

Forward

Twenty-five years have passed since our last great quarter century reunion. Numerous activities have been initiated recently that suggest our “family” continues its strong tradition of working to preserve its roots. These roots help us remember the efforts and lives of our forefathers so future generations can appreciate all that was done to carve out the history of the Dreibelbis Cousins.

The number of cousins sharing their time and talents across the country is no doubt quite extensive. Some of those efforts have included preservation and restoration of farm site(s), production of a scale model of “The Mary” that brought John Jacob to America, creation of videos to document family treasures, re-creation of the Road Ramble to guide travelers to many significant family sites and, most recently, renewed efforts to collect family information in hopes of updating our family genealogy which was published 17 years ago. The efforts by many have been and will continue to be tremendous; please consider becoming part of the ongoing progress to preserve our family heritage by getting involved in some way.

Enclosed in this publication is a compilation of information about the 275th Anniversary Reunion. You will find the agenda of weekend activities, photos of important family sites scattered throughout, documents not “officially” published about our history that we do not want to lose, directions for the Road Ramble, and advertisements from our contributors. Included is a form to be used by you and your family to provide updated information. Feel free to copy and distribute to other relatives. Please duplicate and send in information for our genealogy records.

This is your family organization. We hope you enjoy the reunion weekend. Please seek ways to get involved, and share ideas to make it better!

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Photos have been added throughout the booklet to enhance understanding of Dreibelbis historical sites that were mentioned in speeches. They were not part of those original texts.

Reunion Weekend Schedule August 17 – 19, 2007

Friday, August 17

- 4 p.m. Registration Begins at Farm at Virgenville.
Farm open for Camping – No hook-ups. RSVP
jdreibelbi@cs.com
Games/Time for Family Socializing
Bonfire/Hayride/Ghost stories

Saturday, August 18

- 9 a.m. Registration ongoing throughout the day.
Road Ramble to points of family interest in Berks County throughout the day at people's own pace
- 12 noon Dedication at the John Jacob Dreibelbis Grave Site in Fleetwood
(Lunch on Your Own)
- 1 – 4 p.m. Midway at farm (Display of Dreibelbis hobbies, artwork, collections)
Native American Demonstrations
Displays of colonial farm lifestyle & crafts
Tour of the farmhouse
Genealogy Station to make additions/corrections to history book.
- 5 – 10 p.m. Catered Dinner at Timothy's, 600 Noble St. Kutztown, PA
5:00-5:30 Cocktails/Social Time
5:30 Dinner
(Directions at Registration Table)
Family speakers – Pres. Jill Dreibelbis and L. Lyle Dreibelbi
Traditional PA German Hoedown/ Square Dance with music by The Dreibelbis Brothers, featuring Jeff, Kirk, and Rodney Dreibelbis.
Calling by Cousin Lester Miller
- 10 p.m. Back to the farm for bonfire, hayride, ghost stories

Reunion Weekend Schedule August 17 – 19, 2007

Sunday, August 19

- 9 a.m. Re-enactment of PA German church service conducted in Pennsylvania Dutch and English by Rev. Ressler
Prelude Music by Violinist, Victoria Dreibelbis
- 10:30 a.m. Traditional reunion begins
Brass quintet
Midway displays continues
Genealogy Station Continues
Farm house tours
- 11:30 a.m. Pig Roast with Yuengling beer and traditional picnic lunch
Reunion Continues
- 1 p.m. Panoramic Picture Taken
- 1:15 p.m. Historical lecture about the Dreibelbis Cave with PA cave expert, Dean Snyder. To be held in barn.
- 1:45 p.m. Dreibelbis Cousins of America meeting

Reunion Committee Members

Mark J. Dreibelbis, Chairperson

Jean Davis	Eleanor Hill
Eric P. Dreibelbis	Jane E. Hornberger
Janine R. Dreibelbis	Dorothy M. Miller

Dreibelbis Cousins of America Officers

Vacant.....	President
Paul M. Dreibelbis.....	Vice President
Eric P. Dreibelbis	Vice President
Vacant.....	Vice President
Jane E. Hornberger.....	Secretary
Dorothy M. Miller.....	Treasurer

PA German Church Service Gottesdienst

Per die Dreibelbis Zammelaaf An die Dreibelbis Bauerei,
Virgenville, PA 19564

Der Neinzehnt Aaguscht Am Nein Uhr Vammiddaag
Parre Merrill Q, Ressler

Die Vorschpiel (Prelude) Victoria Dreibelbis

Die Anrufung (Call to Worship)

Es Erscht Lied (The First Hymn)

Im Gaarde

Ich kummin der Gaarde allee
Als der Daa iss noch uff die Rosa
Un die Schproch das ich heer
Gemietlich un glaar
Dut mir mei Heiland weise

(In the Garden)

I come to the garden alone,
While the dew is still on the roses,
And the voice I hear,
Fall ing on my ear
The Son of God discloses.

Chorus

Un Er laaftr mit mir mit mir	Un Er schwetst And He talks with me.
Un Er saagt mir, "Du bischt nau Mei" Mir sin doch so froh	And He tells me I am His own And the joy we share
Weil mir waarde doh Als niemand dafor kann sei.	As we tarry there None other has ever known

Es Alt Teschtament Gelees (Old Testament) - Exodus 32: 1-4, 9-11, 30

Gelees vum Paul Sei Brief (The Epistle) - 2 Corinthians 5: 16-21

Die Evangelium (The Gospel) - Matthew 5: 21-26

Es Gebet (The Prayer)

Saache Bekannt Mache (Announcements)

Es Zwett Lied (The Second Hymn)

En Friend im Yesus

Hen mir Kuumer un viel Sarye?
Hengt noch Druuvel arryiets doh?
Geb net uff in selle Schtuun
Nem's zu Gott un beed recht froh!
Wu schteht uns en Freind so lieblich
Der uns alle Druuvel draagt?
Yesus wees was mir net kenne;
Finn doch aus was er uns saagt.

(What a Friend...)

Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness
Take it to the Lord in prayer

Die Breddich (The Sermon) - Mir Misse Bricke Baue
(We Must Build Bridges)

Es Gelt Kollect (The Offering)

Gebet (Prayer)

Es Letscht Lied (The Last Hymn)

Ich Brauch Dich Alle Schtunn

Ich brauch Dich alle Schtunn
Gnaadichschter Herr,
Ken liewe Schtimm als Dein
Bringt Friede mir.

(I Need Thee Ev'ry Hour)

I need Thee ev'ry hour
Most gracious Lord
No tender voice like Thine
Can peace afford.

Chorus

Ich brauch Dich, O, ich brauch Dich, Alle Schtunn bleibe bei mir; O segne mich mei Heiland. Ich kumm zu dir.	I need Thee, Oh, I need Thee, Ev-ry hour I need Thee O Bless me now, my Savior I come to Thee.
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Die Segen (The Benediction)

Everyone join hands as we sing

Gott Bleib Bei Eich

Gott bleib bei eich bis mir widder
miet Unnich seine Fliegel hiet eich
Geb es deeglich Brodt zu all eich,
Gott bleib bei eich bis mir widder
miet

(God Be with You)

God be with you till we meet again
'Neath His wings protecting hide
you
Daily manna still provide you God be
with you till we meet again.

Chorus

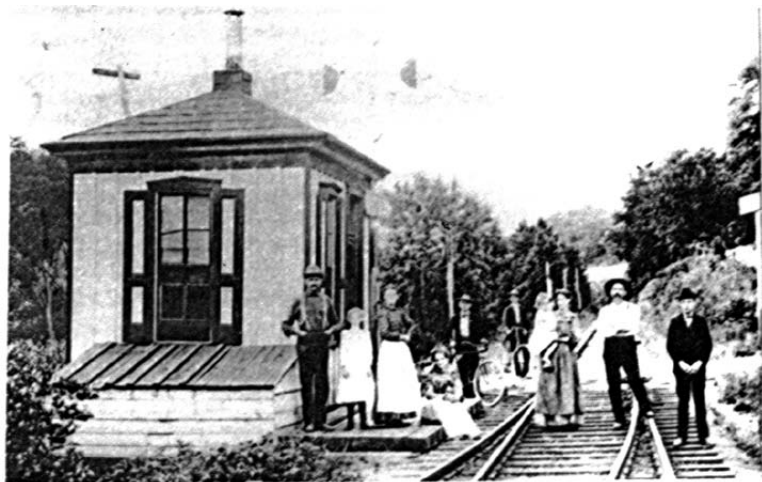
Bis mir miet, bis mir miet Bis mir all beim Heiland miet, Bis mir miet, bis mir miet. Got blieb bei eich bis mir widder miet	Till we meet... Till we meet Till we meet at Jesus' feet, Till we meet...Till we meet God be with you, till we meet again.
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Mir willkuume all vun eich. Mir sin froh das ihr kuume seid. Kuumt als
wider. (We welcome ALL of you. We are glad you came. Come again)

Rev. Ressler is well known in the surrounding communities. He's been in
the ministry fifty years. He is a 1940 graduate of Perry Twp. High
School, Graduate of F&M College and Lancaster Theological Seminary.
He started with the Grimville Charge which included four churches -

Dunkels, Stony Run, Grimville and New Jerusalem. He and his wife, Elizabeth, have a son, a daughter and two grandchildren. He continues preaching in local area churches and is serving as Chaplain at Laurel Center near Hamburg.

Iwwersetzer (translator), Dorothy M. Miller is a 1951 graduate of Perry Twp. High School and Reading Business Institute. She is of the 8th generation of the Dreibelbis Cousins and lives in Shoemakersville with her husband, Paul. She has two daughters and a step-son plus six grandchildren and a step-grandson.



Dreibelbis Station, Pa. - Greenwich Twp. - Station built in the 1870s - Razed about 1950



Dreibelbis Station, Pa. - Greenwich Township - Station built in the 1870s - Razed about 1950

Ernest G. Dreibelbis (3269)

As of August 1982

Only a few of the leaders of the Bicentenary of 1932 are with us still. Ernest G. Dreibelbis (3269) is one of the few. We Dreibelbis cousins owe a particular debt to this survivor from a bygone era. The Dreibelbis Cousins dedicate this booklet to Ernest because of his leadership role in founding the John Jacob Dreibelbis Cousins of America.

Ernest, a seventh generation Dreibelbis, was born at State College, PA. His grandfather, Daniel (554) the direct ancestor of the State College branch of the family, was descended from John Jacob (1) through two branches, Magdalena (2) and Abraham (4). I or better or worse he has a double inheritance.

It was while Ernest was in college (now Penn State University) that he developed a special interest in the family. In the summer of 1928, when he was selling road maps for college expense, he came upon Jacob (691) Dreibelbis who was blind at Millersburg. This early genealogist had written a brief history of our family. He urged Ernest, a college trained man with presumably greater abilities in research and organization, to expand the work. He furnished Ernest with copies of what had been done. The family is greatly in debt of cousin Jacob.

In his usual methodical way (he was a Dreibelbis and a Business major) Ernest undertook his new task. He researched the telephone books available at the University and other places. He thus secured family names and began writing.

His work bore fruit. In 1931 at State College he presided over the first family reunion in modern times, for it must be assumed that there had been gatherings of the North American branch of our clan in the late 18th or early 19th century. There is no record. Charles B. (2691), the compiler of our 1966 history was among those present.

In the meantime Ernest upon graduation was employed by Johns Manville at Manville, New Jersey. He shortly left that company for the O. W. Houtz Lumber Company at State College. He however continued to find and contact family cousins.

The great Bicentenary Anniversary at Kutztown Park in 1932 was the climax of Ernest's work on behalf of the Dreibelbis Cousins. For this momentous occasion for our name family he enlisted the aid of over one hundred assistants divided into twelve committees. Their names, listed

in the Bicentenary Anniversary booklet, read like an honor roll of our family. The officers and committee members produced a program worthy of a bicentenary. It extended through three days. It included tours, addresses, the unveiling of the Dreibelbis monument, and even dancing. (Perhaps Dreibelbises were younger in those days.)

