bretz settlement. He, John, lies buried in the old Lutheran Reformed cemetery over in Berne Twp., which was taken out of the southwest quarter of the southeast quarter of section 11. The old church, which was of logs and was built jointly by the Lutherans and the Reformed people, stood in a corner of the cemetery and was torn down in 1877 and a new structure built near, probably about 300 feet west of the old church and outside the cemetery. The logs of the old church were sold and moved to Colfax, about seven miles north, and erected into a dwelling which is still standing. I have in my possession a pewter baptismal cup which John Bretz presented to the church when it was built and which was given back to grandmother (Catherine) when the new church was built. I also possess some chinaware which grandmother said her mother had brought with her from Pennsylvania and had got when she and great-grandfather (Valentine) Bretz were married. I often heard my grandmother Catherine Stoneburner (daughter of Valentine, son of John) relate how the Indians came each spring to their farm when she was quite small and camped for weeks on the creek which flows through the farm and made maple sugar, and how they helped "raise" a log barn which I believe is still standing. I am not quite certain of the date of John Bretz's coming to Ohio though I have often heard grandmother say when I was a boy. I think it was in 1808 or 1809.

Mrs. J. D. Robinson, Morral, Marion Co. Ohio (a grand-daughter of Andrew D., son of Samuel, son of Valentine, son of John) wrote (to J. H. B.) in 1913 as follows:

My grandfather, Andrew Bretz, told me that the Bretzes came to Fairfield Co. in 1806 when his father, Samuel, was six years old. His grandparents (Valentine and Elizabeth) were very strict Lutherans and when some of the children in their adult years left the church in which they had been confirmed, grandmother Elizabeth walked the floor and wrung her hands. She was of French descent, being Elizabeth DeFav or DeFauw. (Great great) grandfather Valentine owned a farm of 160 acres in Fairfield County which sold after (great great) grandmother's death in 1848 for \$2200 gold, and (great) grandfather Samuel and two of his brothers from Seneca County brought their share of the gold home (to northern Ohio) in their saddle bags.

(Compare this narrative of money in saddle bags with that of Philip, son of John, with 2000 silver dollars in saddle bags in 1821.)

My great uncle David, son of Samuel, son of Valentine, tells me his grandfather Valentine was drafted in the war of 1812 and that,

not being very well, his son John, a boy of 18, went in his place. I have also heard my grandfather, Andrew D., say that Christian Bretz, son of John, son of Valentine, was a soldier in the Mexican War.

The Berne Township Cemetery

This cemetery, donated by John Bretz and taken out of his farm, was visited in 1928 by J. H. D. It was fairly well kept and there were but few fallen stones. Several graves had only rough slabs which apparently never had had inscriptions on them. The cemetery is located on a southern slope, well above the valley bottom. The landscape is a pleasing mature topography, pre-Illinoian in age, only 10 to 20 miles south of the margin of glaciated southern Ohio. Valley trains fill the major valleys but there is no outwash in the valley near the cemetery.

The church, across the road from the cemetery, bears the inscription "St. Pauls Ev. Lutheran. Organized 1820, built 1874." John Bretz gave a baptismal cup to the original Lutheran society but, if he died in 1812, this present society cannot be that original Lutheran Reformed to which he made the gift.

The John Bretz headstone is of dense sandstone. Part of the inscription was almost undecipherable. The year of death was apparently 1812. 18 was clear enough and 2 was fairly clear. The spacing and the absence of any cross grooves seem to indicate that the third figure was 1. It can hardly be 0 or 2, if other history is to be relied on. The stone had a painted design on the head, a crescent moon and several stars, and the incised letters and figures were also painted. Much of this paint still clung to the stone.

Gravestone inscriptions

John Bretz

departed this life

June 5, 1812

aged 74 years, 9 months.

(This is the grave of 1-John. His birth date would be Oct. 1737)

Christena

wife of John Bretz

departed this life April 5, 1818

aged 76 years and 7 mos.

In Memory of John Bretze

who departed this life Nov. 4, 1836

aged 68 years, 7 months and 8 days

(His birth date would be 1768. He probably was John Jr.)

Mary

wife of John Bretz

died Aug. 12, 1850

aged 75 years, 5 months, 6 days

John Bretz

died July 9, 1874

aged 65 yrs., 11 days

(He was born, therefore, in 1809. According to the Bretz Register, John III was born in 1809 and died in 1871. He was a farmer in Bremen, close to Lancaster. This is very probably his grave.)

In memory of

Valentine Bretz

who departed this life April 28, 1845

aged 75 years, 1 month and 1 day

(This is the grave of Valentine, son of John.)

In memory of Elizabeth Bretz

wife of Valentine Bretz

died January 24, 1848

aged 72 yrs., 8 mos. and 24 days

John Stoneburner

died April 27, 1860

aged 60 yrs., 4 mos., 3 days

Catherine

wife of John Stoneburner

B. May 28, 1803 d. Feb. 10, 1889

(A daughter of Valentine, son of John)

THE INCOMPLETE GENEALOGY OF JOHN BRETZ
OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY, OHIO

Numbers preceding names indicate the generations, counting from John as first. Names of Bretz males are underlined and the record of males is believed to be complete except where a (?) terminates a branch of the "tree". A plus sign indicates marriage with the female whose name follows. Parentheses enclose married names of Bretz-born females, with data on husbands where available. Left-hand columns contain the names of Bretz-born individuals. Residences and occupations, so far as listed, are mostly of the early 1900's.

Only families bearing the Bretz name, and those one to two generations removed, have been included. The "Bretz Register", organized and maintained for years by H. F. Pennington and Anna B. Seitz, was a manuscript record, which was planned to contain the names of every one whose ancestry included John. It has been the most valuable source of information for this incomplete genealogy. Miss Seitz commented in 1913 that it then contained between 1500 and 2000 names, that less than half of these were Bretz names, and that it then was far from complete.

1- <u>John Bretz</u>	10-1737 -- 6-5-1812	- Christena	1741 -- 1818
2- <u>Philip Bretz</u>	1765 -- 3-27-1848		
2- <u>John Bretz, Jr.</u>	1768 -- 1836		
2- <u>Catherine Bretz</u>	1778 -- 1848		
2- <u>Conrad Bretz</u>	1780 -- 1861		
2- <u>Magdalena Bretz</u>	1785 -- 1848		
2- <u>Henry Bretz</u>	1789 -- 1865		
2- <u>Martin Bretz</u>	dates unknown		
2- <u>Jacob Bretz</u>	" "		
2- <u>Valentine Bretz</u>	1770 -- 1845		
2- <u>Margaret Bretz</u>	dates unknown		

The children named above accompanied their father into Ohio.

2- <u>Anthony Bretz</u>	dates unknown
2- <u>Barbara Bretz</u>	" "

Remained in Pennsylvania at the time of the family migration into Ohio; Anthony in Dauphin Co., Barbara in Lebanon Co.

2-Four children who died in infancy

The Fairfield Co. probate records show that John's estate was settled in 1820, that all the children above named shared and that Henry then purchased the shares of the others.

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this book)**

2-Henry	1789--1865	Farmer, Lancaster, O.	+ Catherine Myers	--1868
3-John	1814--1852	" "	+ Dinah Musselman	1815--1865
4-Lewis	1843--	" Pleasanton, Neb.	+ Catherine	
5-Willis	1867--	Ranchman, Winona, Kan.	+ Debra V.	
6-Roy				
6-Henry				
6-Mabel				
6-Leona				
5-John	1873--	Grain dealer, Pleasanton, Neb.	+ Emma J.	
6-Helen	1900--			
6-Bernice	1904--			
6-Samuel	1906--			
5-Fannie	1871--	. . . . .	(m. Pearson, Pleasanton, Neb.)	
4-Allen E.	1844--	Surveyor, schoolteacher, Lancaster, O.	+ Mary C.	1844--1906
5-Edgar A.	1871--	Painter, Royalton, O.	+ Amanda J.	
6-Cleora	1902--1903			
5-Nellie	1876--	. . . . .	(m. Bowers, Lancaster, O.)	
5-Mary	1878--	. . . . .	(m. Beagle, Royalton, O.)	
4-Jacob	1846--	Farmer, Pleasantville, O.	+ Mary J.	
5-Fannie	1874--1895			
5-Levi H.	1876--	Merchant, Los Angeles, Cal.		
5-Forest	1883--	Mail Clerk, Pleasantville, O.		
5-Trafford	1886--			
4-John W.	1848--	Farmer, Hebron, O.	+ Anna	
4-Rebecca A.	1849--1875			
4-Adalina	1857--1875			
4-Louisa	1853--	Milliner, Pleasantville, O.		
4-Van Buren	1839--1848			
4-Henry J.	1840--1861			
4-Catherine	1841--	. . . . .	(m. Wine, Pleasantville, O.)	
			5-Harvey	
			5-John	
			5-Henry	
			5-Marion	
			5-Ollie	
			5-Dallie	
			5-Mason	
			5-Van	
			5-Bertie	
			5-Wade	
			5-Bessie	
4-Mary	1837--1879	. . . . .	(m. Wine, Warren, Ind.)	
			5-William	
			5-John	
			5-Clinton	
			5-George	
			5-Bertie	
			5-Addie	
			5-Finley	
			5-Frances	
			5-Douglas	
			5-Nora	
3-Margaret	1816--1893	. . . . .	(m. Miesse or Meisse, Noblesville, Ind)	
3-Barbara	1818-1872	. . . . .	(m. Reese)	

2-Martin				- Katy
3-David E.	. . . . .			+ Julianne
4-Rachel	. . . . .	1847 --		(m. Downe, Lucas, Ohio)
4-David Martin		1839 -- 1863	Farmer	
4-Isaac H.		1837 -- 1898	Farmer	
4-George F.		1841 -- 1886	Farmer	+ Lovina E.
5-Homer C.		1879 --	Farmer	Lucas, Ohio
4-Elizabeth	. . . . .			(m. Dent)
3-Catherine				
3-Mary E.				

2-Jacob	. . . . .			+ Elizabeth
3-Peter	. . . . .			+ Sally
4-Jacob				
3-Catherine		1802 -- 1836		(m. Rhinehart or Reinhart)
				4-Anna
				4-David
				4-Elizabeth
3-Mary	. . . . .			(m. Mast or Must)
				4-Elizabeth
				4-John
				4-Samuel
				4-Isaac

2-Anthony + Magdalena

2-Barbara or Elizabeth (m. John Painter

2-Margaret (m. Miller)

2-Magdalena or Molly (m. Isaac Hite)

2-Catherine (m. Jacob Foreman)

2-John, Jr.	1768 -- 1836		÷ Mary	
3-John III	1809 -- 1871	Farmer, Bremen, O.	+ Rebecca	
3-Emanuel	1803 -- 1863	Celina, Ohio	+ Martha	
4-Noah	1834 -- 1872	Merchant, Celina, O.	+ Ellen	1839 --
5-William H.	1861 --	Clothier, Celina, O.	+ Catherine	m. 1861 --
6-Hubert H.	1887 --			
6-Harriette	1892 --			
5-Clem V.	1863 --	Blacksmith, St. Marys, Ohio	+ Rachel	1861 --
6-Harold	1888 -- 1902			
5-John E.	1864 --	Merchant, Celina, O.	+ Minnie	1871 --
5-Ollie	1867 -- 1898	. . . . .	(m. Bissell)	
4-Maria	1836 --	. . . . .	(m. Nickel)	
3-Philip	1812 -- 1853	Lancaster, Ohio	+ Anna	
4-Adolphus				
4-Mary				
4-Laura				
4-Frank				
3-Josiah	1805 -- 1848	Farmer, Bremen, O.	+ Mary Hillis	1861 --
4-John	-- 1861			
4-Margaret	1848 --	. . . . .	(m. Lytle, Sharpeye, O.)	
4-Washington		Carpenter, Columbus	+ Carrie	
5-Bert	1879 --			
4-Josiah, Jr.	1849 --	Farmer, Harrisville, Ind.	+ Mary A.	1852 --
5-Charles	1871 --			
5-William	1873 --	. . . . .	+ Eva M.	1875 --
6-Mary E.	1896 --			
5-Artie	1875 --	. . . . .	(m. Gray, Union City, Ind.)	
5-Etta	1877 --	Harrisville, Ind.		

