

Christian and Christina Luther had three known children, John, Christian, Jr. and Catharine (our ancestor).¹³ According to the Ellis and Evans biography, John Luther was born at Ephrata in 1755.¹⁴ This seems doubtful unless his birth occurred during a visit there, as the move to Ephrata did not take place until 1764.¹⁵ A biography of this same [Dr.] John Luther from the *Commemorative Biographical Encyclopedia of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania*, says he was born 1 April 1756 in Freuhlingen, Germany.¹⁶

This also seems unlikely unless Christian Luther returned to Germany after his 1751 immigration to the Colonies. The biography, however, might contain a clue to the European home of Christian Luther previous to his immigration, as a town named Freilingen is about two kilometers from Wölferlingen, the European home of the Kelps. This begs the question, were Christian Luther and Christina Kelp acquainted before coming to America? Could they have been married before coming?

Christian Luther was a tanner by trade.¹⁷ After his death in 1808 his widow carried on the tanning business at Ephrata in partnership with James Smith and probably Christian Luther, Jr. until her death in 1812.¹⁸

One branch of the Luther family owned a type foundry in Frankfurt, Germany. In the early 1740's this foundry supplied the type used in the printing operation which was carried on at the Ephrata Cloister. It is not known if Christian Luther was a member of the Frankfurt Luther family. Their connection with the Cloister predated Christian's arrival in the Colonies by about eight years.¹⁹

Christian and Christina (Kelp) Luther and Christian Luther, Jr. may have been interred in unmarked graves at the Ephrata Cloister, but more likely are buried at nearby Mt. Zion Cemetery. This graveyard was used to bury soldiers from the Battle of Brandywine who had died from their wounds or illness after having been hospitalized at the Cloister.²⁰ Mt. Zion may also have been the final resting place for those more loosely associated with the Cloister, but who were not deemed worthy of being interred in the hallowed ground of the Cloister cemetery. Also Catharine (Luther) Beck, born 10 December 1760, died 9 September 1832, and her husband Jacob Beck are buried at Mt. Zion Cemetery.²¹ Dr. John Luther died 28 January 1811 and is buried in the cemetery of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.²²

Christian Luther (along with John A[dam]., Catharine and Jonathan Kelp) was listed as one of the last surviving solitary members of the Cloister on February 21, 1814, at the incorporation of the Seventh Day Baptists of Ephrata.²³ This would have been the son, Christian Luther, as the elder Christian was deceased. Letters of administration on the estate of Christian Luther [Jr.] were granted on 15 June 1832.²⁴

¹Ralph Beaver Strassburger, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers: A Publication of the Original Lists of Arrivals in the Port of Philadelphia from 1727 to 1808*, 3 vols., ed. William John Hinke, Proceedings of the Pennsylvania German Society, vol. 42 (Norristown, PA: By the Society, 1934), 1:461 and 2:541.

²Franklin Ellis and Samuel Evans, *History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania with Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (Philadelphia: Everts and Peck, 1883), pp. 815-816.

³Günter Luther, D1000 Berlin 33, Dievenowstrasse 2, Germany, to the compiler, 26 July 1990.

⁴Shenandoah County, VA, Will Book D:190, William Kelp, 17 April 1792/12 March 1793. Shenandoah County Courthouse, Woodstock, VA.

⁵Annette Kunselman Burgert and Henry Z. Jones, Jr., *Westerwald to America: Some 18th Century Germans Immigrants* (Camden, ME: Picton Press, 1989), p. 123.

⁶Ezekiel Sangmeister, *Leben und Wandel*, Part 5, trans. Barbara M. Schindler *Journal of the Historical Society of the Cocalico Valley* 8 (1983):131 and 144.

⁷Ibid., Part 4:, 7 (1982):99 and 101-102.

⁸Ibid., Part 4:, 7 (1982):98 and Shenandoah County, VA, Will Book D:190, William Kelp.

⁹Sangmeister, *Leben und Wandel*, Part 5, 8 (1983):144-147.

