

# Breyfogle Sentinel Dispatch

June 2005

Sponsored by [www.breyfogle.com](http://www.breyfogle.com)

Volume 1 - Number 2

## From the Editor

As I begin the task of putting this newsletter together my greatest challenge is to try to fit the large volume of information into this limited space. Since the last newsletter I have added substantially to the database of names, dates, and places, a necessary part of building a family history. But along this path I have branched out into what I think of as a more interesting part, the stories of our shared experiences along the way. So instead of filling this spot with idle chatter we will get right into sharing our research with you.

As a final note though I would like to personally thank all those on this mailing list that took the time to return the reply card and/or send e-mail. The list of active names for this newsletter is less than half what we started with, but we are less concerned with numbers and more about sharing this newsletter with those that really want to see it.

## Obituary

We were saddened to learn of the passing of one of those people on the mailing list. Although the death of Joan Bartlett occurred last year, someone in England was kind enough to return the reply card and direct us to this obituary.

As a frame of reference, Joan was the first child of Robert Joshua and Elsie Roberta (McLaughlin) Breyfogle. Robert was the son of William Roland and Mary Edith (Johnson) Breyfogle and the brother of William Arthur Breyfogle.

We offer our belated condolences to her family even though they may not be on this mailing list.

BARTLETT, Joan Patricia (née BREYFOGLE)  
In England on November 14, 2004. Joan, a proud Daughter of the American Revolution, passed away after a full, rewarding life. Beloved wife of Derek BARTLETT and mother of Jonica (Gerard) FOX and Robert (Susannah) BARTLETT of England and Peter (Suzanne) BARTLETT of Denver, Colorado. Loving grandmother of Emma, Alexander and Nicholas BARLETT (U.S.A.) and Catriona, Bonnie and Tallulah BARTLETT (U.K.). Dear sister of Peter (Jo) BREYFOGLE of Toronto. Funeral service was held in St. Mary's church, Warfield on November 19. Donations in her memory may be made to the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, 175 Bloor

Street East, Suite 700, Toronto, M4W 3R8 or the Multiple Sclerosis Society c/o Lines Bannister Funeral Directors, 60 High Street Ascot, SL5 7HP, England.

SOURCE: Toronto Globe and Mail, November 27, 2004

Death is a part of life, and although we must all grieve in our own way, for us it helps to remember happier times when we lose a loved one. The last page of this newsletter contains pictures we were given by Dartmouth University, Alma Mater of Joan's Uncle William Arthur Breyfogle. We are sure these pictures offer a much happier time in her family's memories.

## 18<sup>th</sup> Century Pennsylvania



Farming near Kutztown, PA

As I commented in my opening remarks, knowing the stories of our lives seems so important when we start looking back over time. So I thought that perhaps this second newsletter should be dedicated to giving some historical reference to where the Breyfogle family got its start in America. We have found so much information about this topic that there isn't room to present it in a single newsletter, so we will present this information over the next several newsletters.

When we start looking at the Breyfogle's in America we naturally go directly to Pennsylvania to look for the first settlement by Johann Petar Breyvogel, the only known immigrant to this continent that we can currently connect to our main line. We say continent because the United States did not exist in 1744, rather it was still known as "the colonies" responsible to the King of England.

As we have all come to know, Johann sailed to this country aboard the Phoenix and arrived here in 1744. According to past historians he swore allegiance to the King of England and was granted land near what is now known as Berks County, Pennsylvania. And as much as we appreciate the past researchers leaving us this information we began to wonder what life was like in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century Pennsylvania.

But before we begin looking at life in the new land, let's think a moment about the voyage from Europe to America. John T. Humphrey, author of *Life in Mid Eighteenth Century Pennsylvania*, began his article with this quotation from one traveler's journal:

"Black clouds rested heavily on the southern horizon and foretold of an unusually severe storm...all port-holes and hatches were closed and fastened, the upper yards were lowered and the sails furled...Soon after 8 o'clock a hurricane broke loose, far more terrible than we dreamed an ocean could be...winds howled, roaring waves ran mountains high...All passengers were gathered in the cabins and a solemn stillness reigned about 10 o'clock there was a terrible shock...the side of the ship against which my wife was leaning was now the bottom and the bottom had become one of the sides of the cabin and we realized the ship had capsized...a cry was raised for axes to cut away the masts...the Captain bravely climbed the main mast, and under his blows it parted and went over. Instantly, the ship righted itself and floated on even keel!"