2-Conrad	1780--1861	Farmer, Sycamore, O.	† Susannah Foreman	1786--1852
3-Eli	1822--1900	Farmer, " "	† Elizabeth Seitz	1827--1913
4-Twins	died in infancy			
4-Hugh	" "	" "		
4-Mary E.	1850--	(m. Lewis Spitler)		
		5-Three sons, four daughters		
4-William A.	1854--	Farmer, Sycamore, O.	Single	
4-Lewis C.	1856--	Minneapolis, Minn.	† Ida Johnson	
4-Addison M.	1858--	Barber, Delaware, O.	† Laura Matilda Kear	
4-Flora T.	1861--	(m. Ben Owen, Farmer, lawyer, Mt. Vernon, O.)		
		5-Four sons		
4-Hattie	1863--	(m. C. A. Bartholomew)		
		5-Three sons, four daughters		
4-George W.	1868--	Barber, Carthage, O.	† Ella Clark	
5-Carl	1907--			
5-Harry C.	1898--	Frigidaire Co. Dayton, O.	† Grace Bartholomew	1896--
			(Grace = niece of C. A. Bartholomew)	
6-Donald	1929--			
3-Andrew J.	1825--1902	Sycamore, Ohio	† Mary Baum	1826--1872
4-J. Alexander	1853--1902	" " " " " " " " " " " "	† Lucy Paulin	
5-Mary	" " " " " "	(m. Wm. J. Baugher)		
		6-Mabel	" " " " " "	(m. Martin)
		6-Ethel	" " " " " "	(m. King)
		6-Naomi	1906--1920	
		6-Everett	" " " " " "	† Illa Clabaugh
		6-Martha	" " " " " "	(m. Shafer)
		(m. F. Schwartz, then D. Whistler)		
5-Ada M.				
5-Winnie - Minnie	twins died in infancy			
3-	(second marriage)	" " " " " " " " " " " "	† Eliza Baum	(Mary's sister)
3-Peter	1812--1850			
3-Noah	1817--			
3-Barbara	1819--			
3-Anna	1815--1888	(m. Samuel Spitler		1813--1886
		4-Israel	1834--	† Martha Bushong
		4-Noah	1835--	† Susanna Loehr
		4-Lucinda	1842--	† Paul Bryan
		4-Conrad	1838--	single
		4-Eli	1839--	† Martha Ensminger
		4-Cassius	1848--	† Bina Pingle
		4-Samuel	1851--	† Annetta Poe
		4-John H.	1853--	† Irene Taylor
		4-Douglas	1858--	† Lucy Rader
		4-Susanna	1845--1848	

2-Conrad, continued

3-Lucinda 1820--1907 . . (m. Andrew Pontius 1819-1902 Sycamore, O.)

4-Bruce		
4-Sylvester	1841--	+Mary Paulin
4-Diana	1842--	(m. Amos Kurtz)
4-Marietta	1849--	single
4-Rachel	1846--	(m. Robt. Hudson)
4-Simon	1848--	single
4-Rufus	1850--	+Ann Knapp
4-Cinderella	1852--	(m. Chas. Ingerson)
4-David R.	1855--	+Emma Shafer
4-Cynthia	1856--1864	
4-Addison M.	1867--	+Ellen Heavner
4-Oliver H.	1866--	single

3-Lydia 1812--1889 . . (m. John Bope 1801--1882 Sycamore O.)

4-Abraham	1831--	+Melinda Stalters
4-Daniel	1833--	+Barbara Baum
4-Susannah	1834--	(m. Isaac Corfman)
4-Mary S.	1835--	(m. Peter Baum)
4-John	1837--	
4-Conrad	1839--	+Dorothy Coon
4-Jeremiah		
4-Lydia		
4-Elizabeth		
4-Eliza J.	1845--	(m. M. Cross)
4-Andrew	1848--	+Roxanna Kinney
4-Amada	1850--	(m. Jacob Shafer)
4-George	1864--	+Mary Freece

3-Christena 1808--1875 . . (m. Jesse Morgan)

4-Noah		
4-Susan	. . . . .	(m. Ed. Reynolds)
4-Mary	. . . . .	(m. H. Wayters)
4-Conrad		

The three Baums who married into the Andrew J. Bretz and John Bope families were siblings.

2-Valentine	1770--1845	+ Elizabeth DeFay or Defauw 1775--1848
3-John	1796--1873	Tanner, Melmore, O. & Barry Co. Mich. + Barbara Nagy
4-Christian	1821--1867	Columbus, Ohio + Anna Jenks
5-John C.	1855--	Sailor
5-Mary	1856--	(m. Longman)
4-Isaac	1826--	Merchant, Groton, S. D. + Eliza Baer
5-Dosia	1868--	Music teacher, Groton, S. D.
5-Jay W.	1870--	Farmer, Groton, S. D.
4-Simon Peter	1837--1863	Melmore, Ohio + Cordelia Somers
4-John	1840--1862	Killed in battle during Civil War
4-Mary	1823--1890	. . (m. Myers, Charlotte, Mich.)
4-Lavina	1828--1872	. . (m. Noah Huddle, Melmore, Ohio)
4-Elizabeth	1829--1863	. . (m. Robt. Martin, Bloomville, O.)
4-Fannie	1831--1866	. . (m. Weaver)
4-Rebecca	1833--1860	. . single, Melmore, Ohio.
4-Rachel	1835--	. . (m. Absalom Martin, Tiffin, Ohio)
3-Catherine	1803--1889	(m. John Stoneburner)
		4-Noah
		4-Elizabeth . . . (m. Finsel)
		4-Levi
		4-Christena
		4-Mary (m. Beery)
		4-Helen (m. Hoffman)
		5-Chas. D. Hoffman
		4-Samuel
		4-Catherine
		4-John
		4-Melinda
3-Christena	. . . . .	(m. Barthman or Northman)
		4-Rufus
		4-Silas
		4-Elizabeth
		4-Sara
		4-Catherine
		4-Caroline
		4-Emma
		4-Clarissa
3-Helen	1818--1898. .	(m. Wierbaugher)
		4-Elizabeth (m. Hoppen)
		4-Samuel

2-Valentine, continued

3-David	1798--1875	Farmer, VanBuren, O. +Fanny Kagy	1800--1885
		David was Pennsylvania-born	
4-Lewis K.	1822--1871	Farmer, VanBuren, O. +Elizabeth Seitz	1832--1883
5-Ella		(m. C. W. Hershberger,	
		Bloomville, O.)	
5-Wilson J.	1856--	Single, Wyandot, Ohio.	
5-Ada C.	1860--	Dressmaker.	
5-Fannie	1863--	(m. W. J. Steinmetz)	
4-Abram K.	1824--1868	Grocer, Charlotte Mich. +Mary Perky	1834--
5-Algernon H.	1855--1885	Single	
5-Adonisano D.	1856--		
5-Milton A.	1860--1898	Law and Real Estate, Abilene, Texas	
5-Zora	1858--	(m. Shepherd, Charlotte, Mich.)	
4-Elizabeth	1826--	(m. Zila Myers, Lake	
		Odessa, Mich.)	
4-Samuel	1828--1909	Farmer, Milton Ctr. O. +Anna Seitz	1832--1896
5-Dow	1856--1936	+Sara Robinson	
6-Hazel C.		(m. Cowdrich)	
6-Delora		(m. Roberts)	
5-George A.	1860--1938	Baptist minister, Huntington, Ind.	
		+Augusta Jordon	1862--
5-Frank	1866--1933	Farmer, Milton Ctr. O. +Minnie Pacom	
6-Elma C.		Single	
6-Katie			
6-Cecil M.	1898	Single	
7-Ruth		+Mary Kistner	
7-Martin	1925--	+Hilda Engler	
8-Carolyn			
8-Martin Jr.	1947--		
4-Valentine	1830--1885	+Sara Ann Telford	1832--1896
5-David A.	1858--	Farmer, Sears, Mich. +Mary Boggs	1859--
6-Valentine	1886--	Dearborn, Mich. +Mabel Gentry	
7-Patricia	1913--1938	(m. A. Brankovan)	
		Detroit, Mich.	
		8-Patricia	1930--
6-Frank	1888--	Redford, Mich. +Frances Malpas	--1918
7-Helen L.	1912--	(m. Gilbert Olson, Detroit,	
		Mich.)	
		8-Susan	1940--
		8-Diane	1943--
		8-Jean	1948--
7-Elizabeth	1914--	(m. Francis Hunter,	
		Detroit, Mich.)	
		8-Shirley J.	1938--
		8-Douglas W.	1942--
		8-Robert Bruce	1946--

2-Valentine, continued

3-David,

4-Valentine

5-David

6-Frank, continued

second marriage with Kate Malpas, sister of first wife.

7-Otto H. 1920--

8-Norton L. 1943--

7-Robt. W. 1923--

7-Barbara S. 1930--

6-Otto 1896--1920

6-Gertrude M. 1889-- (m. R. E. Smith, Adrian, Mich.)

7-Roland 1924--

7-Flecta 1927--

7-Willis 1929--

6-Paul V. 1894--

St. Paul, Minn. - Mildred E. Davy 1896--

7-David D. 1916--

8-Sandra J. 1947--

8-Bonnie G. 1948--

7-Thos. Edw. 1919--

8-Thos. Edw. Jr. 1946--

7-Marion E. 1923--

. . . . (m. Vernon Stocker)

8-Candace L. 1947--

7-Dorothy N. 1926--

. . . . (m. Kenneth Holmes)

5-Eva 1862--1921

. . . . (m. Spencer Leigh)

5-Orson 1867--

. . . . -Ewilda 1867--

6-Opal E. 1894--

. . . . (m. Dunford)

5-Ruth 1870--

. . . . (m. Buckborough, Lake Odessa, Mich.)

6-LaVerne

6-Viverne

5-Don 1873--

Carpenter, Lake Odessa, Mich.

4-Mary 1832--

. . . . (m. Noah Finsel, Tiffin, O.)

