

unspeakable what effort these people employed to keep a single soul in their ropes and nets, and they themselves were unhappy.

"To confirm this further, one will be able to judge from the following events how far these people had deviated from their calling and goal and tried to bring others into the same situation. It happened one day that the female Vorsteher of the nuns (Eugenia) personally paid a visit to Luther's household. Her purpose was to take these people from me and get them for herself. (Had she intended to direct them toward God, I would not have said one word against it, but I would have wished her the best and left it up to her). Therefore this head-sister began to talk . . . . All her speeches were made only in order to throw suspicion on me and to change her [Christina Luther's] mind. Since she [Christina] was quite secure in her faith in God, her speeches were scarcely heard. And because he [Luther] still followed along, they put that much more pressure upon him, for once when he came home from a love feast he was very weak and sick, wishing that he would never have to go to one again. Since he was still participating in their activities and she was not, this aroused such lovelessness between them that every day she thought she might be beaten by him. The Ephrata goal even extended to that point, to come between them and cause dissension, and then they could do their preaching.

"Soon after this event, the priest P. Miller also came to visit them one Sabbath. He began talking like Eugenia and said how in the beginning he had strongly disciplined himself in fasting, watching, and praying. But the longer he did this the more enslaved he became thereby and would not find any peace within himself. But when he finally ventured to relinquish and put aside God and his conscience and gave himself up to Father Friedsam [Conrad Beissel] and the Brothers, here he found rest and peace. 'Why that is terrible,' said Sr. Christina. 'That is dreadful, relinquishing God and the conscience,' over which he was taken aback and ashamed. At his departure they said they would not forget him for saying something like that which was so offensive to them. But he did not retract it, for Conrad had led all of his favorites into such evil beliefs. And his purpose in telling them this was the same as Eugenia's, simply that they should put God and conscience aside, follow him and his example, and to follow along thoughtlessly again. In this way they would be at peace with themselves, not otherwise. But God arranged it that they only developed more of an aversion toward them through these speeches and she [Christina] said to her husband, 'Now do you hear the strange beliefs! One could just cry giant tears when one has to hear such things.'"

**Ibid., p. 44.** "Although the Ephratites actually had me as their butt and really put the blame on me for everything, especially for Luther's household because they did not follow along any-more, consequently they began working on them, for Sr. Jael, who had gotten her support from Obed, came to them and had much to reproach them with. Once she had poured out her fury, the matter did not rest here, for the next night thereupon when he and she (Luther and his wife) each were awake alone in their bedrooms, they both heard their kitchen door opening, and also the door to the big room, and suddenly it came to her bedroom door. With great vehemence she heard it said, 'The Vorsteher is here!' And it was said with great turbulence. Since it seemed as though he were being held back by her prayer, so that he could not come in right away, he said in great anger, 'I will bring many spirits who will help me!' He left and suddenly the room was full of spirits, and she heard them walking just like humans!

Since she continued praying intensely, he went to Luther's bedroom in anger and rage. As he lay on his back and was awake in prayer, he likewise heard it said, 'The Vorsteher is here!' Terror came over him. Then suddenly he attacked him and wanted to strangle him. As he now took him by the throat, he wished only that he could move, but to no avail. Meanwhile he gathered courage and said, Oh Lord Jesus! With this he vanished and the clock struck 11. Sr. Christina had the same thing happen to her at a different time, when Conrad Beissel likewise wanted to strangle her in the night. It seemed too real to her, as if his long nails had gone into the flesh of her neck. Although one tried to keep these occurrences secret, the land was still filled with Conrad Beissel's haunting and everyone was told about it, for the people were driven to do it."

**Ibid., pp. 44 and 45.** That evening P. Miller came with his people in Zion. They sang and sounded, and finally went to Luther's household. They treated them harshly, saying that they had to be with them again. Since they left Zion at midnight, in the afternoon she [Christina Luther] went to him [Luther] in his bedroom in order to see how he might feel about the visit. As they sat together on the bed, the door opened by itself. Both of them thought it was the child and immediately made room for it on the bed for it to be with them. They really did feel something coming to them on the bed. As they wanted to receive it, it vanished! They were both astonished at this. After day broke, there was a conference held among the Ephratites on account of the Luthers. They resolved that they would try to influence the husband and then make it so that she would have to submit to him, which Br. Jemini disclosed to me. But he demanded only that she should be there, and what could not be changed should be let go. After several days P. Miller went to them once again very friendly and with craftiness and wanted that they should be there and always be friends with one another. Had these good people not been backed by us, they would have had to either submit or run away like so many others had done."

**Ibid., pp. 45-47.** "Sr. Christina (Luther) also had a strange vision about this time which I have added here for further reflection, so that if she again lets down her guard I will call this to her attention.