Since Johann Petar did not write a journal that we know of, and no one to this date has produced any letters or stories of him directly we will not know what his journey across the Atlantic was like, but we can surely surmise that his trip was fraught with danger on the open seas. Other journal entries for German immigrants of this time that we read included references to burial of the dead on some remote sandy beach, the graves forever unmarked and lost. The deaths were usually attributed to the plague but observers of the day were often heard to remark on the fact that many passengers were so sick and malnourished when they arrived that their very survival in the new land was questionable.

Lewis W. Breyfogle writes that Johann Petar "must have been about 16 when he came to the new world," and perhaps his age was a factor in his survival. We can assume that he was of what is often called the "Serf class" and more than likely used to hard work and long hours. Or perhaps it was pure luck; since there is not any record of this voyage

we do not know if he traveled with people he knew, or if he was a solitary passenger fending for himself among strangers.

According to this article common practice during these times was for a large crowd to gather as ships would arrive with new immigrants, and one journal writer indicated "a crowd of persons was seen gathering on shore in expectation the newly arrived immigrants were to be exposed for sale." This does not indicate that the passengers were to be sold into slavery but that in most cases those arriving on these shores had nothing more than the clothes on their backs and would need work immediately.

But before any of those departing the ships could begin a new life there was a bit of business to contend with. Mr. Humphrey described what came next:

Frequently, a representative of the government accompanied the merchants. The official was not looking for servants, but wanted to make certain that all fit males sixteen and older who were aliens disembarked and proceeded to the courthouse where the required oath was given. Immigrants, whose origins were not in the British Isles, made their way to the courthouse located at Second and High Streets. As they proceeded to the courthouse they climbed the steep riverbank to the city on some very wobbly legs. After an extended period of time at sea they were used to the rocking motion of the ship, and they did not have their "land" legs. Most probably looked like a pack of drunken sailors as they proceeded to the courthouse.

The captain of the vessel usually led the way. When the alien immigrants entered the courthouse, a representative of the government—namely the Mayor, President of the Assembly, or a Justice of the Court—was waiting. He told them they were now in a country that belonged to the King of England; a fact that required them to take an oath of allegiance to that King and his successors. The oath was then explained to the immigrants. Given the numbers of Germans arriving in Philadelphia, one presumes that someone was available who could translate. The immigrants had to promise they would conduct themselves as good and faithful subjects, that they would not revolt against his Majesty, nor would they settle on lands that were not their own. They were also required to abjure or renounce allegiance to the Pope. In the

words of another narrator, "After we took the oath, we signed our names to two different papers, one belonged to the King and the other to the government of Pennsylvania."

It was interesting to read that to those Germans arriving at this time would notice several things almost immediately that made this place different from where their journey began. First, the city had no walls, unlike most of the villages of Germany that still retained their medieval fortifications.

It should also be noted that unlike the twisting narrow streets of most German as well as most European villages the streets of Philadelphia were in a grid pattern running at ninety-degree angles to one another and were much wider. And it is also said that most noticed a lack of church steeples and bells ringing out the hours of the day.

Mr. Humphrey does note that most Germans arriving at this time would spend a few weeks in Philadelphia comparing notes with other recent German immigrants, regaining their strength from the voyage, and in many cases finding work to build a small nest egg. But the promise of land was what lured most immigrants to this continent and it is important to remember that the entire economy in the new world at this time was primarily agrarian.

As we discussed in our first newsletter, those common citizens of Germany during the early 1700's were essentially the property of the Bishop, Lord, or other minor dignitary that actually owned the land. And Mr. Humphrey reinforces this matter and mentions that this taught most people of the day the lesson that "those who controlled land controlled their own destiny."

One church leader of the day remarked that his parishioners seemed to be consumed with the topic of where to buy land, terms under which it was being sold, and how much one would pay for it. In a 1750-journal entry by Heinrich Muhlenberg (a religious leader of the day) we learn, "The price of farms around Philadelphia are quite high. Even a days journey from Philadelphia prices for uncleared land are high."

It was noted that advertisements in Philadelphia newspapers show that in 1750 the price of a homestead with a house, barn, and cleared field was twice the price of uncultivated land—a fact that forced many Germans to search for unimproved land in the interior of Pennsylvania.

As we know from the work of Lewis W. Breyfogle, Johann Petar Breyvogel settled in Berks County and he did not mention any other places of residence. But since he was about 16 years old and essentially

traveling alone we can surmise that he probably found work around the docks and lived with others before he began his trip to Berks County.