¹⁰For a description of the Ephrata Cloister see, Thomas Froncek, "Ephrata Cloister," *American Heritage Magazine*, May 1876, pp. 2-6.

¹¹Sangmeister, *Leben und Wandel*, Part 6, 9 (1984):9.

¹²Ibid., Part 7, 10 (1985):13-14, 17, 40, 42-45 and 48.

¹³Lancaster County, PA, Will Book I:1:319, Christian Luther, 11 November 1803/13 October 1808, and L:1:83, Christina Luther, 29 July 1811/28 May 1812. Archives Division, Lancaster County Courthouse, Lancaster, PA. All Lancaster County civil records herein are at this location.

¹⁴Ellis and Evans, *History of Lancaster County*, p. 816.

¹⁵Sangmeister, *Leben und Wandel*, Part 5, 8 (1983):147.

¹⁶*Commemorative Biographical Encyclopedia of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania* (Chambersburg, PA: J. M. Runk & Co., 1896), p. 353.

¹⁷Lancaster County, PA, Will Book I:1:319, Christian Luther.

¹⁸Ibid. and L:1:83, Christina Luther.

¹⁹Julius F. Sachse, *The German Sectarians of Pennsylvania: A Critical and Legendary History of the Ephrata Cloister and the Dunkers 1708-1800*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Author, 1899-1900; reprint ed., New York: AMS Press, 1971), 2:15, 58-60 and 223.

²⁰Milton H. Heinicke, *History of Ephrata*, Booklet 7 (n.p.: Historical Society of the Cocalico Valley, n.d.), pp. 6-10.

²¹William F. Worner, *Tombstone Inscriptions from Graveyards in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania*, 30 vols. (Lancaster, PA: Lancaster County Historical Society, 1942 and other years), 5:170-171.

²²*Commemorative Biographical Encyclopedia of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania*, p. 353.

²³Candy Crocker Livergood, *Genealogical Abstracts of the Laws of Pennsylvania and the Statutes at Large 1813-1814* (Westminster, MD: Family Line Publications, 1990), p. 55.

²⁴Lancaster County, PA, Bond Book F:1:217, Christian Luther, 15 June 1832.

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LEBEN UND WANDEL

Ezechiel Sangmeister was a man of strong religious convictions who, according to his protestations desired to be a solitary, but was prevented from doing so by various people persistently turning to him for religious leadership. His diaries were discovered April 28th, 1825, many years after his 1784 death, secreted within the wall of his room in the home he had shared on the Ephrata Cloister grounds with the solitaires, John Adam Kelp, Catharina Kelp and John Adam Kelp, the younger, also known as Brother Jonathan. The three Kelps were siblings of Christina (Kelp) Luther.

Leben und Wandel, Life and Conduct of the late Brother Ezechiel Sangmeister, was translated from the German by Barbara M. Schindler and published in 1986 by the Historical Society of the Cocalico Valley, Ephrata, Pennsylvania.

Purportedly great pressure was brought to bear not to print the diaries by those who wanted to shield the deceased Conrad Beissel's reputation from being besmirched. In August of 1825 the printer Joseph Bauman of Ephrata, Pennsylvania, began publishing Sangmeister's manuscripts in serial form. They were entitled *Leben und Wandel . . .*, translation, *Life and Conduct of the Late Brother Ezechiel Sangmeister*. In February, 1828, Bauman discontinued publication for lack of funds.

The following are the extracts from Ezechiel Sangmeister's *Leben und Wandel* which refer to the Luthers. The opportunity is rare for so much insight into the personal lives of one's ancestors set down by their contemporary more than two hundred years ago. As many who read the summary of Luther research will not have access to Sangmeister's writings, all the significant passages which concern the Luthers are included. The common thread running through Sangmeister's writing is his disapproval of Conrad Beissel's debauchery and the conflict caused by Sangmeister's efforts to keep his little band of followers free from Beissel's charismatic, but unwholesome and ungodly influence. The names of our direct line ancestors have been underlined. The explanations in brackets are mine. *Ε. Μ.*

Part 4, Vol. 7, p. 102. In this extract Sangmeister is speaking of the group called "awakened people" who had been followers of John Martin, brother-in-law to Christina (Kelp) Luther and husband of Christina's sister Anna Maria. The group had recently attached itself to Sangmeister's flock. "The people fell upon me and each one of them revealed his or her wish to me. All these people had heard my brothers talk alot [*sic*] about chastity. Therefore they all resolved to live chaste lives. Consequently one after the other asked me for advice concerning this matter. (Especially two pious women among them, Chatarina and Christina [Luther]). They asked me verbally and in writing to be their leader."