"It is indisputable that the good God would ever spare any means and opportunity in the case where a soul has an earnest calling and desire to love and to serve Him, not to mention then that He would help them when they are tempted and in danger, or would let the angels, which he has made to serve man, warn and instruct them in secret through dreams and visions or through their fellow men to rescue them from the devil's nets and tricks. One could prove this repeatedly in the Scriptures, in the Old as well as the New Testament, for instance in Joseph, Jacob's son, the Prophet Micah, and Joseph the foster-father and in many others.

"Therefore I have found myself forced to write down the following event which took place with Sr. Christina, Luther's wife, soon after Conrad's death in the year 1768, especially since this vision was an event or means to help her toward a complete change for the better and to tear her away from the Ephrata sect. She had yearned, sighed, and desired for a long time that this might still happen in this life. Her own words are as follows:

'One evening as I said my prayers according to my custom and went to bed, I was dreaming and in my dream I came to a place where the Seventh Dayers were assembled and I was in the middle of them. My husband [Christian Luther] and Hans Martin [her brother-in-law] I saw outside near them.

'They, the Ephratites were very furious and incensed with me and gave me many and hard blows, so that I could think no differently than that they would take my life! Finally some of them ran out and also knocked Hans Martin around. They accused us of various thefts (on account of S. Eckerlin) which, according to what they said, we had committed against them, but they were nothing but malicious lies. I could not and dared not defend myself in any way, so great was their anger and spite. However the greater their anger, spite, and accusations, the more I was impelled from within to plead guilty and in secret take the blame upon myself. For this I also found a secret divine strength which helped me. Finally, however, in fear I called out and said: Oh you my God, what sort of a dreadful place is this where I am! Alas, if I could only get away from these wretched people! But I had absolutely no way of getting out for it was like an evening twilight. Finally after long sighing, the door opened and I came into another room. Here the Brothers were together, with caps and cowls and much slovenly rabble besides, which they had baptized so ungodly. They were playing cards with one another on the table. With this a Brother, long since deceased, came running in (named Br. Elkana, who she neither knew or had seen before, and yet whose physical features she could describe to me very distinctly). He had one card in his hand, threw it on the table in anger, and said, "This the Vorsteher has produced and accomplished for us." And so there was nothing but confusion and disorder, and to look at this caused me indescribable pain, so that if a secret strength had not sustained me, I would have had to despair.

'In this distress I cried out once again and said, Ah dear God! Do these people who allege to be so good still suffer with such crude vices? Ah, I would never have thought that! But it was said to me through a voice: "There is no vice in the world in which they do not take part."

'After this I came to another place where an entire hall full of Sisters were together. They sat assembled with goblets in hand as if they held a love feast. They waved to me that I should come in to them. They wanted to give me some of what they were drinking. I shook my head no and within me a voice said, "Not a speck of their deemed holiness will be left them."

'Hereafter I came to another place where many were together. They looked as if dead and had, as it seemed to me, absolutely no longing for God. This caused me extreme pain again and it was horrible for me as long as I had to look at them. Then I came to another place, namely a hall where men and women were together. These people seemed to be quite well. They were not especially happy and yet not especially unhappy either. In this place I felt no strength and pain like I did in the others.

'After this I came to another place. It went down very deep like in an abyss. Here everything was full of murder weapons covered with bloody cloths. I was supposed to and had to go through there, over which I came into desperation and said that it is an impossibility to get through there, oh here you must die! Meanwhile a certain Br. Ezechiel came to me and said "No, you must not die." And he put his arms around me and quickly ran through with me. As soon as

I was through however, he was gone from my sight and I saw him no more. Upon this I found myself in a lovely place where many women were gathered. Here I was told, "Those are the meek." Now it seemed to me I was covered with wounds and blood. Therefore they took a cloth and wiped me off and put another dress on me and were very kind towards me.

'After this I came to another and the final place, which was beautiful and magnificent. Here seven virgins in beautiful dresses and head-bands were gathered. It was said to me, "See, those are true virgins." They were exceedingly friendly and kind and waved to me I should come to them, which I did. I was with them for quite a long while, for they sang so beautifully, and praised GOD! to the point where it is impossible to say it with the tongue or describe with the quill! With this praising of God I forgot all my previous distress and misery. Oh how very happy these souls were! And how they would have liked to make me participate in their happiness and considered me one of them, (\*) for they were encircled by an extraordinary purity.

'Finally after all of these things happened to me, I came to my senses again! My hands were just as I had folded them when I went to bed. I had to rip them apart with force. Meanwhile I felt and noticed that my spirit wanted to leave once again, but I feared that I would have to go to the unhappy places again like before. So I got up and walked around in my bedroom, when instantly thereupon the clock struck and I had been gone with my spirit for two hours.