5-Alonzo

5-Delora

5-Fanny

4-Christena 1836--

. . . . (m. Wm. Watson)

5-Irwin

5-Ella

5-Clara

4-Barbara E. 1834--1908

. . . . (m. Daniel Seitz)

5-Four children

4-Fanny 1838--1854

4-George 1840--1864 Died of starvation in Libby Prison

2-Valentine, continued

3-Samuel	1800--1874	Penn.-born. Farmer, Wyandot, Ohio	
		+Catherine Bibler	1804--1888
4-Anna	1824--1889	(m. Shoots)	
		5-Mary (m. Bailey Horde)	
4-Andrew D.	1827--1905	Farmer, Morral, O.	
		+Mary Seitz	1830--
5-Alice	1855--	(m. Brown)	
		6-Effie (m. J. D. Robinson)	
		6-Frank	
		6-Ralph	
		6-Ray	
4-Elizabeth	1829--1912	(m. Rev. Lewis Seitz)	
		5-Anna B. Seitz	1858--1930
		5-Kate	
		5-Elma	
		5-Virginia	
		5-Mary	
		5-Bloom	
4-David D.	1837--1922	Farmer, Harpster, Ohio	
		+Jane Coon	1837--1909
5-Fanny	1860--	(m. Ten Eick)	
5-Stanton E.	1862--	Vet. surg., furniture, undertaking, Nevada, O.	
		+Ione	1868--
6-Kowena	1899--		
5-Cora	1866--	(m. Swartz)	
5-Nellie	1873--	Teacher, Nevada, O. (m. Barden)	
4-Mahala	1840--1906	(m. McBride, Butler, Mo.)	
		5-Myrtle	
4-Amanda	1843--1878	(m. Norton, Wyandott, O.)	
4-Mary P.	1845--1855		
4-Fannie M.	1832--1911	(m. John Brown)	
		5-Fannie	
4-Rebecca	1835--1911	(m. Herman Baer, Morral, Ohio)	
		5-Jonas	
		5-Charles	
		5-Bailey	
		5-Frank	
		5-William	
		5-Kate	

2-Philip	1765--1848	+ Elizabeth Burdner, Burton, Barton or Bottner	1769--1833
3-Susannah	.	(m. Abraham Heistand)	
	4-Solomon	1808--	
	4-Mary	.	(m. Beagle)
	4-Levi	1816--1886	
	4-John	1817--1838	
3-(second marriage)		(m. Henry Wolf)	
	4-Samuel		
	4-Eliza	.	(m. Free)
3-(third marriage)		(m. Williams)	
	4-Sarah	.	single
	4-Elizabeth	.	single
	4-Margaret	.	(m. Daniel Huddle)
3-Catherine	1801--1875	(m. Rev. Jacob Garber, Hardshell Baptist	--1890)
	4-Gideon		
	4-Samuel		
	4-Rebecca	.	(m. Spitler)
3-Sobina	1802--1874	(m. Geo. Bever	1800--1869)
(or Lavina)	4-Gideon		
	4-Joseph		
	4-Solomon	1827--1866	
	4-Melissa	.	(m. Shalter)
	4-Sarah	.	(m. Revert)
	4-Adaline	.	(m. Reiff)
	4-Amanda	.	(m. Coup)
	4-Samuel		
3-Mary	1808--1890	(m. John Pennington)	
(or Polly)	4-Solomon		
	4-H. Frank Pennington		
	4-Philip		
	4-Lavina	.	(m. McClintic)
	4-Betsy		
3-Sarah	1811--1870	(m. John Wax	1813--1897)
(or Sally)	4-Philip	.	single
	4-Eliza		
	4-Samuel		
	4-Elizabeth	.	(m. Coup)
	4-Mary	.	(m. Hall)
	4-John, Jr.		
3-Elizabeth	1799--1874	(m. Peter Springer	1802--1867)
	4-Philip	.	- Nisley
	4-Sarah	.	(m. Nisley)
	4-Ann	.	(m. King)
	4-Mary	.	(m. Berkey)
	4-Catherine	.	(m. Hartman)
	4-Rebecca	.	(m. Meach)

For

3-John

3-Jacob

3-Philip, Jr.

see following pages

2-Philip
 3-Philip, Jr. 1807--1874 + Catherine Free 1809--1838
 4-George W. 1838--1896 + Mary Ellen Strauss 1844--1926
 5-Winnie 1866-- (m. Rev. David Parks)
 6-Mary (m. Ives)
 6-Ellen (m. Ives)
 6-John
 6-Ruth (m. Snodgrass)

 5-Irving 1870-- Cleveland. + Edith Shaw
 6-Nellie 1899-- (m. Chas. Eddy)
 5-Anna 1873-- (m. J. A. Zimmerman, Tiffin, O.)
 3-(second marriage) + Mary Andre 1819--1848
 4-Solomon 1843--1907 Tiffin, O. + Amanda 1846--
 5-Silas 1868--
 6-Carl
 6-Evelyn
 5-Earl 1874--
 6-Mildred
 5-Grover 1886--
 6-Evelyn
 6-Ruth
 6-George
 4-Edward 1848--1933 + Sabina Spitler 1849--1935
 5-Ralph Seattle
 6-Wm. Edward
 7-Connie
 7-William
 6-Henrietta (m. Wm. Schlarb, then Moseley)
 5-Arabella (m. John Roos)
 6-Marguerite (m. Schomberg)
 6-Sabina (m. Devilbiss)
 4-Sarah A. 1846--1923 (m. Daniel Loose, Tiffin.)
 6-Edward
 6-Gilbert
 6-Carrie (m. Gilbert)
 6-Otto
 6-Harvey
 6-Elmer

 4-Philip, III died in infancy
 4-Jacob 1842--1843
 3-(third marriage). + Susannah Winter
 4-Two infant sons 1850 and 1851
 3-John 1794--1852 Melmore, O. + Lydia Seitz 1800--1866
 4-Lewis 1826-- Rochester, Ind. + Catherine Bever
 5-Benjamin 1848-- " " + Cassandra
 6-Bertha
 5-Lucius 1850-- + Ella
 6-Nona
 6-Cleo
 5-Lydia (m. Rennals, Argus, Ind.)
 4-Catherine 1828--1864 (m. Rev. Henry Black, U.B.)
 4-Elizabeth 1822--1848 (m. Joshua Estep or Eastep)
 4-Susannah single
 4-Barbara 1830--1915 single
 4-Anna 1821-- (m. Rev. J. P. Thornton, U.B.)
 4-Sarah 1824--1901 (m. John Stauffer, Poplar, O.)
 4-Lydia 1831--1901 (m. Parks, Richwood, O.)
 4-Rebecca 1832--1908 (m. Hiram Welch, Salinaville, O.)

2-Philip
3-Jacob 1795--1866 Seneca Co., O.
+ Philadelphia Wolf 1795--1839
4-Caroline (m. Abel T. Norris)
5-Albert
5-Jerome
5-William
5-Anna (m. Must)
5-Laura (m. Forrest)
4-Maryann (m. Holtz)
5-Florence (m. Snively)
5-Theodore
4-Sovena 1824-- . . . (m. Geo. Black 1824--)
5-Charles 1847-- Lake Odessa, Mich.
5-Jacob 1849--
5-Alonzo 1850--1906
5-Jasper 1852--
5-William 1854--
5-Ardella 1856-- (m. Ward)
5-Agnes 1858-- (m. Augustine)
5-Joslin 1859--
4-Christena 1828-- Twin of Chas. Ephraim
(m. George Jacobs)
5-Reed
5-Suener
4-Jemina (m. Sherman Lee)
5-Hazel
5-Jacob
5-Avery
5-Rascoe
4-Analiese (m. Russell Hanby Bever)
5-Robert
5-Minnie Jo (m. several times)
5-Ralph
5-Earl
5-Viola (m. Shade)
6-Mary (m. Weddle)
6-Russell
4-Samuel 1830--1903 Battle Creek, Mich.
+ Amelia Lind
5-Infant death
5-Parley (adopted)
5-Marguerite (adopted)
4-Aaron J. 4-13-1836-- abt. 1916 + Emma Chamberlain
5-Bertha 1866-- Teacher, Oakland, Calif.
5-Eugene
5-Clifford 1872--
4-Charles Ephraim
1828--1905 See following page

4-Chas. Ephraim		+ Elizabeth George	
5-7-1828--7-26-1905		2-2-1833--9-25-1887	
5-Oliver Joseph		+ Rhoda Maria Howlett	
9-11-1854--3-27-1924		1-30-1859--8-20-1920	
6-J Harlen	9-2-1882 --	+ Fanny Belle Challis	8-5-1881 --
7-Rudolf C.	7-12-1914 --	+ Emilie Fermier	7-16-1913 --
8-Peter	9-24-1936 --		
8-Michael	6-2-1938 --		
8-Wendy	8-13-1944 --		
7-Rhoda Irene	11-24-1917--	(m. James K. Riley)	9-20-1910 --
		8-Richard	12-25-1944--
		8-Terrill	6-18-1948 --
6-Bina Belle 9	9-17-1884 --	(m. Rev. Levi Goodwin)	12-23-1882--
		7-Isabel	5-28-1917 --
		7-Carlton	7-17-1924 --
		+ Vivian Tronchetti	11-15-1924--
6-Martha E.	2-22-1892 --	(m. Frank Schreiber)	
		7-Joyce	4-7-1929 --
		7-Margaret	7-2-1934 --
6-Ernest C.	10-11-1895--	+ Esther Wakefield	
		4-21-1897--9-8-1920	
7-Elizabeth J.	8-24-1920--	(m. E. W. Hostetter)	6-7-1920 --
		8-Sarah E.	11-17-1943--
		8-Suzanne	12-10-1947--
6- second marriage		+ Ellen Putnam	6-1-1894 --
7-Margaret E.	6-28-1924--	(m. E. T. Baker)	7-31-1917 --
		8-Michael H.	9-3-1946 --
		8-Peter P	12-3-1948 --
		8-Twin brother, died at birth	
7-Johanna E.	3-5-1926 --	(m. R. S. Piskoty)	4-6-1925 --
7-Oliver John	8-9-1927 --	+ Joan Hughes	10-1-1929 --
6-Marguerite L.	3-20-1898 --	(m. Guy Vroman)	8-12-1897 --
		7-Barbara	12-25-1916--
		(m. Lester Varger)	10-7-1915 --
		7-Virginia	5-13-1926 --
		(m. Harold Vrainard)	2-20-1927 --
		7-James	8-13-1932 --

4-Chas. Ephraim, continued

5-Franklin J.

7-3-1861--7-19-1943

6-Lelah

9-23-1891--10-18-1941

6-J Gerald 6-11-1903 --

7-Beverly Ann 11-21-1932--

7-Marylin Sue 5-2-1939 --

5-Chas. Wesley 1-12-1875 --

6-Ephraim Ross 1898--1899

6-Thelma 9-2-1902 --

6-Marjorie 1-13-1905 --

6-Faye 9-28-1909 --

5-Fara Ann

12-19-1855--2-17-1938

5-Lettie Alice 7-31-1863 --

5-Phila Jane 1859--1859

5-Catherine Amanda 1865--1867

5-Cora 1867--1868

5-Meltha Permelia 1869--1888

+ Mary Whitby

1865--1944

(m. Jasper Morrow)

1893--

7-Richard

8-21-1914 --

7-Veryl

12-21-1916--

+ Pearl Hazel

11-13-1907--

+ Alice Hogue

2-12-1874 --

(m. Paul Boomer)

1888--1947

(m. Carl Anderson)

2-5-1902 --

7-Sandra Faye

7-26-1940 --

7-John B.

1-11-1942 --

(m. Geo. Huddle)

7-11-1859--3-17-1915

6-Leon

8-5-1888 --

6-Elsie (m. H. J. Sweet)

8-10-1892 --

(m. Wm. Curtis)

4-24-1858--9-24-1944

6-Gaylia (m. Allison Tolles) 10-16-1889--

6-Harold +Elga Walters 7-27-1895 --

6-Voight +Nettie Miller 2-5-1899 --

Propinquity was a large factor in selection of mates in the sparsely settled country. Huddles, Kagys, Bartholomews, Penningtons, Foremans, Wines, Spitlers, Wolfs, Baums, Bevers and Seitzes married Bretz girls or were married by Bretz boys. There were seven Bretz-Seitz marriages, all occurring among the third and fourth Bretz generations. The earliest known Seitz was Johannes, (1840-1793) who entered America in 1764, coming from Bavaria with wife, Katherine (Diehl) and a babe in arms, Lewis. Johannes settled in York Co., Pa., just across the Susquehanna from Lancaster Co. A Catholic in Bavaria, he became a Protestant in America. Lewis, the only son recorded, came to Fairfield Co. Ohio with four sisters during the same decade that saw John Bretz and family move west. Two of these sisters had descendants who married into Bretz families. The seven marriages noted were all among Lewis' children and grandchildren. The outstanding frontier family among the Seitzes was sired by Benjamin Huddle. He married Anna (1805--), a daughter of Lewis. They had no less than 18 children. Four died young, eight lived past the 80-year milestone, five lived past 90 and one, (dying in 1945) was 102 years old. Seitzes, as well as Bretzes, moved from Fairfield County into northern Ohio, where most of this intermarrying occurred.