Part 5, Vol. 8, p. 144. "During these Indian uproars our people took their refuge with us once again with wives and children, bags and baggage so that one of the Sisters even became ill with us. My three Brothers, Vall., Ant., and Hag. were well able to turn this occurrence to their advantage and they began to preach and talk about baptism with water. They did not rest until one person, Christian Luther, let himself be persuaded. Now it was meant for me to do it, but the

good God protected me from it. And since I dared not say a word against it, I let it go. Since they had no hope of bringing me into their net, they decided to send him to Ephrata. Anton urged me to write a note and to recommend him which I did, but Anton copied it and made a letter of it. And so the mentioned Luther journeyed to Ephrata and let himself be baptized there. He was received and taken in with great joy"

[This was written while the group was still in Virginia near Woodstock, and although Sangmeister fails to note the date, if the continuity of the text is chronological, the baptism would have occurred in early 1764. Shortly thereafter the Indian threat forced the company's relocation.]

Ibid., p. 147. "After this our people got together to move with us too. Hans Martin's, and Luther's household and Hildebrand's three children moved with us Thus this is the end of our living on the Shenandoah where we moved to in October of the year 1752 and in the year 1764 on the 22nd of June we prepared ourselves for the journey to move away."

Part 6, Vol. 9, p. 9. "Finally we arrived in Ephrata on August 3, 1764 and settled ourselves in the aforementioned (Salma Hoffle's) house. Since the Ephratites had heard of our coming and Conrad [Beissel] had gone visiting with the heads of the community just then, they left instructions that if we came while they were gone, they should receive us with great love so that they could win all of us. They had already taken Luther's wife and put her up in Zion. They lured all the information out of her, what great impressions she had of the community in Virginia and that they lived chastely, all of which was praised and extolled before a group of nuns in Conrad's house. Thereupon she was baptized by Conrad and taken in into the chaste state for which she had to suffer greatly afterwards and received double the ridicule and also humiliation for this empty glory and honor."

Ibid., pp. 28 and 29. "In the previous account I have made mention of Luther's household, namely that they both let themselves be baptized among these sects. She especially told about her separated [celibate] life with her husband and how she was greatly exalted by Conrad and his followers according to her custom. Anton also contributed considerably in this matter in that he made the poor people believe that there was no place in America where one could more easily live separated and chastely than here, but it was the exact opposite. He said of course that in the beginning the community was set up for that purpose, but in reality it was totally the opposite. This place no doubt became a lodging of impure spirits, of which I could mention as proof. But in order to achieve my purpose, I will just mention that I always advised and wanted these people [the Luthers] as well as others to come away from the community and to come to God, which troubled Anton and Conrad Beissel a great deal. The latter, when he noticed that he could not win her over completely, he along with his envoy ran to her, Luther's wife, everywhere like the weaker sex and showed great pity for her, namely of how she has not yet come to the true goodness of the community and that she was still lacking God. Then he especially tried to direct her to himself and his writings, which he always placed above those of all the saints. And this along with the idolatrous love feasts was the real goodness that they were still lacking. Since he noticed that he had found entry with her he went home again and soon he came to her again one evening barefoot in deep snow with three Sisters. Once again he began pointing out his dilemmas in view of her, namely that she was lacking something and after long

and much needless talk and digression, what should it finally be that she was lacking but a sister's cowl. Oh for shame to have such a great saint as he alleged to be detain and torment himself and other souls with such trifles. When she agreed they left again and made a cowl and brought it to her for her to wear daily. The poor sister came into great distress because her husband as well as my Brothers Johan Adam and Jonathan [These two were Sangmeister's brothers in religion, however, they were Christina Luther's real brothers.] were against it. Then she came to me and I reprimanded her severely since she so completely let herself be taken in by such foolishness. I said that all these things would be obstructive to her inner self since she did such a thing only to please other people and did she not have reason enough not to do it on account of her husband [Christian Luther]."