'After this occurrence I was in a state where I was not in control of my senses and I was as if in a constant dismay causing me to forget my outward duties. My husband, [Christian Luther] who knew nothing of this occurrence, was very angry with me sometimes since I could not perform my duties according to my custom.'

"Thus, this is that which I have heard from her own mouth and have written down for further reflection, by me.

Ezechiell Sangmeister, in Ephrata.

"P.S. After I had written it I read it to her, and where I had erred I crossed it out. For the rest, I wish that she might persist in the earnestness she has now until her end and give God the honor."

**Ibid., p. 48.** "After this it happened that P. Miller again visited Luther's household. That night Sr. Christina felt the Vorsteher [Conrad Beissel's ghost] in her bedroom. She along with the girl became very afraid. [It is not clear if by girl he means daughter, i.e. Catharine Luther, or perhaps a servant girl.] Since he could not find access, he made his way to Br. Luther. As he was awake, a great force came over him, and since he could not defend himself, he [Conrad's ghost] took hold of him by the throat once again. It was no different for him than as if he had pushed a pillar into him, which he felt with much pain. When he finally pulled himself together, he retreated. A while later he came upon him again, but could not get at him. If he [Beissel] had such a dreadful claim on his subjects now, what then will happen in eternity?"

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\*The reader should notice that though this vision of Christina Luther her future destiny was shown, namely that through much suffering she will get away from the Ephrata sect: and through

God's strength in addition to the help of Ezechial Sangmeister, she will reach the latter-indicated, magnificent place. And her blissful death also showed that she reached such a degree of happiness. [This footnote was added by the editor and is not part of the original manuscript.]

In most instances it is not possible to determine the exact date of each entry. This portion of the diary concludes in September, 1769. Ezechiel Sangmeister died at Ephrata 30 December 1784.



## FAMILY GROUP

Chart No. LUTHER=1**HUSBAND: LUTHER, Christian**Occupation: Tanner.<sup>3</sup>

Event	Day	Month	Year	Town(ship)	County/Province/State	State/Country	Misc. Information
Born:	Probably		1728-1732			GER?	Immigrated 16 Sep 1751 on the <i>Edinburgh</i> <sup>1</sup>
Mar:			1754-1755			VA?	To Ephrata Cloister 1764. <sup>16</sup> Naturalized
Died: (w, p)	13	Oct	1808 <sup>3</sup>	Ephrata	Lancaster	PA	24 Aug 1765. <sup>18</sup> See Note 1.
Cemetery: Possibly buried on Cloister grounds; probably buried Mt. Zion.							Religion: German Seventh Day Baptist <sup>15</sup>
Father:				m.		Mother:	
b.			d.			b.	d.

**WIFE: KELP/KÖLB, Maria Christina<sup>2</sup>**Occupation: Tanner<sup>4</sup>

Event	Day	Month	Year	Town(ship)	County/Province/State	State/Country	Misc. Information
Born:	31	Jul	1732 <sup>6</sup>	Wölferlingen	Rheinland-Pfalz	GER	Immigrated 29 Sep 1753 on the <i>Rowand</i> . <sup>17</sup>
Died: (w, p)	28	May	1812 <sup>4</sup>	Ephrata	Lancaster	PA	See Note 2.
Cemetery: Possibly buried on Cloister grounds; probably buried Mt. Zion.							Religion: German Seventh Day Baptist <sup>15</sup>
Father: John Peter KELP/ KÖLB <sup>6</sup>				m. by 1726 <sup>6</sup>		Mother: Maria Gertraut SANNER/SONNER <sup>6</sup>	
b. 15 Jan 1701 <sup>6</sup>			d. 1755 <sup>14</sup>			b. 21 Nov 1705 <sup>6</sup>	d. 12 Oct 1747 <sup>6</sup>
The order of children may not be correct							