PHILIP BRETZ

Three of the sons of John failed to stay in Fairfield County for the remainder of their lives. Yielding to the lure of newly opened farming lands in the northern part of Ohio, Philip was the first to move (in 1822 to Seneca Co.) followed by Martin (in 1825, to Richland Co.) and then by Conrad (1834, to Wyandot Co.). According to H. F. Pennington, (a grandson of Philip by his daughter, Mary), who has assiduously collected the scattered oral information bearing on the history of the John Bretz family, Philip brought his family with him to Seneca County. He is said to have brought two saddle bags full of silver dollars and with this, to have purchased 1500 acres from the Federal Government for \$2000. He gave a quarter section to each of his nine children, except Catherine. Her husband, Rev. Jacob Garber, asked for 80 acres and \$100 cash, Philip thus kept 160 acres. Pennington believed that Philip married twice but was uncertain what children were born of each wife. He was inclined to think that the first wife died early, and that all the children were offspring from the second union. Philip built the old homestead in 1847, when he was 82, a year before his death. It stood, until 1942, near Honey Creek, half a mile east of Melmore. He is buried at the Stone Church or United Brethren Chapel, built on part of the old homestead, on the banks of Honey Creek. Philip, as recalled by Pennington, was "tall and stately". Pennington was but a boy of six at the time, but he recalls that Philip had a full head of hair and parted it in the middle. Considering that all of Philip's direct descendants in the Jacob-Ephraim-Oliver-Harlen line became bald fairly early, this full head of hair may have been a wig. Two generations later, Ephraim always wore a wig when he went to church. Pennington's notice was attracted to the old man because he peeled an apple for the boy, taking the peeling off in one complete piece.

Anna Seitz (grand-daughter of Samuel, son of Valentine) quotes her father Lewis Seitz as authority for the following. "Uncle Philip was noted for his honesty. At one time, he had a fine cow which a neighbor wanted to buy. The neighbor offered a good price for it. "No", said Uncle Philip, "She isn't worth that much, I'll take only" (naming a lower price).

The records of Seneca County land transactions show that Philip purchased 1200 acres in different parcels at intervals from 1821 to 1829. This seems to indicate that the family did not all go together to Seneca Co. Philip was 56 when he bought the first unit, and 64 when he completed the purchases. The records also show purchases of land, during that same interval, by David and John Bretz, sons of Valentine, nephews of Philip. No other Bretzes are noted during this interval.

Philip's purchases were as follows

SE 1/2 sec. 4, Eden Twp. Aug. 20, 1821
SE 1/4 sec. 23, " " " 22, "
E 1/2 of NE 1/4 sec. 26, Eden Twp. Aug. 22, 1821
NW 1/4 sec. 21, Bloom Twp. " 27, 1821
W 1/2 of SW 1/4 sec. 20, Bloom Twp. Aug. 27, 1821
SW 1/4 sec. 25, Eden Twp. Jan. 4, 1822
W 1/2 of SE 1/4 sec. 30, Bloom Twp. March 4, 1825
E 1/2 of SW 1/4 sec. 30, " " July 26, 1826
W 1/2 of SE 1/4 sec. 30, " " Aug. 16, 1828
NE 1/4 sec. 31, Bloom Twp. June 1, 1829

David's purchases were as follows

W 1/2 of NW 1/4 sec. 31, Bloom Twp. May 23, 1827
W 1/2 of SW 1/4 sec. 31, " " Nov. 3, 1829

John's purchase was as follows

W 1/2 of NE 1/4 sec. 11, Eden Twp. Aug. 20, 1821

Philip was among the very first to enter Seneca County as an agriculturalist, for the first sale of farm land in the county was in 1819. Eden was the first township to have settlement. Survey into sections occurred in 1820 and the township was named for its remarkably fertile soil. Honey Creek has trenched about 50 feet into the ground moraine surface of the township. Melmore was named for Honey Creek. The township was organized the year it was surveyed. Philip Bretz is named among the first settlers coming there after the sales opened in 1821.

Township trustees included the following Bretzes,

1834	Joan T. Bretz, one of four trustees
1845	John Bretz
1846-47	" "
1848	Philip Bretz
1849	" "
1850	John Bretz
1856	P. Bretz

The township had 319 inhabitants by 1830 and Melmore contained 250 people in 1847. Among enterprising citizens listed for Eden Township in 1847 were John Bretz and Philip Bretz. It was in this year that Philip built the stone house on Honey Creek, where the 1887 re-union was held. Isaac Bretz and A. K. Bretz were subscribers to Butterfield's History of Seneca County, published in 1847. Isaac was a son of John, son of Valentine. A. K. may be a misprint, referring to Andrew J., son of Conrad, who is listed in the Bretz Register as living in Sycamore, a few miles from Melmore. Jacob Bretz was listed as a settler on Honey Creek in 1823. This was Jacob, son of Philip. A Charles Bretz lived near Rocky Creek in 1821 and a Charles Bretz was listed as a prosperous farmer in a Seneca Co. history in 1840. In neither case can this name belong to John's family.

Early conditions in Seneca County duplicated those encountered 20 years earlier in Fairfield County. Houses were built of logs, roofs were made of split logs with a gutter hewed on the upturned flat side of the under tier. The upper tier covered the cracks of the lower and had the semicircular surfaces uppermost, the edges thus resting on the verge of the gutters in the lower tier. Floors and doors were made of puncheon staves. Fireplaces were constructed of clay mixed with small twigs; chimneys of crossed sticks. "Raisings" were held for the erection of these cabins. Willing help was secured by a liberal supply of whiskey. "Temperance raisings" gradually developed because of the evils of the usual affair.

Wolves were plentiful in the county in the early days; nights were described as hideous with their howls. They were particularly vicious on the east side of Sandusky River where Philip made his land purchases.

The known span of activity of that eccentric Swedenborgian, Johnny Appleseed, (1801-1847), almost exactly covers the Ohio history of John and Philip Bretz, and some of the counties receiving his attention, (Licking, Richland, etc.), were close to the country of these Bretzes. Always on the move and everywhere welcomed by the settlers, Johnny might have been known, and must have been known of, by some of John's sons.

No soldiers with the name Bretz are listed from Seneca Co. during the Civil War.

Although life under these frontier conditions was hard, leisure was non-existent, comforts were few and culture was limited to the Lutheran or the United Brethren church, these forebears were not driven from Pennsylvania to Ohio, nor from Fairfield to Seneca County, by economic, religious or political pressure as were the immigrant Germans a generation or two earlier. Philip came well-heeled and played the part of an affluent patriarch in setting up his offspring on their own farms. The reason for these moves can be only that these people sought the opportunities a newly opened land offered, and did not greatly dislike the simple, rugged life required.

Cemetery Records from Seneca, Marion and Wyandot Counties, Ohio

"Old Bretz Graveyard" near Sycamore, Ohio

Conrad Bretz

died Jan. 29, 1861

aged 80 years, 9 months and 23 days

(Born in 1780, this is the grave of Conrad, son of John)

Susan, wife of Conrad Bretz

died Jan. 18, 1852

aged 65 years, 2 months, 2 days

Cemetery 3 miles southeast of Tiffin, Seneca Co.

NE corner of section 4

In memory of

Jacob Wolf

died March 2, 1834

aged 68 years, 2 months and 8 days

(Born 1766)

In memory of

Christena C.

wife of Jacob Wolf

died Oct. 13, 1849

aged 88 years, 6 months

(Born 1761)

Isaac Wolf

died Sept. 25, 1857

aged 35 years, 10 months, 21 days

Prudence, wife of Isaac Wolf

died May 9, 1854

aged 25 yrs., 11 mos., 11 days

Corporal J. J. Wolfe

Co. G, 3rd Ohio Cavalry

John Wolf

died Jan. 28, 1858

aged 79 years, 17 days

(Born 1779)

Mary A.

wife of Meshach Wolfe

died Jan. 2, 1849

aged 28 yrs., 9 mos., 27 days

James Wolf

died Sept. 14, 1869

aged 64 years, 11 months, 9 days

these are undoubtedly relatives of Philadelphia Wolf, wife of Jacob

Grand Prairie Cemetery, Rocky Fork Baptist Church
Marion Co. Near Marion. Jct. 23 and 221
Collected by Ernest and Ellen Bretz

Samuel Bretz

died April 30, 1874

aged 73 yrs., 8 mos., 2 days

(Born 1800, he was a son of Valentine)

Catherine, wife (of Samuel, maiden name Bibler)

died Jan 22, 1888

aged 83 yrs., 8 mos., 2 days

Andrew D. Bretz

born March 5, 1827

died Jan. 9, 1905

(He was a son of Samuel, son of Valentine.)

Mary, wife (of A.D., maiden name Seitz)

born Oct. 5, 1830

died Aug. 18, 1912

Jane Ann Bretz

born Nov. 7, 1837

died May 12, 1909

(Not in "Register")

David S. (Bretz? No name on stone.)

born Dec. 30, 1837

died April 6, 1922

(Samuel, son of Valentine had a son David S.)

Cemetery three miles east of Melmore, Seneca Co.
NE corner of section 30

Barbara

wife of John Bretz

died Nov. 28, 1860

(She was the wife of John, son of Valentine)

Rebecca M.

daughter of J. and B. Bretz, died Oct. 2, 1860

Simon P.

son of J. and B. Bretz

died May 15, 1863

Lewis M. Bretz

died Aug. 11, 1871

aged 48 yrs., 3 mos., 7 days

(He was a son of David, son of Valentine.)

(Lewis K. in Bretz Register)

Elizabeth (maiden name was Seitz)

wife of L. K. Bretz

died Dec. 19, 1888

aged 61 yrs., 5 mos., 19 days

Eli Bretz

died May 6, 1900

aged 77 yrs., 7 mos., 7 days

(He was a son of Conrad)

Elizabeth, his wife (wife of Eli, maiden name was Seitz)

William A. Bretz

1854 - 1928

(He was a son of Eli, son of Conrad)

Alvin J.

son of Aaron and Eliza Seitz

died May 10, 1890

aged 21 yrs., 7 mos., 3 days

(A nephew of Elizabeth, wife of Eli)

United Brethren Chapel Cemetery on Philip Bretz farm,
east of Melmore, Seneca County

This cemetery was woefully neglected, in 1928. Many stones had fallen, some fallen ones may have been concealed in the tangle of vegetation. Later information is that this condition has been corrected.

Philip Bretz

died March 27, 1848

aged 83 years

(This is the grave of Philip, son of John)

Philip Bretz

died April 16, 1874

aged 67 years, 1 mo., 28 days

(Born in 1807, he was Philip, Jr.)

Catherine,
wife of Philip Bretz
died May 8, 1838
aged 28 yrs., 7 mos., 2 days

(First wife of Philip Jr., maiden name was Free)

Mary, wife of Philip Bretz
died Aug. 5, 1848
aged 28 yrs., 7 mos., 12 days

(Second wife of Philip Jr., maiden name was Andre)

Jacob, son of P. and M. Bretz
died March 26, 1843
aged 9 mos., 17 days

Infant son of P. and S. Bretz
died Jan. 6, 1850

Infant son of P. and S. Bretz
died Nov. 16, 1851

Joan Bretz
died July 24, 1852
aged 57 yrs., 9 months, 10 days
He was the father of 16 children,
5 sons and 11 daughters

(Born in 1794, he was a son of Philip.)

Lydia, wife of John Bretz (maiden name was Seitz)
died Oct. 28, 1866
aged 66 yrs., 7 mos., and 25 days

Elizabeth, wife of
Joshua Eastep and daughter
of J. and L. Bretz
died Feb. 21, 1848
aged 26 yrs., 1 mo., 18 days

Noah, son of J. and L. Bretz
died Oct. 29, 1823
aged 8 mos., 12 days

Infant son of J. and L. Bretz
died Feb. 7, 1823

Magdalene, Dau. of J. and L. Bretz
died Aug. 22, 1841
aged 3 yrs., 28 days

John, son of J. and L. Bretz
died Sept. 27, 1827
aged 2 yrs.