Berks County is not a great distance to travel from Philadelphia by today's standards but certainly it was a toilsome trip by 1740's standards. We don't know if he traveled alone or with others but can picture a strong-minded German boy striking out on an adventure without considering the consequences of the trip; after all he had just survived a sea journey with no control over his fate, how difficult would travel over land be?

Since we are unable to produce pictures, journals, letters, or even an exact location for the Breyfogle ancestral home place we will take a look at the area of Berks county itself.

We turned to the on-line encyclopedia, Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org>) that has a short article about Berks County, and we offer its text in full:

Reading developed during the 1740s and the northern inhabitants of Lancaster County sent several petitions requesting a separate county be established. With the help of Conrad Weiser, the county was formed on March 11, 1752 from Chester County, Lancaster County, and Philadelphia County and named after William Penn's family home of Berkshire, England. Berks County began much larger than it is today. The northwestern parts of the county went to the founding of Northumberland County in 1772 and Schuylkill County in 1811, when it reached its current size. It is known as a part of Pennsylvania Dutch Country.

This website also offered an outline map to give us a graphical look at where the county is located.



**Berks County, PA**

Keeping track of the county names and how they separated from the original is a little like a shell game so instead of taking considerable space in this newsletter to detail these changes it will suffice to say

that Philadelphia, Chester, and Bucks counties were the original three counties as established by William Penn. Berks County was originally part of Chester County, which is the county to the south of Berks.

In his article Mr. Humphrey notes that travel from Philadelphia to the unsettled land was by foot on one of the three roads leaving the city to the west. Travelers of the day would have seen barns and homes near the outskirts of Philadelphia, but as they traveled west these homesteads would be less frequent.

Muhlenberg noted in his journal that, "When one travels on the roads, one constantly travels in bush or forest. Occasionally, there is a house and several miles down the road there is another house." And although rivers and streams presented obstacles to travel, often causing the traveler to swim to the other side, it is this same source of water that dictated the early settlement of land.

In our research on the very early settlement of Pennsylvania one writer notes that William Penn was noted for his ability to relate to the local native American Indians stating, "he befriended the local Indians, and ensured that they were paid fairly for their lands; even though later colonists did not treat the Indians as fairly as Penn and his first group of colonists had done, colonists and Indians remained at peace in Pennsylvania much longer than in the other English colonies."

With this thought in mind, and since none of the family history research to this point contradicts it, we assume that although Johann's trip to Berks County was more than likely accomplished by foot over wooded tough terrain, he more than likely was not bothered with skirmishes with the Indians.

(to be continued)

### **Dixon-Breyfogle Marriage**

Please be aware that the following newspaper account was transcribed many years after the actual event. But we liked the way it was written so decided to publish it; we hope you enjoy it as well.

#### **A Pretty Wedding at Madera Thursday Evening**

A quiet wedding occurred at 9 o'clock last night at the residence of the bride's parents on C Street, at which Miss Nellie Breyfogle was given in marriage to F. A. Dixon of San Jose. The ceremony was performed by Rev. W. B. McElwee. Besides the members of the family the only ones present were Miss Anne Nicholson and E. A. Nicholson. Miss Lillie Breyfogle, sister of the bride, acted as bridesmaid, and William R. Breyfogle was best man. The happy couple took

the 11 o'clock train for San Francisco, by way of Fresno, where they will spend the honeymoon.

Miss Breyfogle, the bride, has lived with her parents in Madera for the past eight years, and is one of Madera's most accomplished and beautiful young ladies. She has been engaged as a teacher in the Madera public school for the past four or five years. F. A. Dixon is a resident of San Jose, where he is manager of the San Jose Fruit Packing Company. He is well and favorably known as an energetic and thorough businessman.

SOURCE: January 13, 1893 Fresno Weekly Republican

### **Connections to Germany**

We want to thank Steve Breyfogle for thinking of us and sending along a reply he received from Ed Brandt concerning the Breyvogel name in Germany. Here is what Mr. Brandt had to say:

Dear Steve,

I just checked my book, 1200 Jahre Udenheim 773-1973 published by the community in 1973. Even though the Lutheran parish registers do not begin until 1703 and the earlier records of the Archiv der Familie Köth von Wanscheid, located in the state archives in Darmstadt, were destroyed in 1944, some of the information in them had previously been published.

