

JOHANN FRIEDRICH METZGER

Frederick I, 1759-1842

Late in life Johann Friedrich Metzger adopted the simple English spelling, Frederick Metzger, and so, for genealogical purposes, became Frederick I.

His career, when compared with his father's possesses some dramatic elements, but far less glamour. Having been born into the picturesque first stage of Colonial pioneering, he was compelled to carry on with the rather barren second stage, until, with one big resolve and remove, he rejoined the first stage, now fronting beyond the Appalachians and on the Ohio.

It is the background of father and of son that makes the difference between them. Christian spent his first twenty-five years in the "Heart of European Culture" amidst art, architecture, schools, churches, roads, posts, organized industry, as good as existed in the eighteenth century. On the other hand, Frederick spent his first twenty-five years in utter lack of all these phases of culture. He was disinherited of them. No apperceptive process existed by which he might even visualize them.

Then, he was caught in the War for Independence in which he enlisted before he was eighteen. Although this period is marked by glamour to us, we must admit that he spent five of his most formative years in military camps, musters for drill, and the exacting and hard life of the Pennsylvania campaigns around Philadelphia and in the Jerseys, including Valley Forge. The effect of this may be noted throughout his life -- a lack of a good trade training, a lack of agricultural training, a lack of higher education as it was afforded in the academies and seminaries already existing in his County and in Eastern Pennsylvania.

His life falls into three episodes or periods: his youth and military career;¹ his marriage and futile attempt to get on in the world; his remove to the fresh frontier and his constructive effort in Westmoreland County.

He was born at Old Zionsville, March 4, 1759, and baptized in the Lutheran Church there the following August. In November, 1776 he enlisted in the "Heidelberg Company" under Colonel Henry Geiger, composed of men from Upper Saucon, Upper Milford, Macungie, Whitehall, Lowhill, Heidelberg, Lynn, Penn, and Weisenburg Townships. On January 4-8, 1777 they were on the march to Philadelphia bound for Washington's Army.

The Company was composed of sixty-three men and had sixty muskets. They were the First Company of the Second Battalion of Northampton County Militia. Frederick, age seventeen, was in Class 4, composed of seven men. Many names in this Company¹ are familiar in the History of Old Zionsville, viz. Isaac Hiestand, John Hiestand, Abraham Hiestand, Mathias Kern, Melchior Yeackel, George Yeagle, Abraham Meyer, (husband of Frederick's sister), Frederick Kramer (afterwards pastor of the Lutheran Church), Abraham Stahl, Jacob Stahl, Jacob Schleiffer, and William Schaeffer.

As a soldier in this Battalion he was an active participant in the campaigns of 1777-1778, and of 1778-1779.¹ A description of the Camp and the Army is given by Washington himself in a letter to his brother, J. Augustine Washington, dated Aug. 5, 1777. He points out,

a. It was composed of troops from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Mary-

¹ Penna. Archives, Series V. Vol. 5, p. 101.
Penna. Archives, Series V. Vol. 8, p. 7, 101, 103, 202, et al.
Record established Ella K. Metsker-Milligan, Nation No. D.A.R. 84713.
Record established E. W. E. Schear, National No. S.A.R. 52202.

land, Virginia, and North Carolina.

b. It was the second army raised for the cause of independence, successor to that of 1776, known as the "Flying Camp," enlisted at Boston, and fighting at Long Island, White Plains and at Trenton.

This second army is described by LaFayette² who had just offered his services to Congress.

About eleven thousand men, ill armed, and still worse clothed; their clothes parti-colored and many of them were almost naked; the best clad wore hunting shirts, large gray linen coats which were much used in Carolina. They were always arranged in two lines, the smallest men in the front line. No other distinction as to height was ever observed. In spite of these disadvantages, the soldiers were fine, the officers zealous; virtue stood in the place of science, and each day added both to experience and discipline.

This was the army, ill armed, worse clothed, without discipline, that fought at Germantown, and Brandywine, and suffered at Valley Forge.

By his manoeuvres in the summer of 1777 Washington had blocked the British army and supplies in the Chesapeake Bay. Meantime, for psychological purposes he gave his army a parade through the city of Philadelphia on Sunday, Aug. 24, 1777. These are his orders, and we may imagine the young Frederick, in a drum corps enthusiastically drumming the quickstep:

Line of march to be as little encumbered as possible.

Only one ammunition wagon to accompany the field pieces.

All the rest of the baggage wagons and spare horses to file off to the right, to avoid the city entirely, and to move on to the bridge at the middle of the ferry (Market St.). The drums and fifes of each brigade are to be collected in the center of it, and a tune for the quickstep played, with such moderation that the men may step to it with ease, and without dancing along, or totally disregarding the music, as has too often been the case.

After marching through Philadelphia they went on, via Wilmington, to the Heights of Brandywine, and here encountered the British moving

² Penna. Mag. Vol. XVI, p. 28ff.