Looking to the future the single most important event took place on Saturday, September 3. It was the unveiling of the monument at the burial plot of John Jacob (1). (Hannah Dreibelbis Hoch (127), granddaughter of Abraham (4) had restored this burial ground in 1832, the last person to do so). In this connection it is noteworthy that in the summer of 1932 the cousins worked to restore the ground after a century and provide a monument. Barbara (Dreibelbis) Smoyer, the young daughter of Paul L. (5219) had the honor of unveiling the memorial. The Rev. Emmanuel L. Dreibelbis delivered the dedicatory oration.

After the Bicentenary Anniversary, Ernest continued as President in 1933 and 1934. He believed that the many able cousins should have the leadership role, but he continued to be an active participant. He was elected President Emeritus in 1934.

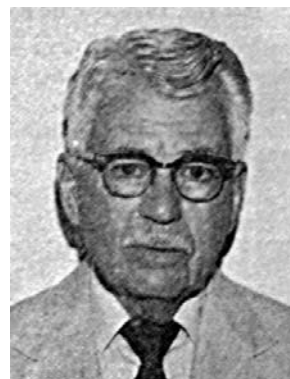
In 1936 Ernest moved to Pittsburgh where he was employed by Jones and Laughlin Steel Company. He also married Anna Mae Beatty of Pittsburgh that year, They purchased the house, originally built in 1807, of the Cooper estate and still reside in this gracious American home. Ernest and Anna have two children. Julia married a career man in the U.S. Air Force who is stationed at Bitsburg, West Germany. Like other family cousins they have visited Holderbank, Switzerland. Susanna and her husband Alfred Kairyns, have two children and reside near Annapolis, Maryland.

Ernest has now retired from Jones and Laughlin, but he and Anna still reside in their interesting, historical house at 3704 Orchlee Street, Pittsburgh. They receive all visitors with a warm welcome, especially Dreibelbis cousins.

“Our Heritage – Part 1”

August 15, 1976

Paul M. Dreibelbis (2612)



Mr. President, and Dreibelbis Cousins:

It is a pleasure for me to be here, and I feel honored that our President has asked me to make some brief remarks about our family heritage. I know that several of the cousins have researched the subject intensively and are well qualified to speak on the subject.

Forty-four years have elapsed since the Dreibelbis family met at Kutztown Park to celebrate their American Bicentennial. Today we are meeting as our country celebrates its Bicentennial. It is a mark of the tenacity of the

breed that a number of the cousins who were officers and committee members of that now distant anniversary celebration are with us still and functioning:

Ernest (3269) - President in 1932

Earl (5249) - assistant chairman then and President today

Harvey (5251) - committee member and past president

Paul L. (5219) - committee member and past president

Arthur E. (1907) - treasurer in 1932

Dorothy A. (3251) - secretary in 1932

Some of the early leaders are no longer with us. Many Dreibelbis cousins have contributed toward the success of our meetings through the years, and to the publication of the Dreibelbis Family History. In particular, I would like to recognize one cousin who was a prime organizer but is no longer with us, Charles Benjamin Dreibelbis (2691), and “Uncle Charlie” to some. To him more than any other person we owe our excellent family record which, incidentally, is the envy of many other families. This record is contained in the *Dreibelbis Family Book* - published in 1966. I'm sure that all of you are familiar with it; and if you do not have sufficient copies in your particular branch of the family, I suggest that you order more without delay. Although there may be errors in detail; and although a ten-year-old family history will inescapably have many omissions this is a very useful book. It can still

be used by every one of us to place our relations in the Dreibelbis family.

Incidentally I suggest that when corresponding with our cousins, we identify ourselves by our family number as assigned by Charles in the book. The given names are very confusing. For example, think of the number of Johns. I have a brother, John; another brother Charles. Their numbers incidentally are 2616 and 2617. I might add that there are a lot of Pauls, too, and they need number identification. While we're on the subject of the present family, I urge each of you to bring his own part of it up to date and get a copy to our secretary, Mrs. Eleanor Hill. Correct any errors also.

As I said at the beginning, we met 44 years ago to celebrate our Bicentennial, and this year we celebrate the nation's Bicentennial. It is fitting that we should consider briefly that part of the Dreibelbis heritage that relates to the 1700's, since the total heritage is too vast a subject.

The first part of this heritage is European. Our Dreibelbis ancestors lived in the village of Hassloch, which is in present West Germany; west of the Rhine River and about ten miles from the larger places, Neustadt and Speyer. It is just north of Alsace, which is part of France today. In John Jacob's time and earlier Hassloch was in one of the German States, the Palatinate.

Our Dreibelbis family ancestors lived less than 100 years in Hassloch, before John Jacob took a ship to Philadelphia. They came, according to existing church records, from northern Switzerland. In this period our ancestors were directly affected by the international events of the time.

In the 1600's France was gradually becoming the unified country that it is today. Germany, which had never been united, was falling into worse disunity. In the early 1600's a powerful Spain and the Emperor in Vienna ringed France and restrained the French kings from aggression. This was no longer the case by the time our ancestors came to Hassloch from Switzerland. French armies were pushing toward the Rhine.

Our ancestors were in the middle of the wars caused by this aggression. In the 1673-79 period the French armies drove out the ruler of the Palatinate and devastated the country where our ancestors lived. In the 1680's they repeated the invasion. It was sometime during this time that the church records at Hassloch were destroyed. New records began about 1700 or shortly before. They show the birth of John Jacob, two brothers and three sisters. They do not show the birth of the parents, but indicate that the grandparents came from Switzerland.

Page 8 of the Dreibelbis Book states that 30,000 immigrants from the Palatinate came through the Philadelphia port between 1727 and 1808. And no wonder! Their lands were ravaged four times in about a half-century, 1673-79, 1680-95, 1705-15, and again in 1733. Our Dreibelbis, John Jacob, was part of this migration. Add to that a religious problem and you have plenty of reason for people to take big chances by going to America. Our ancestor with thousands of other Germans came to Pennsylvania to seek a better life.