As a result, I can assure you that the Breyvogel family lived in Udenheim as serfs before the Thirty Years War (1618-48). In fact, a list of residents in 1687 shows not only the first ancestor I have listed (1648-1711), but two elderly Breyvogel widows, whose deceased husbands' names are given, but since one was age 60 and there is a typo in the printed age of the other one, it is clear that there must have been a predecessor, who presumably was the father of the deceased Jacob and Adam, who would have had to be born before 1600. As a serf, he would, of course, have lived with his lord, who could conceivably have had more than one domain or possibly moved his domain.

Of course, Udenheim was burned down in wars in 1635 and again reduced to ashes in 1690. Therefore, it is possible that the lord, with some or all of his serfs, fled temporarily but returned later. In 1620 there were 245 residents, reduced to 30 men in 1648. Its population increased to 250 in 1687, with only 32 residents left after Udenheim was burned down in 1687, but including the two Breyvogel widows, with three married children, but only (Hans) Peter Breyvogel, with three children, listed by name. Because Margaretha, widow of Jacob, had a married son named Hans Peter, I am inclined to think this

was the parental couple, although there is no way of being absolutely sure that they did not both have sons by that name.

Considering the high mortality rates and the possibility that one or both of the unnamed children could have been daughters, it is possible that only one lineage survived. I checked the Udenheim parish registers when I was in Germany long ago. But since I already had more than 100 surnames to research at that time, I used my time to trace direct ancestors, rather than taking extra time to write down siblings.

In either case, you should be able to trace your lineage back to 1703 and with marriages and deaths, usually with the age at time, recorded, you might be able to go back far enough to make a direct connection with my wife's ancestors and the names listed in the local history of Udenheim. I think the odds that they came from another locality are slim.

Happy hunting, cousin!

Ed

### Correction

This is our second newsletter, and as I begin putting it together I have one correction to make from the first newsletter, namely the title. For those that are good at editing text I am sure you have all ready noticed that this publication is titled, "Breyfogle Sentinel Dispatch" and not "Breyfogle Sentential Dispatch" as our first issue declared on the masthead.

I guess this proves that Microsoft Word, the software we use to publish this work, may know exactly how to spell a word, but it may not always report the misuse of a word. We will be more diligent in the future.

For those non-linguists in the crowd (such as your editor) here is the difference between these words:

Sen-ten-tial (sĕn tĕn' shəl), adj. Pertaining to or of the nature of a judicial sentence.

Sen-ti-nel (sĕn' tĕ nəl), n., One who or that which watches, or stands as if watching.

ə = a in alone

SOURCE: The American College Dictionary, dated 1970

### [www.breyfogle.com](http://www.breyfogle.com) Report

At the time of this writing here is a run down of the progress on the Breyfogle database:

Surnames – 1177 (up 200 from last report)

Individuals – 4446 (up nearly 1000)

Marriages – 1367 (up 250)

Generations – 13 (same as last report)

Are you listed on this database? Since this file is so large it is not possible in this newsletter space to reproduce it. The generation report if printed would now be nearly 300 pages long. So instead of printing a full report here you can check on-line at [www.breyfogle.com](http://www.breyfogle.com) (follow the family history links) or you can drop us a note and we will check our files to see if you are listed.

We do know that over half the names on our mailing list are NOT on our database so there are a lot of missing links in our research. We really do need your help in compiling a complete genealogy.

And while on the subject, we again would like to encourage all readers to submit information for this family newsletter. At this point we are publishing topics and information that we find interesting, but would be happy to include information from all sources.

### Mailing List Information

It has been approximately 90 days since our initial newsletter was mailed out and the reply cards and return to sender packets have stopped. This tells us that we have probably heard from all those that wish to be included with future mailings.

Here are the results of our initial mailing:

Total Mailing – 209

Returned unopened – 31

Wish to receive newsletter response – 96

No response – 73

Removed by request – 9

So who is missing from this mailing list? If you have family members that would like to receive this mailing please let us know their address and we will include them at NO CHARGE.

### Contact Information

If you are reading this newsletter on-line and would like telephone or mailing address information please send us e-mail. We do not publish this information on our website but will make it available to those with an interest of sharing information by regular mail.

Our website is [www.breyfogle.com](http://www.breyfogle.com) and you may contact us by e-mail at [dan@breyfogle.com](mailto:dan@breyfogle.com)



Joan P. Breyfogle and father Robert J. Breyfogle

Wedding Day June 25, 1956 - St. Peters, Eaton England



Derek and Joan P (Breyfogle) Bartlett