

Two Delaware Indians Who Lived on Farm of Christian Hershey

By C. H. MARTIN

THE earliest record of the family name Hershey obtainable in the Province of Pennsylvania is that of Andrew Hershey, who emigrated from Switzerland. He moved from Switzerland to Friedensheimerhof in Palatinate about the year 1700, and with two sons, Andrew and Benjamin, emigrated to America and settled in what is now Lancaster County. A third son, Christian, followed later. The year of Andrew's emigration is not definitely established, but evidently was about 1717.

The Minute Book of Board of Property, reference to which is found in Pennsylvania Archives, Second Series, No. 19, Page 622, states that between 1712 and 1717, Martin Kendig returns to Switzerland and brings over eight or nine families and that later came Christian Hersh, Hans Pupather and others.

February 8, 1717, the Proprietors agreed with Martin Kendig and Hans Herr for 5,000 acres of land to be taken up in several parcels about Conestoga and Pequea creeks at 10£ per hundred acres, to be paid at the returns of the surveys, and the usual quit-rents, it being for settlements for several of their countrymen that later arrived here. Warrants for this land were signed September 22, 1717, to the following, (here are given twelve names) among whom were: Christian Hersh and Hans Pupather. This quite definitely fixes the emigration of Andrew Hershey with his sons, Andrew and Benjamin in 1717.

The land surveyed for them was located near or by the Little Conestoga creek immediately west of the present Lancaster City limits.

In this connection the following letter is of a great interest.

Philadelphia,

27th of the 7th month, 1717

To Friend Is. Taylor:

John Funk and Christian Herr applied yesterday on behalf of their countrymen that are lately arrived, for several parcels of land near their settlements, but before I could have the consent of the commissioners, the time is so far spent that I cannot get the warrants ready, being just taking horse for Duck Creek. However, thy design of being upon surveying thereabouts in so little time as thou mentioned when here, thou may lay out for the following persons the several parcels of land undermentioned, namely:

| | | |
|---|--------|---------------|
| For Peter Leman and Henry Funk | 5 or 6 | hundred acres |
| Abraham Herr | 3 or 4 | “ “ |
| Hans Pupather | 4 or 5 | “ “ |
| Hans Pupather, Jacob Pupather and Peter Swar | 1000 | acres |
| Christian Hershey | 400 | acres |
| Hans Tuber | 300 | “ |
| Woolrich Houser | 200 | “ |
| Hans Burkholder | 700 | “ |
| Michael Shank | 700 | “ |
| Henry Pare (Bare) | 500 | “ |

The warrants for ye above lands will be ready in the office and it is again ordered by the Commissioner that no return or survey be made to anybody without their bonds taken at the same time.

J. Logan says his coming up will be very uncertain. So wishing thee health and success in the woods when there, I remain

Thy loving friend,

James Steel.

P. S. Thou need not insist on these men's bonds because they are to pay down their money without delay.

While Benjamin Hershey's name (who came to America with his father, Andrew, about 1717) does not appear among the above list of surveys, he evidently settled upon some of this same land. His son, Christian, born in February, 1719, married Anna Hernley. He, Christian, became one of the pioneer settlers of Warwick township. He died November 21, 1782. His widow died March 15, 1812. The land comprising 380 acres which he took up was located in the southwestern section of Warwick township, now in Penn township, Penn township having been cut off from the western part of Warwick township in 1846. The tract now consists of 100 acres and is owned by John B. Hershey, a descendant of the Christian Hershey who took up this tract of land. The date stone on the house now standing upon the farm reads as follows:

Christian Herschie und Elisabeth Herschisien — 1792.

In this matter I have a personal interest, as Christian Hershey, the pioneer settler of Warwick township and wife had nine children. He was a great-great-great-grandfather of mine through his daughter, Esther, born September 14, 1769. She married John Hess, born November 9, 1769, their son, Christian Hess, born October 11, 1789, whose son, Samuel Hess, born February 24, 1812, whose daughter, Anna Hess, born January 17, 1852, was my mother.