The British colony that these people came to was in 1732 a proprietorship of the Penns. William Penn and his descendants both out of personal conviction and for economic reasons welcomed the immigration of sound people and John Jacob certainly fell into that category. The Penns had plenty of land granted to them by the British Crown, but they needed energetic people to develop these lands in order to generate needed income. For our ancestors Pennsylvania offered unparalleled opportunity.

John Jacob himself came as a redemptionist and worked for a Casper Wister for eleven years. From 1743 to his early death in 1761 he rose to become the largest landholder and taxpayer in the district. Part of this land was given to him by Mr. Wister, much he acquired by purchase and much he acquired from the Penns. It seems that our ancestor was fated to be in the locality where wars were fought. In his brief 18-year life at Fleetwood there were two wars. Although these were big international wars fought mainly in Europe, they are known to those who study American history as King George's War, 1745-48; and the French and Indian War, 1754-63. Both were fought between the British and French and their European and American Indian allies. Incidentally each had East Indian Allies also. John Jacob was far from the European fighting, but real close to the Indian fighting. The records do not indicate how he was affected. He may have sold supplies, but he was not involved in army service, which in any case was voluntary.

In his lifetime it is plain that our Dreibelbis ancestor was a substantial citizen who helped transform Berks County into a prosperous, civilized community. The will, reproduced on page 9 of the *Dreibelbis Family* indicates the extent of his property and conveys a sense of his standing.

These two wars, King George's War and The French and Indian War transformed the political situation in North America. The French and their Indian allies no longer controlled the interior country. The French had been forced to surrender all of their mainland territory to the British and the Indians were disunited and broken. The frontier was open to English colonists after 1763. The period from 1763 to the formation of

our present government in 1788 saw the fastest growth yet in Pennsylvania, and our family was in the middle of it. It was also the period of the greatest political upheaval, and our family was in that too.

I want now to conclude this talk by giving some attention to what the seven children of John Jacob were doing in this period of upheaval, and what part they took in events. I have to speak mainly about the three sons. The property laws and the restricted role of women at that time made it difficult to follow their lives. At John Jacob's death in 1761 all of the children were minors ranging from 16 to less than one year of age. By 1790 the country changed from a proprietary colony of the Penns to one of 13 states of the new United States. The sons are shown by the 1790 census to be substantial heads of households.

Abraham, living in Richmond Township, headed a family of:

3 males 16 and over	2 females
3 males under 16	1 slave

Martin, living in Brunswick and Manheim Townships, headed a family of

3 males 16 and over	4 females
3 males under 16	1 slave

I was puzzled that the census had no entry for Jacob Dreibelbis, for I thought that he must have been in Richmond Township. Then just as I was about to give up, I spotted a Jacob Treibelbis entry. Now there's an interesting problem for a family historian! Jacob's household was as follows:

3 males 16 and over	4 females
2 males under 16	

The female members of the family were hard to identify, but there was information about a certain Peter Rodermel, whom I took to be the husband of Mary Magdalena, Peter Rothermel. There were also entries for Breyfogels, Catherine's second husband.

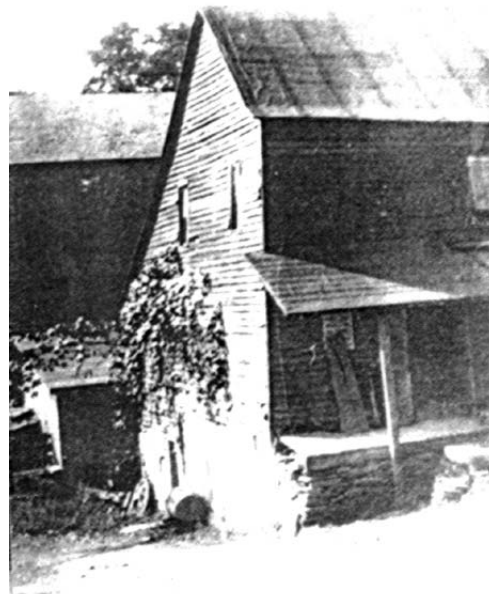
The Dreibelbis men were helping to develop the new State of Pennsylvania, the proprietorship of the Penns being overturned by revolution. Abraham and Jacob were large landholders in Richmond Township. Martin was an extraordinarily successful businessman and the founder of Schuylkill Haven. He went there to take charge of the interests of his father-in-law, George Merkel. Marrying the Boss' daughter was not a 20th century invention. Martin's will gives us a real glimpse of the workings of the property laws. His widow did not retain her inheritance from her father. It was all willed away.

She got only a house and some keep, and lost that if she remarried. Martin was one of the really outstanding men of his time. On page 12 of the *Schuylkill Haven 225 Year Celebration 1750-1975* he is credited with owning 2,000 acres of land. The book says this about him, "A man of indomitable energy and remarkable foresight and acumen."

The Dreibelbis family did more than make an economic contribution to the development of Pennsylvania. They helped the transformation from colony to state. Both Martin in and Jacob participated in the Berks County Militia during the Revolution. Jacob became a company commander and Martin, a Private First Class. Abraham served in the supply service.

We can take a certain pride that the Dreibelbis family was where the action was in the decisive 18th century. Our heritage is closely connected with events that changed the world. Our Dreibelbis ancestors were hard-working people of foresight and thrift. We can do well to continue their example.

Thank you.



Dreibelbis Station - This Old Clover Mill on Dreibelbis Property taken down in the 1960s

“The Dreibelbis Family in the National Period, Our Heritage – Part II”

August 20, 1978

Paul M. Dreibelbis (2612)



Some time back, our President asked me to give a brief talk that would more or less follow the one I gave two years ago on the Dreibelbis part in the American Revolution. The title of this talk could have been "Dreibelbises since the American Revolution" or the one that I've chosen. This period includes an enormous amount of material. I'll try to be more modest than the title might imply. There's too much material to cover, and you don't want to sit long enough for me to do a complete job.

The story of our family has been divided into three parts: the first is the pre-North American period (The booklet, *The Dreibelbis Families*, 1965, and the book, *The Dreibelbis Family*, 1932-1966, relate some of the research). There follows the colonial and revolutionary period about which I spoke two years ago. The third is our period which we shall call the National Period. Naturally we have much more information about the third period. In fact, there is so much that we have to pick and choose. Inevitably many important people and accomplishments will be left out.