Part 7, Vol. 10, pp. 13 and 14. "Now in the meantime while one was very earnest in the outward ceremonies, it happened that because we did not give in in the least and attend the ceremonies [love feasts], Sr. Christina [Luther] likewise not only had second thoughts on the matter, but also came into great distress because of it. In the beginning, through Conrad's exalting, she let herself be made as if drunk and be completely plunged into the matter. Later she had to pay dearly for it and she had to atone for it with want and much distress and misery. As I said, after she came to perceive the corruption and the perverse motives of this community, she tried to gradually tear herself away. Conrad noticing this sent Sr. Eugenia to her one day, who spoke from his mouth, in a manner I have often heard him speak. This Sister not only ran down the mystical books to her"

[The intervening paragraph describes a night of debauchery by Conrad Beissel.]

"As soon as it was day and he was scarcely sober, he went to Luther's house along with Peter Miller [Beissel's successor] and scolded and reviled these people because they had not visited him and had been unfaithful to the church. Since he could not accomplish anything in this manner, the following day he came with praising and exalting in order to more thoroughly rob the poor souls of their possessions. I conscientiously warned them of this and was burdened with deep temptations on account of it so that oftentimes I did not know what to do and committed many unfaithfulnesses in that I did not have enough faith in my God."

Ibid., p. 16. "Everything was reconciled with love feasts, the cover for all sins. And because until now Br. Luther followed along on account of the outward gains, and saw and knew all these things, and his wife had to suffer extremely because of it, I trueheartedly presented the matter to him and what sins he was taking upon himself thereby and that he participated in their sins, which finally brought him to reflect on various things."

Ibid., p. 17. "He [Conrad Beissel] called us hypocrites and said that whoremongers and adulterers would sooner come into the kingdom of God than we. When he had considerably released his anger, he tried especially hard to get Sr. Christina [Luther] as an attendant for this great feast and to get an even stronger grip in the matter, but she flatly refused, which had not yet happened at a public meeting!"

Ibid., p. 28. "The following day the Vorsteher [Beissel] went to Luther's place with Jaebez [Peter Miller] and [Brother] Philemon. He told them how he had had a struggle the entire

night until he came to a resolution to visit them, for I was in their way. And so my dream was explained, in that he put all the blame on me, that he could no longer have Sr. Christina. 'Oh how much (he said to them) have I already had to suffer on account of you all, and it will go badly for you when you turn toward evil and let yourself be misled again.' And he began to sigh deeply because there was a fierce fight between him and me, for he tried with all his might to have the souls attached to him, and I tried to direct them away from him and toward God to the best of my ability."

[The succeeding entries were made following the death of Conrad Beissel 6 July 1768.]

Ibid., p. 37-38. "After, as I said, Conrad Beissel was buried, the second night thereupon he paid his respects to Luther's household. Since each of them slept alone, it happened that immediately after she [Christina Luther] had gone to bed, she became very uneasy, so that she could not sleep. Suddenly something descended upon her like a heavy sack, which brought along with it a right deadly stench which was so horrible that it was unbelievable. In this fear, she came into a real cold sweat of death, but was not able to move at all, much less to cry out. While she lay constantly sighing to herself, she finally was able to call, 'In the name of Jesus, go away from here you evil spirit.' Then it went away.

"Br. Luther, who was still awake at this time but did not know anything of this happening with his wife, said his prayers, and went to bed. This was between 11 and 12 o'clock. Scarcely had he lain down when the ghost came after him, He too was deathly afraid. He then fell into a brief slumber and awoke with great fear. Suddenly it happened that in the churchroom which was next to his chamber, an awful uproar and raging broke out as if one had torn down and smashed the weatherboarding. He immediately jumped out of bed and opened a window. The mentioned terrible noise recurred and there was a frightful snort like a wild stallion's. Then downright mortal fear overtook him. And she was very weak the following day and felt it in her limbs for a long time.