Mary, wife of Noah Seitz

died Apr. 22, 1865

aged 65 yrs., 11 mos., 7 days

Noah, son of N. and M. Seitz

died Apr. 19, 1847

aged 11 yrs., 3 mos.

George Bever

born March 26, 1800

died Sept. 26, 1869

aged 69 yrs., 6 mos.

Sebina, wife of Geo. Bever

died Oct. 19, 1874

aged 71 yrs., 10 mos., 4 days

(a daughter of Philip)

Solomon Bever, son of Geo. and Sebina Bever

died Dec. 28, 1866

aged 39 yrs., 3 mos., 8 days

Member of Co. K, 123 Reg., O.V.I.

(G.A.R. flag on grave in June, 1930)

Solomon Bever

died May 8, 1882

aged 32 yrs., 10 months

(Apparently a brother of Geo. Bever)

Maria, wife of Solomon Bever

died Sept. 14, 1863

aged 55 yrs., 6 mos., 25 days

Elizabeth, wife of Solomon Bever

died May 11, 1897

aged 75 yrs., 20 days

John Wax

born Sept. 13, 1813

died Dec. 7, 1897

aged 84 yrs., 2 mos., 24 days

Sarah, wife of John Wax

born March 17, 1811

died Feb. 26, 1880

aged 68 yrs., 11 mos., 9 days

(A daughter of Philip)

Gravestone inscriptions in Fish Cemetery,
New Rochester, Crawford Co., Ohio

Jacob Bretz

1866

71 yrs.

(This is the grave of Jacob, son of Philip, father of Eohrain)

Phil. Bretz

May 1, 1889

94 yrs., 21 days

(She was the wife of Jacob, son of Philip)

Identifications of the Bretzes and Bretz wives
buried in the U. B. Chapel Cemetery

Philip, son of John, and two of his sons, Philip Jr. and John are buried here. From data in the Philip, Jr. family bible, reported by Grace, wife of Harry, son of George, and by Aaron, son of Jacob, son of Philip, Philip Jr. was married three times. Catherine Free was his first wife, Mary Andre his second, and Susannah Winter his third. The first two wives are buried here. The 9-months old Jacob was Mary's child, the two infants were born to Susannah. Lydia was John's wife and the four children of J. and L. Bretz are part of their large family. The headstone boast of John's fathering 16 children blandly ignores the part Lydia played and the implication of those infant and early childhood deaths.

BRETZ PHOTOGRAPHS

A group photograph of the first Bretz reunion, held in 1887 on the Philip Bretz farm near Melmore, was submitted to H. F. Pennington, Allen Bretz and Anna Seitz about 1913 for identification of individuals in the group of more than 200 Bretzes and relatives. Three grandsons of John Bretz and eight great grandsons were identified, plus 83 other people. All these are located by numbers penned on the copy of this photograph owned by J Harlen Bretz. When Melmore was visited in 1937, just half a century later, there were no Bretzes living there or in the vicinity.

The list of identified persons in the photograph is as follows:

1. and 22. Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Herschberger. She was Ella, a of Lewis K., son of David.
76. Catherine (Bibler), wife of Samuel, son of Valentine.
50. and 46 or 80. David, son of above Samuel and wife.
61. Stanton, son of above David.
27. and 28. Rev. Lewis Seitz and wife. She was a daughter of Samuel, son of Valentine.
- 4, 17, 18, 87, 68, 69 and 71. Daughters of Lewis Seitz. 18 is Anna B. Seitz.
65. Bloom Seitz, son of Lewis Seitz.
48. and 49. Daniel Seitz and wife. She was Barbara, a daughter of David, son of Valentine.
5. Margaret Miesse (Meisse), daughter of Henry.
6. and 7. Mr. and Mrs. Allen E. Bretz.
8. and 9. Mr. and Mrs. John W. Bretz, he a son of John, son of Henry.
10. Andrew J. Bretz, son of Conrad.
64. Eli Bretz, son of Conrad.
79. Hattie Bartholomew, daughter of Eli.
11. Charles Black. A son of Sovenia, daughter of Jacob, son of Philip.
- 15, 12, 13, and 14. Oliver, a son of Chas. Ephraim and Rhoda Bretz, with Harlen and Bina.
19. Samuel Garber.
47. Rev. Jacob Garber, son-in-law of Philip.
51. Andrew D. Bretz, son of Samuel, son of Valentine. 76 is his mother.
16. Mrs. Alice Brown, daughter of Andrew D.
20. Fannie Bretz Steinmetz, daughter of Lewis K. Bretz. 22 is her sister.
21. Ada Bretz.
- 24, 25 and 26. Edward, son of Philip, Jr., wife and daughter.
- 29 and 30. George F. Bretz, son of Philip, Jr., and wife.
- 31 to 38. Daniel Loose, wife and family. She was Sarah, a daughter of Philip, Jr.
- 52 and 53 or 78. Noah Stoneburner and wife. His mother was Catherine, a daughter of Valentine, son of John.
39. Mrs. Bailey Horde. She was Mary, daughter of Anna, daughter of Samuel.
- 41 to 43. Rev. Parks, wife and daughter. She was a daughter of George, son of Philip, Jr.

44. Mrs. Mary Hall, a daughter of Sarah, a daughter of Philip.
45. Chas. Ephraim Bretz. 15 is his son.
77. Philadelphia Wolf, wife of Jacob, mother of Ephraim.
54. and 55. Joseph Reiff and wife. She was Adeline, daughter of Philip.
58. and 59. Mr. and Mrs. Lewis. She was a daughter of Noah Stoneburner.
60. Elizabeth Springer, a daughter of Philip.
62. Mrs. Noah Einsel. She was Mary, a daughter of David, son of Valentine, Jr.
66. Effie Brown Robinson, a daughter of Alice, daughter of Samuel.
72. Ella Watson Knoke.
73. Almira Stauffer.
74. Kate Bauer.
75. Irving, son of George F., son of Philip, Jr.
82. and 84 Samuel, son of David, son of Valentine and wife.
81. Mrs. Rebecca Baer, daughter of Samuel, son of Valentine.
83. Jonas Baer, son of Rebecca, daughter of Samuel, son of Valentine.
87. Ira Baer.
90. Mrs. John Baer.
85. and 89. Mr. and Mrs. Homer Huddle.
91. Chas. Huddle.
94. John Huddle.
86. and 63. Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Watson. She was a daughter of David, son of Valentine.
88. Frank Browne.
92. Ross Bever.
93. Earl Bever, a son of Analiese, daughter of Jacob.
95. John Wax, Jr. His father married Sarah, daughter of Philip.
96. Catherine Springer Hartman, daughter of Elizabeth, daughter of Philip.
97. Sarah Springer Nisely, daughter of Elizabeth, daughter of Philip.
98. Mary Berkey, daughter of Elizabeth, daughter of Philip.
99. Philip Springer, son of Elizabeth, daughter of Philip.
100. John King, son of Ann, daughter of Elizabeth, daughter of Philip.
101. Chas " " " " " "
102. Wm. " , husband of Ann, " " "
103. Ann Springer King, daughter of " " "
- 104, 105, 106, 107, 108. Mary, Della, Minnie, William and Cleora King.
109. Nellie, daughter of John Wax, Jr.
110. Blanche Wax Frankenfield.
111. Alice Hall Guigley, daughter of Mary Wax Hall.
112. Samuel Hall, son of Mary Wax Hall.
113. Audaces Hall, " " " " .
114. Mrs. John Wax, Jr.

JACOB BRETZ ET AL

Jacob's birth date (1795) indicates that he was one of the grandsons in that family trek from Pennsylvania to Ohio. His wife, born in Virginia in the same year, must have come to Fairfield County in another family migration. If they married when 20 years old, the date would be 1815, six years before Philip took his flock north to Seneca County. Reckoning from Aaron's statement that intervals between births in Jacob's family were close to 2½ years, two of Jacob's children, both girls, were born before the northward move.

The urge to be on a frontier missed a generation after Philip's patriarchal move, with all his sons and their families and all worldly goods, to Seneca County. Jacob Bretz remained for the rest of his life on or near the farm Philip gave him. At some undated time after the birth of his children, he moved to New Rochester, in adjacent Crawford County.

But the urge re-appeared in Charles Ephraim, it existed in Oliver and surely that salty character, Aaron, was no moss-covered stone, nor did tendrils of the paternal family hopelessly entwine his heart. The narratives which follow carry this account through the fourth and fifth generations from John.

Letters, verbatim, from Aaron, son of Jacob, son of Philip
(The spelling is Aaron's; the parentheses are J H. B.'s.)

Oakland, Cal., 1-20-1913

J H. Bretz, Chicago, Ill.

Dear Friend and Relative,

Your favor of recent date is at hand and noted. That it is a pleasure to supply you as far as possible with the desired information goes without saying. But I am illly prepared to supply you with details in the family tree. I beg to call your attention to the fact that forty six years have elapsed since I left the old home neighborhood, hence know little of the younger ones of our tribes. But nevertheless I had a history of the older ones which was burned in 1892 by the Catholics. In that year I bought a small suburban home in this place to which I had retired preparatory to writing several books, one of which was on Catholicism from an American Protective Association standpoint, a fact known to the Catholics. The first evening that I left the place it went up in smoke and all that I possessed save an umbrella. Since then I have made no further effort to make further data. The best that I can now do is to draw on a 78-year old brain for a recall of facts in the case. That all will be absolutely correct there may be room for doubt.

At some period previous to the Revolutionary War there came to Philadelphia two Bretz brothers, the name of one being Ludwick. The name of the other brother I never learned. Ludwick enlisted in the Army of the Revolutionary War which separated them. And for some reason the one remaining dropt out of the knowledge of Ludwick and so remained forever. I opine that the mosura (? sp.) tribes of Bretzes are his desendents. Ludwic returned to Pa. after the close of the war and took unto him a wife whose maiden name I have never been able to get. There was born unto them two sons and a daughter. Philip and Conrad. (Aaron is in error here. The names Philip and Conrad do not appear in Parthemore's genealogy of Ludwig Bretz.) The daughter's name I can not now recall. Of the Conrad family was born Andy Elie (Aaron has now got over into John's family) and a daughter whose name has slipped my memory. She married Jessey Morgan. Philip was my grand dad, whose family was as follows. Catherine, who married Jacob Garber, the most richiaus preacher I ever knew. He lived nearly a whole sentury and died in Charlotte Mich. Unto him, and wife of course, was born two sons and one daughter, Samuel and Gideon, both of whom died in Charlotte. Becky married Nor Spiller, a Baptist minister. Sam married Angeline Pennington, and they had Isaac and Semantha. Of Gideon's family I have no knowledge. Of Rebecca's family, I know not enough to undertake to supply names and I am not even able to give you the maiden or Chris. name of my grandmother Bretz.

But the second which was born into the (Philip Bretz) family was John who married Lidia Seitze, sister of the renowned Elder Seitze of the Hardshell Babtest. Ann was their first born, who married J. P. Thornton, a U. B. minister, who had a son and daughter, J. B. and Lusetta. Second, Salley who married one John Stauffer, a carpenter, of whose family I know naut. Third, Catherine, who married Henry Black, a U. B. preacher, whose family I can not recall. Plenty preachers, eh? Fourth, Louis who married Catherine Bever. (This Louis, (Lewis) who married Catherine Bever, was the son of John, son of Philip, according to the Bretz Register.) Family dont know. Rebecca married Hiram Welch, a farmer. The name of Lidia's husband I can not now recall. Susan and Barbara were (also) of the tribe of John Bretz.