One way to proceed might be to follow the activities of a branch of the family, that is of the descendants of one of the children of our original North American ancestor, John Jacob. Another way of opening up the subject might be to take types of activities and contributions of members: professional people, government, churches and charities, armed forces and so forth. The way I want to use the time that I have is to pick and choose some of the interesting happenings that have involved the cousins through the generations. If some seem amusing so, much the better. I shall rely on *The Dreibelbis Family 1732-1966* which was produced by the late Charles B. Dreibelbis (2691), the family genealogist.

Before going ahead we ought to think for a moment about how fortunate we are. We find ourselves on a stage that was set for us by our ancestors. I don't just refer to our name ancestors, but all of them. In

this connection my brothers, sisters, and I and our families have been blessed (if that's the proper word) with reunions of our ancestral families: The Dreibelbises since 1932; the Boyers since early in this century and the Knights the past four or five years. Incidentally I have a close neighbor and friend who, when I told her that I was going to the Knight reunion, thought that it was our reunion after dark. Anyway if the Mulls, my fourth ancestral family, will only organize a reunion, we'll have some place to go almost every Sunday in the summer.

All of us inherit the genes of our many ancestors. For the most part these provide the sound physical basis and mental ability that enable us to handle our problems. With this stage set for us, we've done different things. Some for many reasons: ability, fortune, opportunity, tenacity, seem to have done more than others. We need to remember too that we have set a stage for our descendants, and have passed along to them physical and mental traits. Like us the coming generations will have the most of what they inherit.

Since we're going to concern ourselves with the family in the National Period or a span of about 190 years - six generations, let's see where we were when the period began. We'll pick 1790 as the starting point. Let's see how many of them there were, what they were doing and where they lived then. For identification purposes I am using the numbering system of *The Dreibelbis Family, 1732-1966*.

In 1790 all of the descendants of John Jacob (1) were either siblings or first cousins.

(2) Mary Magdalena m. Peter Rothermel and Peter Wanner. She lived in Berks Co. was buried in Mt. Hope Cemetery, Kutztown and had eight children.

(3) Catharine M. Johannes and George Breyfogel (Burgess of Kutztown) is buried in Mt. Hope Cemetery, and had seven children.

(4) Abraham owned the original farm is buried in the family plot, and had six children.



Dreibelbis Homestead – house as one looks directly at the house, the smaller portion on the right was probably our immigrants second home, after a log cabin. The larger portion came later. No dates have been established for construction. John Jacob owned 400 acres in Richmond and Rockland Townships and was the largest taxpayer in the area. The farm passed out of the Dreibelbis family in 1848 when it was bought by John M. Shollenberger.



Abraham Mill – the mill was part of the Dreibelbis homestead. Water from the Dreibelbis Spring fed the waterwheel. Abraham B. inherited this mill in 1761 when a young man of 12, upon the death of his father, John Jacob. It is not known when he personally assumed operation; however, in colonial times, boys became men at a very early age. His son Abraham R. inherited the mill from his father but later sold it and moved to Columbia County. The mill is now the beautiful home of Mr. And Mrs. John Luckenbill.



Dreibelbis Homestead - barn has recently been repaired by Giorgi Mushroom, current property owner. As funds permit, they plan to restore the remainder of the buildings. Giorgi also maintains the lawn areas. Across the road is where the Dreibelbis Spring was located and from which Abraham's Mill got its power. The volume was such that there were trout in the stream.

(5) Martin lived in Schuylkill Haven (then part of Berks County) is buried in Union Cemetery, Schuylkill Haven, and had seven children.

(6) Jacob lived near Virginville, is buried at St. Peter's Church, and had six children, (five additional born after 1790). The church records of 1795 show Jacob's name. Rev. Keller sent me an additional excerpt from the records dated 1819 which shows the names Jacob and Samuel, my great grandfather.

(7) Elizabeth m. Jacob Wanner, lived in Berks County, probably buried at St. Peter's, and had five children, three were born after 1790.

(8) Philabena m. William Koch and lived at Schuylkill Haven. There is no record of burial. She had three children, one additional after 1790.

By 1790 there were 49 living Dreibelbis descendants, living mainly in Berks County, seven children were making their way in various financial circumstances, but a reading of their father's will shows that they must have been helped substantially by inheritance. The 49 were all siblings or first cousins. Since the brothers and sisters whose births spanned the period 1745-1760, had been brought up in various circumstances due to the early death of their father, they may not have been close to each other as adults.

Let's look at the activities of the cousins, the third generation. They number from through 60 in *The Dreibelbis Family*. They lived for the most part in the first half of 19th century although one survived until 1886.

The Rothermel-Wanner records are incomplete, but it appears that most of them in Berks County.

(14) Abraham Rothermel moved to Northumberland County near Dornsife.

(16) Johannes Wanner was state legislator and Justice of the Peace. This is the first involvement in government.

The Ely-Breyfogel children of Catharine remained in Berks County except for two: (17) Mary Ely was unmarried, ended up in Iowa.

(20) Jacob Breyfogel moved to Sunbury, Northumberland County and finally moved Lockport, New York.

The children of Abraham scattered widely -

(24) Daniel operated the family farm, which he inherited. He is buried in the family plot.

(25) Abraham moved to Columbia County where he acquired 330 acres.

(27) Peter was in the War of 1812, moved to Northumberland County, Fulton County, Ohio and ended up in St. Joseph County, near Albion, Indiana.

(28) Isaac moved to Northumberland County near Dalmatia, You will have to turn to the book to get his full story. What follows is just outline: Isaac is described as a real "Old-timer ". I guess that means a real character. He was an "applejack" man and was known to imbibe freely at the inn of Daniel Rothermel (possibly a relative). On one occasion a companion became deadly sick and said, "Essac, Ich mus Storben". Isaac replied, "Nein, du mucht nicht storben, so hob Ich schoont uft gerfeelt in meiner tzeit."

Another time Isaac came home loaded, and his wife who had locked the door would not unlock it. He said that he would get his own key, and this he did by getting an ax and chopping the door in.