CHILDREN & spouses	Event	Day	Mo.	Year	Town(ship)	County	State	Misc. Information
1. John LUTHER <sup>3</sup>	Born:	1	Apr	1756 <sup>7</sup>				Doctor. <sup>7</sup>
(1) Barbara WEAVER <sup>5, 7</sup>	Mar:	21	May	1779 <sup>7</sup>			PA	
b. d. 1791 <sup>8</sup> -1797 <sup>5</sup>	-----							
(2) Eve HISSER/HISTER <sup>7</sup>	Mar:						PA	
b. 1766 <sup>7</sup> d. 15 Aug 1804 <sup>7</sup>	Died:	28	Jan	1811 <sup>7</sup>	Harrisburg	Dauphin	PA	Bur: Harrisburg Cemetery. <sup>7</sup>
*2. Catharine LUTHER <sup>3</sup>	Born:	10	Dec	1760 <sup>9</sup>			VA?	
Jacob BECK <sup>3</sup>	Mar:	22	May	1781 <sup>11</sup>	Cocalico Twp.	Lancaster	PA	
b. 1/2 Sep <sup>9</sup> 1756? <sup>10</sup> d. 1 Jul 1829 <sup>9</sup>	Died:	9	Sep	1832 <sup>9</sup>	Elizabeth Twp.	Lancaster	PA	Bur.: Mt. Zion Cemetery, Ephrata.
3. Christian LUTHER <sup>3</sup>	Born:							Sabbatarian: celibate solitary. <sup>13</sup>
Unmarried <sup>13</sup>	Mar:	-----		-----	-----	---		Possibly buried at Cloister; prob-
	L. A.:	15	Jun	1832 <sup>12</sup>	Ephrata	Lancaster	PA	ably buried at Mt. Zion, Ephrata.
4.	Born:							
b. d.	Mar:							
	Died:							
5.	Born:							
b. d.	Mar:							
	Died:							
6.	Born:							
b. d.	Mar:							
	Died:							
7.	Born:							
b. d.	Mar:							
	Died:							
8.	Born:							
b. d.	Mar:							
	Died:							
9.	Born:							
b. d.	Mar:							
	Died:							
10.	Born:							
b. d.	Mar:							
	Died:							

References are found on the following page.

\*\*Not Proven.

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2. Shenandoah County, VA, Will Book D:190, William Kelp, 17 Apr 1792/12 Mar 1793. Shenandoah County Courthouse, Woodstock, VA.
3. Lancaster County, PA, Will Book I:1:319, Christian Luther, 11 Nov 1803/13 Oct 1808. Lancaster County Courthouse, Lancaster, PA. All Lancaster County Civil records are at this location unless otherwise noted.
4. Ibid., L:1:183, Christina Luther, 29 Jul 1811/28 May 1812.
5. Ibid., G:1:88, Barbara Eckstein, 22 Aug 1797/1797 and *Commemorative Biographical Encyclopedia of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania* (Chambersburg, PA: J. M. Runk & Co., 1896), p. 353.
6. Annette K. Burgert and Henry Z. Jones, *Westerwald to America: Some 18th Century German Immigrants* (Camden, ME: Picton Press, 1989), pp. 123-125. Extracts from the Reformed Church of Maxsain, Germany.
7. *Commemorative Biographical Encyclopedia of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania*, p. 353.
8. Lancaster County, PA, Deed Book MM:666-669, 13 Mar 1791/28 Jun 1791.
9. William F. Worner, *Tombstone Inscriptions from Graveyards in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania*, 30 vols. (Lancaster, PA: Lancaster County Historical Society, 1942), 5:170-171. The birth year 1750 for Jacob Beck as reported from his tombstone is incorrect. Because of the poor condition of the stones, all extracts of inscriptions from Mt. Zion Cemetery are suspect.
10. William J. Hinke, trans., "Pastoral Records of Rev. John Waldschmidt, Cocalico Charge, 1752-1786," *Reformed Church Records of Eastern Pennsylvania*, Communicants p. 38, Film No. 20361:1. Family History Library, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, UT. Jacob Beck's age on 21 April 1771 is given as 14, which would mean he was born about 1756.
11. Ibid., p. 65.
12. Lancaster County, PA, Bond Book F:1:217, Christian Luther, 15 Jun 1832.
13. Milton H. Heinicke, *History of Ephrata*, Booklet 7 (Ephrata, PA: Historical Society of the Cocalico Valley, 1973), p. 35.
14. Frederick County, VA, Will Book 2:181-183, Inventory of Peter Kelp, 4 Mar 1756. Frederick County Courthouse, Winchester, VA.
15. Ezechiel Sangmeister, *Leben und Wandel*, 7 pts., trans. Barbara M. Schindler (Ephrata, PA: Historical Society of the Cocalico Valley, 1986), 5:144 and 6:9. This book is recommended reading for its many references to, and much insight into, the lives of this Luther family.
16. Ibid., 5:147.
17. Strassburger, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers*, 1:568. It is presumed Christina Kelp came to America with her father and some of her siblings in 1753. It is possible she could have come in 1751 with her husband, Christian Luther, as neither passenger manifest listed females.
18. M. S. Giuseppi, *Naturalizations of Foreign Protestants in the American and West Indian Colonies* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1979), p. 135.

## NOTES

1. According to Franklin Ellis and Samuel Evans, *History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, with Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (Philadelphia: Everts & Peck, 1883), p. 815, at the time of his immigration Christian Luther was of the Lutheran faith and claimed direct line descent from the reformer, Martin Luther.
2. Speaking of Dr. Martin Luther, grandson of Christian Luther, "Traditionally, he is a descendant of the brother of Martin Luther, the great Protestant Reformer, and is said to resemble him very strongly in appearance." Source: *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Pennsylvania of the Nineteenth Century*, p. 208. Philadelphia: Galaxy Publishing Co., 1874.

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