Third of the Philip tribe was Elizabeth who married Peter Springer and whose family was Polly who married W. A. Berkey and settled in Grand Rapids, Mich. 50 years ago where he (Berkey) grew wealthy manufacturing furniture (Berkey and Gay). No children to bless or curse them. (The following Catherine, Elizabeth, Philip, and Amie seem to have been the children of Elizabeth and Peter Springer. Sovina, Solomon, Malicia, Samuel, Adaline, Sarah and Amanda were Bevers.) Catherine married William Henry Hartman, carpenter and inventor. The family I know not. Elizabeth married Saml. Myers from whom she was divorced with no children. Sam Myers lives somewhere in the vicinity of your Grand F. Bretz's old place. Philip married to Teany Nicely, my cousin on my mother's side. One child. Amie married Mr. King, a farmer. Sovina married Geo. Bever, the champion liar and a farmer. Solomon married Mary Blare, had some children. Malicia Ann married Levy Sholder, some children. Samuel married a Miss Miller and was a prosperous millman. Joseph's wife a stranger, he lives at Centralia, Wash. Gideon married a Miss Jones of Tacoma, Wash., where he now lives. Both have families. Adaline married Sam Rife, a farmer. Sarah Ann married Coupe, a carpenter.

Now comes Jacob Bretz, but I will leave him for later space.

Sally (Philip's daughter, Sarah) who became Mrs. John Wax, whose family consisted of three sons and three daughters. Philip, who died single. Elizabeth who died a young woman, in her teens. Sam (who) went daft on religion and succeeded by deliberately holding his head under water in a spring near the house. Mary became a Mrs. Hall, has a family, now a widow. J. B. the baby, ran a family also. And farmer. Polly married John Pennington, a farmer and misor, whose family was two daughters and three sons. Elizabeth, Lavina, Philip, Solomon, and Frank, all of whom settled near Charlotte many years ago. Of their history I know very little. Frank, the youngest, once upon a time was a member of the Senate of Michigan and ran for Congress. (This is H. F. Pennington).

As to the tribes of Jacob, I will do all I can in the absence of written data. As to names and (?), your data is correct except as corrected. But I am ashamed to say that I can give no

dates as to births or deaths of the family. Our whole family was born at intervals of 2½ years, within a month or so. I was born April 13, 1836, before breakfast. I put in a full day and haven't missed a day since. Ann Eliza was my only junior. So you can approximate to years of birth. But as to ages and deaths, I am as much in the dark as you are.

I was but a child when A. T. Norris made his advent into our family. He was a farmer, well to do. E. Holtz wasn't anything by trade or profession, and nearly a nonentity. George Black was a prosperous farmer. Sherm Lee was N. G. George Jacobs was a respectable, staunch man, carpenter by trade. R. H. Bever was a good carpenter, rough to his children, given to periodical boozing. Of Chas. Ephraim Bretz you have some knowledge. Sam was a faller as a money maker. Ale (Aaron) was not a dollar chaser. To the minds of such as your Grand Pa Bretz, mine was a Miss Spent Life. To their knowledge, save as how to catch the dollar, had no attraction.

My mother was a native of Va., Philadelphia Woolf. Her father was a native of England. Her mother of Germany. The grand F died before I was born. G.M.'s maiden name was Christena, maiden Rensch-Hiner. There was of that family 4 daughters and one son. Philadelphia, Polly, Catherine, the fourth I cannot recall the name. Polly became the wife of Samuel Nisley; Catherine, Mrs. Aaron Harvel. The other daughter married Syrus Shook. Each of them raised a family.

In yours, you manifested some fear of boring me with your requests. If, after you have perused and deciphered this conglomerate mess, you do not feel that you are the fellow who is bored, or boared, it will be a stand off. But with a man who is pursuing a science by which he is supposed to trace the age of this earth back 72,000,000 years should call this task easy.

Hoping that you may glean from this conglomeration some of the desired points, I will close wishing you success in your studies and achievements of your highest hopes.

The weather is fine nowadays.

I am now accord with my daughter, 2731 Boulevard Ave., Oakland. We buried Mrs. Bretz last June a year ago.

I will be pleased to hear from you at any time.

A. Bretz

Oakland, Cal., 4-5-1913

Harlan Bretz,
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sir,

I have just finished the writing of a letter to your dad and will now procede to reply to yours of the 27 Feb. I am very sorry I am not able to suply you more information and matter for your undertaking. But if you knew the Bretze tribes as I know them, you would not wonder that I can not do more. The Bretzes, up to my generation, seemed to have no thought for a damed thing but the dollar and the U. B. Church. They had no pride in their ansestors. I never heard my father speak of his grand parents and seldome did he speak of his parents. There was kept no record of family births, wedans or deaths in my family. It is now 50 years when left the old home, I am schegred as I write the fact that I do not know the birth, age or date of a single member of my family. One of my sisters was dead a year before the fact was communicated to me. My mother was dead 4 months before I knew of it. The information I imported to you in my former letter was disclosed to me in a write-up in a local paper gave at the Bretz reunion. Pennington should know more of the ansestvy than I do.

In my former letter I omitted to give you my uncle Philip's family record. (Philip, Jr.) Philip was the younger brother of my father who survived two wives and married a third. The first of which was a Free, who gave birth to one child, George. The second was Merry Andra with whome three children were born, Solomon, Sarah Ann and Edward. The third wife survived Philip, her wadan name I dont knoe.

Our old farm was situate on the est shore of the south branch of Silver Creek, 2 1/2 miles east of Melmore, Bloom Township, Seneca Co. and 11 miles southeast of Tiffin, county seat. (Apparently in section 30. Philip bought three 80-acre tracts in the south half of this section)

As to a histiry of my brothers and sisters lives, I might just say that they were chumps and refer you to your Grandfather Bretz for sample of their kind. All but Sam were farmers.

My life would make a book of itself. A farmer boy. A farmer man. A Randy. A horse trader, foxhunter, merchant, soldier, merchant again, book convasser, insurance man from the lowest broker to the Presidency of a Company. A medical student. A law student and admitted to the bar in 1874. Publisher and editor of diferent papers. (Some super-editor must have checked his spelling.) In politics. Elected to the Legislature of Cal. in 1892. Served two years. Farmer agane. Postmaster, chicken fancier, weaver and a damed old crank yet working hard to socialize the world and crush Capitalism.

If you will write to Philip Springer, Macluer, Ohio, you will no doubt obtain correct data of the old Springer family.

I am growing rather inactive. But I may in the near future write of the family and of reminiscences of the lives and send it to you for what it will be worth to you. (He never did.)

As to the book you think of writing, I look upon it with great favor. And if not so near the end of my life, I would become very zealous in the work. I am ready to aid you with all points of information. It is possible that one of my sisters had some data as to birth and deaths of the family, which may be in the possession of some of her children. I will ascertain and if found, I will favor you with it.

Respectfully

A. Bretz

2731 Boulevard Ave., Oakland, Cal. 6-10-1913

H. Bretz.
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Relative,

Replying to and concurring to your favor of the 6th inst., I beg to say that I am not easily (?) or (?). I herewith inclose the wayfaring epistle to which you are welcome. Since my last letter to you, Earl Bever died at Tiffin who was my youngest sister's child. Also Annie Must (?) the youngest child of my oldest sister. She died at Dayton. Earl Bever died of pneumonia.

I congratulate you on your - what shall I say? -- your luck or on your merit, in the appointment at Seattle. But if you knew the difference of our climate to that of Seattle, you would be tempted to swap your position for climate.

I am as well as usual but very busy. We are ripe in the beginning of our berry harvest. We have a large garden of berries to pick and to market which keeps the old man busy. Has no time to curse the government. But Bryan and Teddy will keep the government until after the berry rush.

Most respectfully yours,

A. Bretz

CHAS. EPHRAIM AND OLIVER JOSEPH BRETZ

Elizabeth George, whom Ephraim Bretz married, was born near Wilkesbarre, Pa. and came with her parents to Crawford Co., Ohio, about 1845, when she was 12 years old. Joseph George's farm was but a few miles from that of Jacob Bretz, where Ephraim was growing up. Father George was born in New Jersey and in his early years was a tailor. His wife was Sarah Rymer. Joseph's dates are 1-8-1805 and 2-10-1890. Sarah was born 12-26-1810. Oliver Joseph is authority for the following items regarding the Georges.

Joseph and Sarah were members of the United Brethren Church. Joseph always read the German Bible, and prayed and said grace in German. It is doubtful if he ever read English. Elizabeth sang German songs to her children and she and Ephraim talked German freely. As youngsters in Ohio, they went to a German school in Seneca Co. Joseph George came to Michigan shortly after 1860. His house, in Odessa Twp., Ionia Co. was built by John Otto about 1850. It was a double log house, almost entirely of black walnut. The barn also was of black walnut, even to the flooring. Siding of the house, roof beams, beamed ceiling and ceiling boards of the huge living room, doors, etc., all were made of the same wood. There was a brick oven out doors. When owned by Otto, the house was used as an inn, half-way between Hastings and Ionia. Joseph George was kicked on the chin by a horse when he was but eight years old. As a result, his jaws were "locked" all through his life. He fed himself by slicing and mincing food and introducing it through the gap where his front teeth were knocked out. The accident practically destroyed his chin.

Odessa and adjoining townships are largely on ground moraine topography, almost untouched by subsequent stream work. Lakes, ponds and extensive swamps still existed, despite drainage improvements, when the Ionia quadrangle was topographically mapped in 1916. The Saranac region in west-central Ionia County, noted in O.J.B.'s narrative, is diversified by the great trench cut in glacial drift by the outlet river from a succession of glacial great lakes in the Erie and Huron Basins, and by several deep tributary valleys. A few miles to the west is strong morainic topography. There is more natural beauty here than in any other region in which the Bretz generations have lived since John and his family left the Piedmont, perhaps since John's ancestors left the Rhine.

Charles Ephraim's farm, on well-drained but almost flat ground moraine, was a model of a prosperous and nearly self-contained family economy when J. H. B. was a boy. The wood lot, shrinking remnant of the original forest, supplied fuel. For long, it contained an adequate "sugar bush" with huge evaporating pans and 400 wooden sap buckets. The orchard, in the southern part of which stood the ruins of the log house of pioneer days, yielded fruit, cider and great kettles of apple butter. Wood ashes were saved in barrels, leached at the proper season and the lye combined with kitchen

grease in the big iron kettles to make soap, both soft and hard. The swill barrel back of the woodshed caught all kitchen leavings for the pigs. Hog butchering was an annual event, yielding lard, sausage, head cheese, spare ribs, smoked hams and bacon. There were chickens, of course, all their feed coming from the farm. The apiary at one time contained 150 bee colonies. An ample garden of small fruits and vegetables lay north of the brick house, (built 1881).

To J H. B.'s small-boy mind, the farmstead was almost a village. There were two dwellings, a frame house for "Uncle" Will and "Aunt" Lettie Curtis and their family standing near the larger brick house. A row of buildings margined the driveway back to the big barn; a smoke house, a corn crib, a chicken house, a pig house, a sheep shed, a tool house and shop, an ice house, a bee and honey house, a milk house, and sheds for farm machinery. Cows and horses were kept in the big barn, as was the hay and small grain. The barnyard well and windmill supplied the needs of the stock, another well and a cistern supplied the two dwellings. Ephraim took especial pride in keeping a weed-free farm. He was chagrined if any one found a burdock or canada thistle growing about his buildings. He fought ragweed along the roadside well beyond the limits of his farm.

CHARLES EPHRAIM AND OLIVER JOSEPH BRETZ
Narrative of Oliver Bretz. Dated Feb. 28, 1920

My grandfather Jacob was a farmer, as was my father. My uncle Samuel Bretz followed sawmilling and mercantile business mostly. My uncle Aaron was a sort of sport at hunting when young. He had a dozen to sixteen foxhounds at one time. In after years, he practiced law and was general state agent for several large insurance companies in California. He also edited a paper and wrote for several papers that just suited his politics. He was a rank socialist. He died about 1916 in San Francisco.