(29) Joseph, Lieutenant grade in the War of 1812, settled in Clinton County.

The children of Martin (5) were born in Schuylkill Haven and most remained in that area. Two exceptions were:

(31) Magdalena had her first wedding in Schuylkill Haven and reached Germantown, Ohio.

(32) Jacob M. assumed his father's business which was a huge operation. He was a state senator, is credited with actually laying out Schuylkill Haven and was a large landowner. He married an extraordinarily sturdy French girl, Anna Margertha Muche. The girl is credited with being able to shoulder a three-bushel sack of wheat. Our president here can tell you that takes some doing even for a sturdy young man.

(35) Daniel fought in the War of 1812 and moved to Canada and Ohio and died in New Orleans in 1849.

The many children of Jacob B. (6) were born in Berks County and by and large made successful careers for themselves in that area. Samuel was the exception.

(40) Samuel moved to Richland Township, Venango County, in later middle age, and is buried at Old Zion Cemetery. His first wife, Susanna Klaus and infant son are buried at St. Peter's. What caused Samuel, his second wife, Sarah Rahn and the children, except Esther, to move, is not clear. He had a prosperous business in Shoemakersville. His wife had relatives in Venango County. He was my great grandfather.

(46) William made a noteworthy trip through the mid-west by horse and buggy.

The children of Jacob B. have supplied more descendants to our reunions than any other branch.

The Wanner cousins, offspring of Elizabeth (7), have largely disappeared from our records.

The children of Philabena (8) and William Koch lived in Schuylkill Haven.

Thus we see that these first cousins of the 3rd generation lived mainly in Berks County, a few in Northumberland County, and Martin's family in what became Schuylkill County. They were mainly farmers and business people. Some got into politics. Although a couple were in the War of 1812, there was nothing like the mass effort put forth during the Revolution. All died in the 19th century, though Daniel (45) one of Jacob's sons, survived to 1886.



Memorial dedicated to Martin B. Dreibelbis, 1751 – 1799, founder of Schuylkill Haven.

The 4th generation which we want to look at next changed as our country changed. With industrialization the variety of jobs increased rapidly. The professions developed and with them the need for longer periods of education, higher education. This is not to imply that even the second generation was uneducated. In fact John Jacob specified in his will that his younger children were to be taught to read by their guardians. The 4th generation, like Americans generally, scattered widely, mostly westward. They grew up with the country. They take numbers 61 to 288 in *The Dreibelbis Family*. When we talk about second cousins, the 4th generation, we're talking about your grandparents and great grandparents. For the younger people present you have to add another "great" or two. The 4th generation normally lived into the 20th century and some were known to people here today. They are our link with the past.

The generations have not proceeded evenly. I'm 6th generation and about the same age as our president here who is 7th generation. I have two brothers, John and Charles Philip, who are 50 and under and the same age as some of the 8th generation. Now for items of interest about our

4th generation. Abraham Rothermel (75) attended Princeton Academy, the first mention of higher education. Joel Wanner (94) was graduated from Franklin and Marshall in 1848.

(112) Daniel - Westward travel was not a uniform success story. In 1852 Daniel, his wife and daughter all perished of cholera in one day, while in the wilds of Indian Territory.

(116) Catharine was a centenarian 1815-1915.

(127) Hannah was the last to repair the family burial plot before our time in 1882. Her grandson, Samuel (1681) encouraged Charles to get the story down in permanent form.

Many of the descendants of Martin showed the restlessness and energy that characterized his life.

(132) Jacob T. Trivelpiece who for some reason changed the spelling of Dreibelbis to Trivelpiece had the largest Dreibelbis Family (17 children) on record at the time (1966) scattered throughout the United States.

(175) John went from Galena, Illinois into the Mexican War and ended in California.

(176) Lewis had a wild adventure in the California gold rush. You can read his story page 76 in *The Dreibelbis Family*.

The 4th generation descendants of Jacob continued to progress in Berks County. The descendants of the emigrant, Samuel, lived in Venango County.

(208) Charles had an adventure somewhat like that of Lewis but less violent. When gold was discovered, like other young men, he went west. His route took him from New York to Panama. After crossing the isthmus on mule back, he took another ship to San Francisco. He returned by way of the Great Plains with a few gold pieces (watch chains, jewelry, etc.) and enough money to purchase a farm that is still in his family.

(216) Simon was an outstanding member of this community. He bought 160 acres from his father on Ontelaunee Creek, operated Ontelaunee House. He built the Dreibelbis bridge and other covered bridges. He is the ancestor of many who are here today including our president. It was he who purchased the present Dreibelbis Mill from Enoch Wartzluft.



Simon Dreibelbis Hotel, "Ontelaunee House." Simon had a 160 acre farm and was one of the early entrepreneurs of the family. He ran the hotel, served in the Pennsylvania State Senate, owned and operated the Dreibelbis farm and mill at Shoemakersville, and was the contractor who built bridges. He built "our" Dreibelbis Covered Bridge. The last bridge he built was in Lebanon County.

(220) Joel attended Bucknell "so that he might become proficient in the English language." He was the pioneer in using advanced farm machinery for reaping and hay making. He was almost a centenarian (1826-1924).

(242) Rubin was a minister in the Evangelical Association.

(246) David a practicing physician was graduated from Hahnemann.

(248) Samuel was a physician from Hahnemann. He was a man of extraordinary range interest. He helped organize the Homeopathic Hospital in Reading. He traveled widely throughout the United States to visit cousins. He visited my grandfather in Venango County and shortly thereafter wrote a letter in which he listed the main branches of the family. He also traveled to Europe to research our origins. When Charles (2691) was accumulating material for our record, he visited Dr. Samuel's daughters to get his notes. You can imagine how he felt when the daughters told him that all of this research had all been thrown into the rubbish.

The fifth generation of our family were so scattered and slightly related that only the name held them together. However, these third cousins continued the tradition of doing interesting and important things.

(344) Daniel owned a farm which is now part of Penn State University. He is the direct ancestor of the Penn State branch. For better or worse he had a double Dreibelbis inheritance.

(349) Martin who died in 1846 was the last person to be buried in the Dreibelbis burial ground.