toward Philadelphia. A battle ensued on Friday, the 11th of September.³

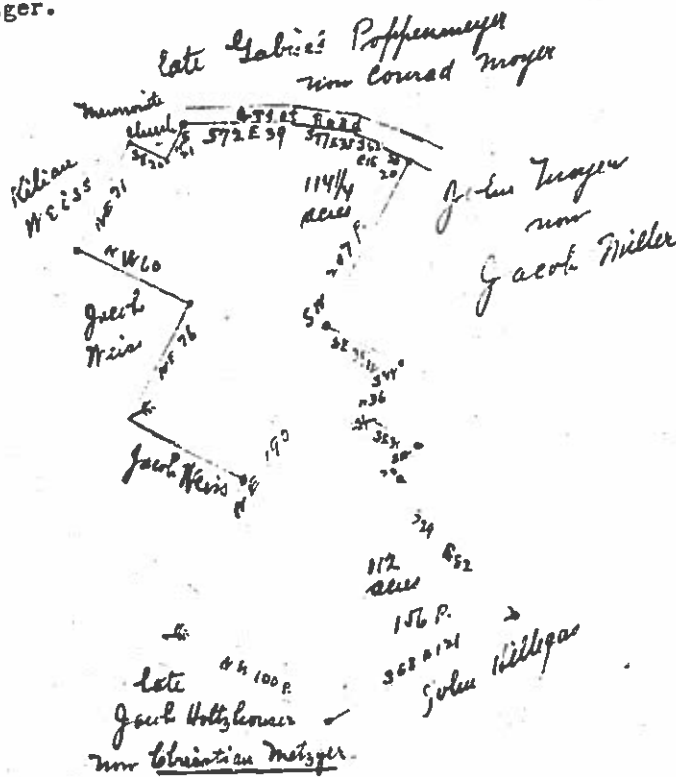
In spite of Washington's good plans, and his brave stands, the British were able to occupy Philadelphia on September 26, 1777. The winter season now approaching, Washington chose Winter Quarters at Valley Forge, and the remaining season was devoted to making these quarters as fit as possible. This dreadful winter passed, the summer of 1778 brought better luck to the Colonies, by way of British policy. On the 18th of June, 1778, the latter's army evacuated Philadelphia, and moved toward New York. Washington pursued this army and overtook them at Monmouth. In this and other encounters in New Jersey, Rhode Island, and about New York we may imagine Frederick Metzger participating.

When, in late 1779, the conflict changed to the Southern States, the Pennsylvania line was somewhat relieved, and southern troops thrown into that campaign. But the Pennsylvanians were held to drill, and kept ready for muster. After 1781 we no longer find Frederick's name in the muster rolls, and it is to be understood his service was honorably ended.

³ Here, Congress, in consideration of the gallant behavior of the troops on the 11th inst., and of their subsequent fatigue was pleased to order thirty hogsheads of rum distributed to them. The Commander-in-Chief directed the Commissary-General to deliver 1 gill per day to every officer and soldier while it lasted.

Second Episode

The second period of Frederick's career began with his marriage, 1782, to Miss Anna Schleiffer. His bride was the daughter of Heinrich Schleiffer, his father's prosperous Mennonite neighbor. Heinrich's farm, much larger than Christian's, stretched along the King's Road to the corners, where, a half-mile south of Zionsville, the Mennonite Meeting House stood. Thence it lay westward to Bald Hill and, on one side, there, joined the 113 acres of Christian Metzger.



No doubt Frederick had skated, coasted, and attended many a "bee" with Anna while they were growing up. Anna was ten days younger than Frederick, only. When she reached the 'teen age, she went to Philadelphia to live with relatives in the city. At times Frederick may have met her while he was campaigning with the Army around Philadelphia, 1777-1779. And so, some time after he was mustered out, on his twenty-

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GENEALOGICAL TABLE

Second Generation

- 1 JOHANN FRIEDRICH² METZGER (Christian¹)
 - b. 5/4-1789, Zionsville, Upper Milford Twp., Northampton Co., Penna.
 - d. 10/17-1842, at Barren Run (near Smithton) Westmoreland Co., Penna. as. 83 yrs. 2 mo.
 - m. — 1782, Anna Schleiffer, dau. of Heinrich and Veronica (Eberle) Schleiffer, pioneers and Swiss Mennonite colonists who settled at Zionsville, Northampton Co., 1743.
 - b. 3/12-1759 in Upper Milford Twp., Northampton (now Lehigh) Co., Penna.
 - d. 7/4-1856, at Barren Run, Westmoreland Co., Penna. as. 97 yrs. 3 mo. 2 da.

Children:

- i. Catharine (Katy)
 - b. 5/10-1783, Northampton Co., Penna.
 - d. — 1804, nr. Alliance Furnace, Westmoreland Co., Penna.
 - m. — 1800, Alexander Guynn, Foreman of the Alliance Furnace, Jacob's Creek, Penna. She is buried in the burying ground of this Furnace and its community of workers. This is a historic site as it was the first furnace, established 1789, west of the Appalachians. A complete history of this industrial plant was written and published by Dr. Oliver Perry Madager when a young man. His work was based on original sources. He says he identified the house in which his great-aunt, Katy Metzger Guynn, died. It was in ruins. A tree more than two feet in diameter grew by the hearth. The markers of the graves in the burying ground have sunk beneath the sod, except one, which bears the inscription, "Daniel Guynn, aged 76, died 1809." He was probably her husband's father. In this furnace were cast some of the cannon balls for General Wayne's expedition against the Indians in the North West Territory. The ruins of this Furnace still stand. After the year 1801 work was discontinued here. Catharine had no children.
- ii. Daniel, b. 10/19-1784, Northampton Co., Penna. m. 10/5-1806, widow Rachel (Cain) Lyons.
- iii. John, b. 10/23-1786, Northampton Co., Penna. m. — — — It is known that he married, but no data.
- iv. Frederick II., b. 7/24-1788, Northampton Co., Penna. m. — — —, 1810, Maria Swartz.
- v. Anna (Nancy), b. 12/2-1790, Northampton Co., Penna. m. — 1806, Jacob Weible.
- vi. Jacob, b. 3/7-1793, Northampton Co., Penna. d. 9/25-1794, Northampton Co., Penna.
- vii. Christian II., b. 3/23-1796, Northampton Co., Penna. m. 2/6-1816, Catharine Gnaegi.

*Exception to the System is made here because Nancy, like her brothers, founded a DIVISION of the Family.