Then I remember Valentine Bretz and his brother Samuel (sons of David, son of Valentine). Both were farmers when I knew them, about 1860 (in the Lake Odessa region, Michigan.) Samuel's son Dow and I went to school together. I also knew Valentine's three sons, Orson, Don and David. Valentine carried a rifle bullet in his head for 23 years. He was hit in the bridge of the nose (in the battle of Stone River) and supposed it was a glance shot. After he came home he thought he was suffering from catarrh of the head, was going to die of it. Then one day he coughed the bullet out. His brother Samuel was in the Army, I am quite sure.

Then I remember an old man Bretz who lived at Geo. Meyers in Woodland Twp., Barry Co., Mich. They called him Tanner Bretz, evidently because of his trade. I think he was John, son of Valentine, son of John.

Some time during the month of February, 1856, my father Charles Ephraim with his wife Elizabeth and myself, then one and a half years old, were driven across and through the wild country from Seneca Co. Ohio to Ionia Co. Michigan, by his brother Aaron. We travelled in an old style long sled, modernly a pung, drawn by a span of horses, and carried all our earthly belongings with us. Father's land, in Odessa Twp., had already been purchased of Jacob Wolfe, the brother of Ephraim's mother, Philadelphia Wolfe. This was a 160 acre tract. (NW $\frac{1}{4}$ sec. 21, T. 5 N., R. 7 W.)

On arriving in that wilderness, where not a blow of an ax had yet been made on the purchased land, we were fortunate to find an empty log structure within half a mile of the proposed home. This had been abandoned by a family named Kimble, which had starved out and moved to the village (now city) of Ionia. Here we stayed until father could cut the logs and erect a house in the forest on his own land.

On completion of the house, father began cutting down the huge trees, burning brush, limbs and entire logs so as to clear a place large enough to plant potatoes and other garden stuff. During the first year, he succeeded in removing the heavy timber from some two or three acres.

During much of the first two years, father, myself and infant sister Sarah lay sick in bed with the ague. The Lord saw fit to spare our devoted mother so that she was able to care for us three. She had to cut nearly all of her own wood, carry all the water from a hole in the ground back of the Kimble house half a mile away, besides waiting on us. She was obliged to force the horrid ague medicine down both children by holding our noses while we swallowed it.

By the fall of either 1856 or 1857, father had managed to get about two acres of wheat in the ground. When the harvest came, he was flat on his back again with the ague. While father was sick, some one from the so-called settlement about three miles distant, where about six families had settled (now Lake Odessa), came over through the woods and cut and shocked father's wheat, using an old turkey winn cradle. There the grain stood for three or four weeks and father could look out of the window and see a squirrel on every stump and corner of the fence, thrashing his grain for him. After he got able to crawl out and gather it and pound out what the squirrels had left, he had eleven bushels for our year's bread and next year's seed.

(We being thus faced with starvation), grandfather Joseph George came out from Ohio in the fall of 1858, hired a team from the settlement, took us to Saranac, then consisting of a few houses and a store where Mr. Chipman's house now stands. Grandfather paid our fare back to Ohio on the railroad, then but a year old. In Ohio, father worked that winter at whatever he could find to do. Another little girl was born to our family that winter in Ohio. We called her Janey. She died the following summer.

Early in the spring of 1859, we all pulled out for Michigan again, five of us this time, instead of three. Father used to walk to Saranac (eleven miles) to the store, and back, carrying flour, groceries, etc. on his back, until we were able to purchase a yoke of oxen. Then he sometimes drove the oxen to Battle Creek to get a small grist ground. Four days were required for that trip.

Sometime about 1861 or 1862, a man named Kibbey built a little water mill on the creek one mile east of the present site of Lake Odessa, where he ground corn and wheat for the settlers. Many were the times that father, having shelled about a bushel of corn, put it in a two-bushel bag, swung it across the back of one of the oxen, lifted me on behind and sent me to Kibbey's mill to get some "Johnny cake timber".

For cash to buy groceries and other necessities of life, father used to take jobs on the roads, or jobs cutting and clearing land for others, sometimes right in the midst of the then cold Michigan winters, sometimes ten or twelve miles from home, sometimes camping out in the woods while on a job.

So we existed until we finally got a little more clearing done on our own land. Then the (Civil) war broke out. Near the close of the war, father was drafted and went to the front in the spring of 1865. He was gone from home only a little over four months. He never was in battle, for the day he reached Virginia soil, General Lee surrendered. I remember that he wrote home and told us he guessed that Lee heard he was coming and gave up the fight. I can remember when the first gun was fired on Fort Sumpter and war was declared.

After the war, I was old enough to do quite a stroke of work and I helped father on the farm, making maple sugar and peeling slippery elm bark. By the sale of sugar and bark, we thought we were getting along finely compared with what we went through the first ten or twelve years in Michigan.

I remember that my grandfather Jacob Bretz, and grandmother, came to see us once, perhaps 1867 or 1868. Grandfather died soon afterward, perhaps 1868, '69 or '70. (O. J. B.'s estimated dates are in error. Jacob died in 1866.) Grandmother died about 1889, aged 96 (94) years. She was Scotch by birth, her maiden name was Philadelphia Wolfe.

I remember well how father used to tell me to pitch in and work hard until Saturday afternoon, when he and I would go fishing on Jordan Lake, three miles south of our home. Other times I would go with some of the neighbor boys, frequently fishing for bullheads at night and being so tired and sleepy that we would crawl into the haymow of Sam Chapman's barn, near the lake, and sleep until daybreak.

My school days began in the winter of 1859 when I was five years old. I rode behind the teacher, Merrit More, on horseback for two and a half miles to the settlement school house, now Lake Odessa. The following two summers I lived with my grandfather Joseph George, a mile east of the present Lake Odessa, and went to school with my uncle Wesley George, three years older than I, and my aunt Rosa George, 9 days older than I. We attended the Val Bretz school, two miles east of where Lake Odessa now stands (shown as "Betz" school on Ionia topographic map, U. S. Geol. Surv.). Then, until about ten years old, I went two and a half miles, around by the Old Clinton Trail, to a little school house on the edge of the woods near Odessa Center. About this time a new school house was built right at the Center Cross roads, and this I attended during the winter months until about 17 years of age. Except, of course, when father needed me to help out and get up wood, haul cornstalks, butcher the fatted hogs and do many other things he could not do alone.

At the age of ten, I was put to work plowing among the stumps with the oxen and a No. 22 Curtis plow. When I was 18, father let the job of building the first frame barn on the place to Jesse N. Mapes. During that summer I decided that I wanted to learn the carpenter trade. So next spring father let me work for Mapes if I would give him all my wages to hire some one in my place. I got \$18 a month while father paid \$22 a month for my substitute. The next summer, when I was 20, Mapes paid me \$25 a month and father got a young fellow on the farm for \$15 a month.

On August 13 of that summer, I became 21 years of age. I quit working for Mapes and went to work on my own hook for \$1.50 a day. Within a year, I began contracting at construction work. (The United Brethren Church west of C. E. Bretz's farm was built by O. J. Bretz.) This I followed for the next two years.

I was married on Aug. 15, 1877, when I was 23 years old. Within 12 hours from the time Rhoda (Howlett) and I were pronounced man and wife, I was swinging an ax on a wild forty two miles north of father's place (SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 4). I cleared three acres in time for corn planting next spring. During the ensuing winter, we lived in the same Kible house father, mother and I had occupied when first arrived from Ohio. That spring I built a small frame house on our forty, in which we lived for five years. When married, we owed \$650 on the forty. At the end of the five years we had it all paid for, all cleared and improved, and sold it for \$1375 cash.

About this time I purchased the southeast quarter of section 8, entirely in the wild, built a small frame barn on it. In this we lived during the summer of 1883, my infant son (Harlen) then less than a year old, while I built a good frame house into which we moved that fall. During the following winter, I cut and hauled green wood to Ionia and Saranac, selling it for \$1.50 a cord.

In February, 1884, my uncle Stephen Haight of Woodland Center, Barry Co. and I became partners, buying out the only furniture and undertaking business in Saranac. We moved from the farm to Saranac about April 20th.

On the following Sept. 17th, our first girl baby, Bina, was born. I remember that two days after her birth, we had a very distinct earthquake shock which rattled windows and dishes and shook some bricks loose from Chimneys. (U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, "Earthquake History of the United States", describes this quake as follows. "Moderate earthquake in Ohio and Indiana and parts of adjacent states. Intensity was 3 to 4 over a large area. The center was near Columbus, Ohio (where) chandeliers kept swinging from north to south for several minutes. The shock was felt at Washington, D. C. by workmen on top of the then unfinished Washington Monument, about 500 feet above the ground. It was felt from Pennsylvania to Kentucky, and from West Virginia to Michigan".)

In May, 1885, Uncle Steve felt obliged to return to Woodland to care for his own business, left in the hands of a son-in-law, so I bought him out. That same summer I bought a vacant lot at the corner of Main and Bridge streets and built on it a two-story brick store, 22-8 x 60. (J. H. B.'s memory carries back to an inspection of the plans for this store building. O. J. B., explaining them to Rhoda, said "Now, here is the elevator". J. H. B., looking on, required further explanation, for those lines didn't look like any elevator!)

(One of O. J. B.'s stories of this undertaking partnership with Stephen Haight deals with a dead Indian "laid out" in the back room. It was after nightfall and Uncle Steve and nephew Ollie were in the front room. There was a slight noise in the darkness of the back room. O. J. B. went to investigate, highly conscious, as a very young undertaker, of the Indian corpse. A big, flop-eared hound dog, sleeping there, was roused, got up and vigorously shook his head. The flapping noise of the long ears was misinterpreted for a second and O. J. B., with a yell of fright, leaped back to the protection of the light and his uncle. Stephen was so convulsed with laughter that he had to lie down until his attack subsided.)

About 1885, I sold the south half of the 160 acre farm in section 8 to Edw. R. Howlett, my wife's father, taking in part payment 20 acres of land in the northeast corner of section 29, Odessa Twp.

At the time I moved into my new store in the fall of 1885, I found myself in debt over \$4,000. But with a good business the debt was wiped out in three or four years and I soon bought the lot adjoining on the south and built another brick store of the same size, in which I ran a general crockery and bazaar business, buying out one competing bazaar and, eventually, two competing furniture and undertaking businesses. (His business ventures carried him even further. With Charles Bradley, he established a similar furniture and undertaking firm in the county seat, Ionia. This partnership lasted for half a dozen years, was finally dissolved by Bradley's buying out O. J. B.)

End of narrative

The narrative of Oliver ends at about the beginning of J. H. B.'s memories. Oliver continued in business in Saranac for 17 years, then returned essentially to the activities of his youth; clearing new land, building, farming and, in addition, lumbering and sawmilling. This was in Chippewa Co., northern Michigan. Again a Bretz had become restive and sought a new frontier. Merchandising and undertaking were too sedentary for him, and there were other factors which prompted a complete shift in his occupations.

One factor was an incontinentally crusading spirit for Prohibition. He hated the saloons of Saranac, strove to keep them closed except within their lawful limits, antagonized all mild and tolerant individuals, all who were commercially favored by the "drink evil", all friends of the saloon-keepers and all drinkers, from sippers to toppers, in the village. When a church organization failed to back up his militancy, he hated that church. Finally, he had only the Methodists (his church) with him. He was subjected to whispered calumnies, for small-town gossip loves malice. Oliver had a coupon book for purchases at the Van Drezer grocery and, in the hands of his two youngsters, J. H. B. and Bina, it was inadvertently left on the counter and another customer's coupon book taken home. This, used several times before the mistake was discovered, was the basis of one malicious story which culminated in daubing Oliver's store windows one night with "BOOK TIEF" in black paint. The Stein Bros., proprietors of Saranac's leading thirst parlor, were German, and they virtually signed their name on those windows.