After Lancaster county was erected and became more thickly

populated, the various Indian tribes residing here emigrated north-westward, seeing that the end of their long so-journ in the wilderness in this section was approaching. The game supply was rapidly diminishing. Among the Indians so migrating, were two old persons, man and wife, who fearing death at the hands of their own tribe because of their age and inability to travel with them, fled to the Hershey home for protection. Their usefulness was about gone, and according to tribal custom, would be put to death since it was too great a burden to take them along on the migration.

After the tribe left, this Indian and his wife were given protection by Christian Hershey, who gave them a hiding place in the cellar of the house for three days and nights, during which time the other members of the tribe endeavored to locate them; but being unable to do so, started on their journey. This couple became servants of the household, living for a number of years under Christian Hershey's protection in a hut on his farm close by a small stream of water.

The following Certificate for their protection given by John Penn which appears in Second Series, Volume II, of the Pennsylvania Archives, Page 739, is of great interest.

"By the Honorable John Penn, Esq., etc.
To all whom it may concern, greeting.

Whereas, I am given to understand that the bearers, Michael and Mary, his wife, are friendly Indians of the Delaware tribe, who formerly resided with other Indians, in the Conestoga Manor, and have for upwards of 15 months last passed lived with Christian Hershey at his plantation in Warwick Township, Lancaster County, during which time they have constantly behaved in the most friendly and peaceable manner, to all his Majesty's subjects; I do, therefore, hereby grant the said Michael and Mary my protection and do enjoin and require all officers, civil and military, as well as all other persons whatsoever within this Government to suffer them to pass and re-pass on their lawful business without the least molestation or interruption, and they are hereby also desired to treat the said Indians with civility and to afford them all necessary assistance.

Given under my Hand and Seal and Arms at Philadelphia, the 17th day of August, 1764.

(signed) John Penn

By his Honour's command,

J. Shippen,
Secretary."

Other documentary evidence or reference to these Indians is found in the Diary of the Lititz Moravian Congregation, which

entry was made by Bernhard Adam Grube, a missionary among the Indians, and a Great, Great Grandfather of the President of the Lancaster County Historical Society, Herbert H. Beck, whose father, Abraham R. Beck, translated the entry from its original German form:—

“May 21, 1767—Brother and Sister Grube, visiting in the country, lost their way not far from Manheim and came to a house where abide the only couple of Indians remaining in this Province. The man was not at home but the woman was as happy as a child when Bro. Grube began to speak to her in the Delaware tongue, which she slightly understood—although she and her husband are Conestoga Indians.

“At the time of the Lancaster Blood Bath (the massacre of the Conestogas in Manor Township and in the Lancaster Workhouse 1763), these two Indians were in the same danger of being murdered, but the Mennonite with whom they were living for 15 years hid them in his cellar, where they had to stay all winter until the excitement had somewhat abated.

“The woman seems to be quiet and orderly but knows nothing at all of the Saviour, and that most familiar word ‘Potamaorinna’ was unknown to her. She was glad to have Bro. Grube’s promise that he would visit her again.”

Too much emphasis cannot be laid upon the danger of these two Indians at the time and following thereto, the massacre by the Paxtang Boys, and the asylum given Michael and Mary by my ancestor is a notable kindness and charity to possibly the last remnants of the Native Americans in Lancaster County or South-eastern Pennsylvania.

After residing with Christian Hershey for some few years, Michael, according to tradition, was the first to die. His wife, Mary, died a few years later. They were buried nearby the little stream, by which their wigwam had been located for many years. A panel of fence surrounded the little plot upon which their graves were located. Later this fence was replaced by a concrete headstone, at each of their graves. Michael is reputed to have been about 90 years of age and Mary about 87, at the time of their death. They were given a Christian burial by Mr. Hershey, and are, so far as I know, the only marked Indian graves among the large number of Indian burials in Lancaster county.

For a portion of the information of the Hershey genealogy, I am indebted to a pamphlet prepared by Samuel Hershey, who in his 78th year prepared a brief genealogy of the Hershey family. This was printed in July, 1887, by the Sentinel Print, Manheim, Pa.

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