"Now there is no surprise at all that this happened since they [the Luthers] had greatly given themselves to Conrad Beissel and the community in the beginning and received many things from them. She in particular had greatly praised Conrad and the community in this drunkenness of hers. [By drunkenness Sangmeister is referring to her religious fervor.] She entrusted her whole heart to him, so that he likewise praised her and included her in the number of celibate souls, which bonds I always tried to break through sincere admonition and encouragement. He visited them shortly before his death and threatened both of them that if they would not soon lead better lives (namely follow him), he would no longer have any patience with them and with this resolution he died. Looking back on it now, it seems he really meant what he said.

"Now these people were in great fear, but I encouraged them and at the same time said that of course it would have been better had they broken away more from him in his lifetime. I stayed with them overnight several times when I likewise felt very afraid alone in the room. Yet I could see and hear nothing."

Ibid., p. 39. "The following night thereupon, Sr. Christina (Luther), as if beside herself, was led into eternity, where she then heard and saw amazing things in view of Conrad Beissel and his followers, whereof I will make mention in the following report. I mention this event in order to show how the deeds of such a restless spirit pursue a person."

Ibid., p. 40. "Since Conrad was dead I advised Luther on this occasion to free himself of this ungodly creature. P. Miller did the opposite, kept after him and even influenced Luther considerably. Meanwhile it happened, however that he set her [Christina Luther] free. She went neither to the meetings nor to the love feasts anymore and since he still went regularly, the spirits caused her considerable suffering."

Ibid. "After this once again they busily began bringing some people, especially Philemon, into their maze under the pretense of the mystics so that they remain in the church. I said I do not direct myself toward them, but toward my conscience. Sr. Christina was also ill. I gave her as much support as I could. She also got a boil on her finger and Sr. Peternelle got them on her hand. I had to cut it open for both of them and soon it was healed again."

Ibid. "By this time one could almost think nothing else but that Conrad Beissel's pursuing spirit had come upon his followers twofold. For one had to feel, hear, see and experience this every day and every hour. Since they could not get Luther's wife to conform in the community because she had divine assistance, [Br.] Eleaser went up to them and said that they had decided among themselves, that they should move out of the chamber and another household should move in. This was already made known to me before, so I informed Br. Luther and he gave them short notice" [Obviously the Luthers had been living in one of the Cloister's communal houses.]

Ibid., pp. 42 and 43. "I have mentioned in the previous account that Sr. Christina, with the consent of her husband, was finally permitted to be absent from the meetings as well as the love feasts. As soon as the Ephratites noticed this, they, particularly the Sisters, gave him [Christian Luther] special treatment, which burdened his wife with a great temptation since the devil continually suggested to her he had associations with other women and did not respect her at all. This brought the husband into such terrible distress that he said he would rather drown himself than to live this way with her, namely that she supposedly had such suspicion of him. I stepped in the middle and made suggestions on both sides as to what they could do to made peace. I could easily appease him, but as for her I could not bring her to change her mind for a long time. And it is very pitiful with the female sex, that when they cannot possess the men totally with heart, soul, and body, unfortunately they are lacking all over, and yet in reality they always want to have the upper hand everywhere, which of course goes totally against divine and natural arrangement. These unfortunately were the fruits of the self-willed chaste life, where they must view another with horror instead of love. P. Miller made use of this opportunity and influenced him [Luther] considerably through his frequent visits, so that once when he had had a talk with him, afterwards he [Luther] expelled her from the table for the slightest reason, which brought her into great temptation. She became ill, got a sore throat, and almost suffocated. (Now I was priest and doctor, oh misery!) Her absence was taken very badly and the matter was brought to the Brothers' table three times and they debated over what should be done. I was always given the blame. They went running to her one after the other to bring her back. It is