O. J. B. had a fist fight with the town's shady lawyer, an ensuing suit for assault and battery, a fine of one dollar and an open threat of being knifed if he ever touched the syphilitic carcass of this lawyer again.

One associate, a man who rented part of Oliver's store for a jewelry business, proved to be a greater villain than any of the saloon-keepers, and without the stimulus of any antagonism from O. J. B. Altho never proven, almost surely he was the instigator of an attempted arson. Oliver was in Chippewa Co. at the time. The two stores were well doused with kerosene one night and fires started in two places. They were promptly discovered, however, and the rather well-known cry of "Fire! Fire!" raised in the sleeping village. Saranac had no water mains and no fire pumps. J. H. B., a high school student at the time, dashed from the house with a three-gallon soda extinguisher. It checked the larger fire sufficiently to allow time for swarming volunteers to form bucket lines from the creek, a well and a cistern, and to complete the job. Kerosene was found in dishware stacked high on shelves in the "bazaar store" and kerosene-soaked excelsior in the basement and other places. Our villain was also bent on destroying his own over-insured stock!

This was in the autumn of 1900. Oliver adjusted the insurance losses, had a fire sale of the damaged stock, sold the undamaged furniture and the undertaking business, along with the two buildings, and moved his family to the new farm in upper

Michigan, three miles south and two miles east of Rudyard, on the flat clay bottom of Glacial Lake Algonquin. The 160-acre farm was the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of sec. 27, T. 44 N. R. 2 W. He also owned a forested 80 acres about three miles farther south, on the Niagaran cuesta, which he lumbered off in ensuing years. Chas. Wesley Bretz and Wm. Curtis also acquired farms in Chippewa Co. at this time. The three were inveterate deer-hunters. Even out of season, they had to protect their crops!!

Harlen went to college in 1901 and before he graduated, Oliver moved back to southern Michigan, settling his family in Albion where three more of his children attended the college. He owned a coal and feed business here for several years. Both he and his wife died in Albion

Oliver acquired a few books, more perhaps than all his progenitors had ever owned together. Early, he bought a wheelbarrow load at an auction! It contained a huge family bible, Hill's "Manual of Correspondence", Cruden's "Concordance of the Holy Bible", Speke's "Travels in Africa", A complete set of Dickens, "Earth, sea and sky", "The Road to Heaven", A medical encyclopedia, "The Story of Jesus", "The Child's Bible", a history of the Pinkerton detectives, "Old Times in Oak Openings", "Life of P. T. Barnum", and a few others. Thereafter, he bought only of persistent agents. He read a little in each new book when it first arrived, then never touched it again. The big bible was too heavy for the ten-year old son to handle, though it had ever so many pictures in it. It was closed by two silver latches, and used only at family worship when Charles Ephraim or some church dignitary stayed overnight.

Charles Ephraim had even fewer books. His pine secretary-desk afforded the only book shelves in his home and could not have contained more than a dozen or so books. What they were is not on record.

Despite Oliver's rather high-strung emotional nature, his religion was formalized. He would have made a good Catholic. He never dared to be really friendly with God. His prayer at morning worship was a recitation which he rarely altered, and his prayer-meeting prayers and testimonies were similarly formalized. Phrases of his morning prayer: "again on bended knee we come before the throne of grace"; "again we find ourselves on mercy's side of the grave whilst many of our fellow beings, more worthy than we, have been called from Time to Eternity"; "we pray for those on beds of sickness, racked with pain and scorched with fever"; "guard us from all evil as t'were with a wall of fire"; "here beneath the circle of the sun"; "we trust the right use of our minds and reasoning faculties"; etc. He would say, in testimony, of his adolescent conversion; "It seemed as though the Lord passed down the aisle and I reached out and touched the hem of his garment and was healed".

In these traits, Oliver reflected his father whose grace was a formula recited so rapidly that parts were unintelligible to J H.B. as a small boy. Later, it was recognized that "Cod spoon

or eggs" was "Guide us through life" and that the final, semi-explosive "Steamer" was the last part of "Through Christ, Amen". The pious murmuring of an "Amen" echo when grace or prayer was ended was common among male auditors of this time and region. All these phrases and mannerisms were doubtless copied from earlier progenitors.

A Michigan winter without a revival meeting was like one without sless, bobsleighs or skating; it never happened. Meetings occurred every night for two to four weeks, perhaps were accompanied by afternoon prayer meetings of those strong in the faith and most intent on reviving the weak and saving the sinners. Although youngsters were sinners in that they had not yet "come forward" to the mourner's bench, the real ones were the habitual backsliding oldsters. And did they like it? To be prayed over and labored with daily for a week to a month, to come back into the fold with weeping and hosannas, and then to join the workers on the still resisting sinner residuum: that was social recognition of a high order in the quiet rural and village life, and gave enormous satisfaction. Sometimes a really hell-bound sinner was saved. One of Maranac's town drunkards, a brute to his family when in his cups, was so rescued, and stayed so afterwards.

The serious objection to revivals was not the stage play of retrieving the consistent back-slider. It was the over-stimulation, even the laceration, of naturally unsettled adolescent emotions. "Do not deny the Spirit too long: It will not always strive with you"! But most of the "boys" Sunday School class (where Oliver was S.S. superintendent for many years), never would consent to march up the aisle and kneel at the mourner's bench while "Just as I am" was sung over them. They didn't believe it was fair; this triumphing of the oldsters, this display of what should be very private matters. And when old enough, and "the Spirit had ceased to strive", as a group they rebelled, and refused to go to Sunday School any longer. More intelligent approaches were then tried; class meetings were offered in the parson's study, the conventional lessons were abandoned. But it was too late. They were fed up and shortly refused to attend even this emasculated means of grace. All too long, Sunday had been an unpleasant day, what with prohibitions on play and with sitting still through three "services" in stiff, uncomfortable clothes. Although those dads who took their boys fishing instead of to church on Sunday were leading them into sin and wickedness, said boys have all become good citizens, if not good church members.

If there ever were rebels in the family, earlier than J. H. B., they included Charles Wesley and Aaron. Aaron's rebellion must have been much more marked than C. W. B.'s or J. H. B.'s, if one may judge by his letters. The family also contained individuals neither hot nor cold. Franklin was one.

This picture of Saranac's religiosity probably is equally applicable to the environment of the earlier generations. Tolerance was a rare quality in the religiously inclined of that time. O.J.B. was considerably disturbed when J.H.B. brought home a copy of the Koran. Having it explained to him as another Bible, of another religion, he announced "I won't have that book in my house". Ephraim's intolerance showed in his bitter opposition to "secret societies". (Oliver belonged to every one in town.) Ephraim's attitude reflected that of his church, the United Brethren in Christ, a denomination popular with the Pennsylvania Dutch and their earlier descendants. Ephraim had very firmly fixed opinions, was not open to new ideas. He almost sneered at J.H.B.'s statement that his fertile farm and its environs had once been covered by a huge ice sheet; that the boulders in the stone pile had largely come from Canada. "Aw, bosh!" he commented; "that's all theory". He did approve of J.H.B.'s early idea of becoming a foreign missionary. "But you'll never get rich, if you do", he warned.

Oliver met his future wife at a series of revival meetings in the West Odessa U.B. Church, the then recent construction of which had been his first independent job. Rhoda Howlett's parents and their family lived on a farm in section 28, half a mile from Eph. Bretz's farm. Her father, Edward R. Howlett, apparently had come here in the early 1870's from the vicinity of Kalamazoo where he had married Elizabeth Olmstead, with whom he had eight children. Edward, although foreign-born and not naturalized until years later, carried the U. S. mail from 1875 to 1885 between Saranac on "the railroad", Bonanza Corners, Ionia Co. and Woodland Center, Barry County. Then he returned to farming, buying 80 acres of Oliver in section 8 of Odessa township.

Our earliest record of the Howletts is found in the obituary of John. He was the father of Edward and ten other children, seven by his first wife, Rhoda Riches and four by his second Caroline Rogers. He was born in Watton, County of Norfolk, England, 7-25-1796. He emigrated in 1834 or 1835, coming with wife and some children to "the wilds of that part of Canada now called the Eastern Townships". Bury, Salmon (Salmon?) River, Stamstead and Fitch Bay are place names in his early history in America. Vermont, "the Far West" and Battle Creek are mentioned as later sojourns. He died in Battle Creek 11-15-1892, more than 96 years old. Oral family accounts state that Edward, (born 7-14-1834, died in 1901) was one of the children born in England.

John Howlett was a farmer. He appears to have been an actively religious man, first among the Wesleyan Methodists in England, later as an ardent Adventist. "Though he had hoped to live till the Coming of Christ, yet he rejoiced that, to the dead in Christ, death was a blank, and that, in the light of this truth, in a moment, as it were, after closing his eyes in death, he would awake to unite with the saints and with Jesus".

Elizabeth Olmstead, Rhoda's mother, was born near Ypsilanti 12-6-1839 and died in Lake Odessa 3-26-1904. Her father, Salmon (Solomon.) was Canadian-born in 1792. He was a stone-cutter, and became

permanently blinded by stone dust in 1835. He lived until 1865. His wife, Lois Vannorum, was born in New York state in 1809 and died in Grand Rapids in 1892. They came to Michigan, with one child, in 1831. The family appears to have lived near Coldwater, then near Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. Finally, in 1857, they moved to Orleans township, Ionia County, their farm being a mile and a half north of Orleans Center. Eleven children were born to them, five coming after the father became blind. "Some of the children remember hearing their father pound on the wagon at night to scare away the wolves, near what is now the city of Coldwater".

Lois, grandmother of Rhoda, was "converted" to Free Methodism at the age of 40. The Bible was "her one book". Her obituary states that she was "a praying woman", that "she believed in experimental religion", and that "she was never known to be angry".

Elizabeth, like her mother, was strongly religious. J H.B. remembers her protesting against Edward's fence-mending one Sunday morning. "Its wrong to work on Sunday, Ed. Even the bees don't work on Sunday"!! Her "testimonies" in prayer meeting were clarion-clear, almost oratorical, announcements of the adequacy of her faith. Edward was never much affected by the near-militancy of either his wife's or his father's religion. After Edward's death, Elizabeth instituted "morning worship" in her home, conducting it herself.

Rhoda, unlike her mother, was shy and reserved. Her only "testimony" was "I am on the Lord's side". A devoted, self-sacrificing mother, her efforts were all directed toward the advancement of her children and her greatest happiness was in their accomplishments. Except for Chas. Wesley Bretz, they were the first of this line to have a high school education or its equivalent. For four of them to go to college afterward was the "summum bonum" of Rhoda's life.

A narrowly circumscribed mental and physical environment largely determined the character and the achievements of these forebears. Their lives were uneventful monotones, lived offside the main lines of change. Of this they were hardly aware, for they knew little else for comparison. There is but little to record other than that they all played effectively in the surge of German and British agriculturalists which swept over the Indians' hunting grounds and inaugurated a wholly different economy and culture. By the generations herein recorded, the forests were removed, the virgin soil possessed and the settlements expanded to villages and cities. Who among these pioneers could have dreamed of an education beyond the ungraded rural school? It was not until Oliver and Rhoda were rearing their family that any better schools were organized within reach of the farm and village dwellers. Churches came with the earliest schools but, maintained by adults, they possessed no higher intellectual level than the culture inherited by the dominating generation from their own youth. Such rebellions

as occurred in Saranac were inevitable, so soon as youngsters encountered a broader knowledge of the world and learned of cultures superior to that locally displayed. But no blame attaches to the attempted shaping of young minds to conform to the limited views of the adults. The older folk did not, could not, understand that the static world view held from John down to Oliver was vanishing. Grief over the rebellions was comprehensible but unjustified. It is pleasant to record that Oliver and Rhoda eventually accepted with equanimity the departures of some of their children from the older and unsuitable conformity.