(377) Abraham Rothermel was a famous orator and District Attorney for Berks County. He died in 1850.

(705) James served in the Civil War and donated land for the Dreibelbis School on the Oley to Blandon road in Berks County. He died in 1925.

(891) Kate - it is to her credit more than any other person that the record of Samuel's descendants is included in the family book. She had prodigious powers of memory, and an unsurpassed belief in the mystique of the Dreibelbis family and name.

(892) John traveled widely and as a youth spent some time in Dodge City, Kansas, about 1885. He found that it was as dangerous as fiction writers made it out to be. He died in 1954.

(922) Cleophas purchased the Dreibelbis Mill in 1888 from his father, Simon and in 1892 converted the mill from stone milling to the "roller" process.



Dreibelbis Mill - Four brothers once owned the mill and the Dreibelbis Farm. The mill, except for one broken part, is operable. For many years, Lloyd operated the farm and Earl operated the mill until a few years before his death at age eighty-three.

The mill came into the Dreibelbis family in 1868 when Simon (the Dreibelbis bridge builder) purchased it from Enoch Wartzluft. Simon sold the mill to his son Cleophas S. Dreibelbis (p. 287) whose first wife was Catherine Ann Wartzluft. Descendants of Cleophas will be interested in the Wartzluft cemetery.

The cemetery is totally unkempt and is within a grove of lilac bushes a short distance from the mill.

(927) Emmanuel was an outstanding Lutheran minister, who gave the oration at the dedication of the Dreibelbis memorial in 1932. He died in 1944.

(937) George operated the original Jacob B. farm. He was graduated from Keystone State Normal and operated the general store in Virginville. He married his second cousin, Clara

(1037), so his descendants like the Penn State branch have a double inheritance.

(938) Hannah, a sister of George, arranged the interesting arrowhead collection that many of you have seen when you visited the homestead farm of Jacob (6). She died in 1919.

(959) Perry was graduated from Kutztown Normal and Ontario Veterinarian College. He practiced at Dreibelbis Station until his death in 1932. Along with George (937) he was responsible for the Dreibelbis Memorial.

(1042) Solomon Leon, son of Samuel (248) was an outstanding Reading surgeon who died in 1960.

(1069) Walter was a ticket agent for the Schuylkill and Lehigh Railroad, and took an extensive trip to the West to visit his many family cousins in 1883. He stayed with my grandfather, Charles (208) and visited other surviving children of Samuel who lived in Richland Township, Venango County, Pennsylvania.

(1070) Logan F. Dreibelbis moved to Sartoxie, Missouri, had thirteen children, four daughters had the names of gems: Pearl, Opal, Garnet, and Ruby.

(1098) William M. served as president of our association in 1936 and 1937. He died in 1938.

(1106) George Logan was chairman of the Anniversary Committee in 1932, and died in 1939.

The reason that I have included the death dates of these fifth generation cousins is to remind you that they are not names from a remote past, but close relatives and intimate acquaintances to many who are here today.

We are the 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, and possible 10th generations. We live all over the USA and other countries. The trend that I noted in the fourth generation has continued. The established fields of work have continued. In the past quarter century there's been a tremendous growth in the technical and scientific fields. There's been a new emphasis in research

in chemistry and physics. The Space Age has opened and women have taken a larger place in the economic life of the country. The Dreibelbis cousins have been and continue to be part of this development, I'm proud to say. Let me mention a few of the sixth generation.

(2143) William was graduated from Hahnemann in 1932 and has practiced at Snow Shoe until his recent retirement.

(2275) Grace Weiser and her husband had a bronze plaque and monument erected at Schuylkill Haven in honor of her great great grandfather, Martin (5).

(2691) Charles was the genealogist of the family. He was "Uncle Charlie" to several who are here. Many people have researched our family history. It remained for Charles to push the enterprise to completion and produce something that was published in 1966 and is of use to all of us. He had many disappointments and some cousins did not come through as he had hoped. I was guilty of that myself. He died in 1967.

(2729) Sally, (2731) George Parker - Both live on and continue to operate the Jacob B. (6) homestead farm.

(3037) Paul A. served as a member of the John Jacob Dreibelbis Plaque Committee, was president in 1973.

(3039) Ruth Detterline gave the address at the presentation of the John Jacob plaque at St. Peter's Church on December 12, 1976.

(3061) John F. served as a member of the John Jacob Plaque Committee.

Now to identify a few members of the 7th generation. I must call these the younger generations since I'm 6th myself. These people are doing and have done much to perpetuate the traditions of our family.

(3269) Ernest was the founder and the first president of the John Jacob Cousins Association. He was president in 1931, 1932, 1933, and 1934

(3864) Jennie T. Trivelpiece retired in 1966, taught in the Bloomsburg Schools and plied much of the data concerning the Trivelpiece branch of the Dreibelbis Family, was Chairlady of the Dreibelbis Reunion held at Bloomsburg in 1936.

(5219) Paul L. was president of our association in 1962 and 1966 and a member of the John Jacob Dreibelbis Plaque Committee.

(5249) Earl J. is our president now and has been president since 1975. He was the secretary of the Dreibelbis Cousins from 1934 to 1953.

(5251) Harvey C. was president of our association in 1970, 1971, and 1972. He carried the family book through to publication and still has a quantity for sale. It becomes more valuable every year. He was also a member of the Plaque Committee.

(5252) Lloyd H. is the treasurer of our association and president of the William H. Dreibelbis Sons, Inc.

(5255) J. Paul Schildt is vice president of our association.

(5264) Eleanor D. Hill is secretary of our association and has been secretary since 1974.

Members of the 8th generation are active both in affairs of our family and public affairs.

(5308) Jacob D. along with Sally and Parker operate the Jacob B. (6) homestead.



Jacob B. Dreibelbis Farm - This farm is on the National Register of Historical Places as a prime example of a self-sufficient Pennsylvania German farmstead. You will see all the necessary buildings which allowed the farm family to live with limited dependence of the outside. It is owned by Parker Dreibelbis, born in 1904 and operated by his nephew Jacob Dreibelbis.

The original log house, built in 1787, was torn down and the handsome brick manor house was built by Joel Dreibelbis in 1868. Some of the logs from the house are reported to have been used to construct the corncrib. The Heisel, little house, or summer kitchen, was recently destroyed by fire and has been rebuilt like the original one. When the original owner, Jacob B. Dreibelbis bought the farm land from his father-in-law, George Merkel, it

comprised 800 acres. Much of the family descended from Jacob B. has remained in this part of Berks County.

(5744) Donald was active in the erection of the Dreibelbis Monument at State College, and in its dedication on October 16, 1977.

(5745) Galen was the designer and mason of the project. He was a state legislator.

(6670) Jason is active in family affairs and is Superintendent of Schools at Oxford, Pa.

(7128) Dana of the 9th generation spent a summer in India and has written for the Princetonian.

(7162) Bryan also of the 9th generation gave the closing prayer at the dedication of the plaque in St. Peter's on December 12, 1976.

It's time that this recital of family developments ended - past time in fact. I regret that many of the cousins who should have been recognized have not been included. Two years ago I suggested that we would do very well to follow the pattern of our fore bearers. It looks as though we may be doing just that. Let me close with an excerpt from Bryan's prayer: "Make us grateful for our heritage. Help us to respond daily to the calling service to our country and one another."



Dreibelbis Station - Aerial View probably taken in the mid 1900s

Past Dreibelbis Reunions

Year	President	Place of Reunion
1931	Ernest G. Dreibelbis, State College, Pa	State College, Pa.
1932	Ernest G. Dreibelbis, State College, Pa	Kutztown Park, Kutztown, Pa.
1933	Ernest G. Dreibelbis, State College, Pa	Rolling Green Park, Shamokin Dam, Pa.
1934	Ernest G. Dreibelbis, State College, Pa	St. Peter's Church, Molltown, Pa.
1935	Lawrence T. Orner, Bloomsburg, Pa.	Hecla Park, Bellefonte, Pa.
1936	William M. Dreibelbis, Reading, Pa.	Columbia Park, Bloomsburg, Pa.
1937	William M. Dreibelbis, Reading, Pa.	Elizabethville Mem. Park, Elizabethville, Pa.
1938	Mark W. Dreibelbis, Millersburg, Pa.	Island Park, Northumberland, Pa.
1939	Howard A. Dreibelbis, Hamburg, Pa.	American Legion Park, State College, Pa.
*1940-1954	Charles B. Dreibelbis, Philadelphia, Pa.	(no reunions)
1955	Charles B. Dreibelbis, Philadelphia, Pa.	St. Peter's Church, Molltown, Pa.
1956	Charles B. Dreibelbis, Philadelphia, Pa	St. Peter's Church, Molltown, Pa.
1957-1965	(no reunions)	
1966	Paul L. Dreibelbis, Royersford, Pa.	St. Peter's Church, Molltown, Pa.
1968	Paul L. Dreibelbis, Royersford, Pa.	St. Peter's Church, Molltown, Pa.
1969	Mrs. Dorothy (Dreibelbis) Heron, Chatham, N. J.	St. Peter's Church, Molltown, Pa.
1970	Harvey C. Dreibelbis, Freehold, N. J.	St. Peter's Church, Molltown, Pa.
1971	Harvey C. Dreibelbis, Freehold, N. J.	St. Peter's Church, Molltown, Pa.
1972	Harvey C. Dreibelbis, Freehold, N. J.	St. Peter's Church, Molltown, Pa.
1973	Paul A. Dreibelbis, Coopersburg, Pa.	St. Peter's Church, Molltown, Pa.

Past Dreibelbis Reunions

Year	President	Place of Reunion
1974	Earl B. Dreibelbis, Reading, Pa.	St. Peter's Church, Molltown, Pa.
1975-1983	Earl J. Dreibelbis, Shoemakersville, Pa.	St. Peter's Church, Molltown, Pa.
1984	John A. Dreibelbis, Wattsburg, Pa.	St. Peter's Church, Molltown, Pa.
1985-1987	Donald A. Dreibelbis, State College, Pa.	St. Peter's Church, Molltown, Pa.
1988-1998	Jason F. Dreibelbis, Ed.D. Mertztown, Pa.	St. Peter's Church, Molltown, Pa.
1999	David H. Heron, Wayne, Pa.	St. Peter's Church, Molltown, Pa.
2000	David H. Heron, Wayne, Pa.	Historic Dreibelbis Farm, Virginville, Pa.
2001-03	Vacant	Historic Dreibelbis Farm, Virginville, Pa.
2004-07	Jill K. Dreibelbis, Spring City, Pa.	Historic Dreibelbis Farm, Virginville, Pa.

(*) The Reunions were discontinued because of gas rationing during the War Years. 1957-1965 - Interest seemed to be lacking. Along about that time it was voted at the Reunion to hold the Annual Reunion at historic St. Peter's Church, Molltown, R. D. 2. Fleetwood. Pennsylvania since it is the area where Dreibelbis history began.

Reunion Songs

Dreibelbis Anniversary Song **Tune: "America the Beautiful"**

We, Dreibelbis Cousins,
Have come from East and West
To honor our forefather,
John Jacob Dreibelbis.
We came today to celebrate
Our anniversary;
Tis two hundred and fifty years
Since his arrival here.

He left his native Germany
To begin a new life here,
In Eastern Pennsylvania
A land of woods and deer.
He was a brave courageous man,
Hard working pioneer;
Gave us a name we hold with
pride,
His leadership revere.

He helped to build America,
The land we hold most dear;
Let us resolve to carry on,
The work he started here,
Recall our noble heritage
With hope and faith in God;
As cousins meet and fellowship
And hold our name aright.

*By Mrs. Charles (Ruth Dreibelbis)
McMurdy (2614)*

Dreibelbis Reunion Song **Tune: "America"**

Since seventeen thirty-two
Our family surely grew,
From sea to sea.
Our kin have had a hand,
In shaping this great land.
Now on this day we stand
To carry on.

By John Adam Dreibelbis (2616)

Blest Be The Tie

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love,
The fellowship of kindred minds,
Is like to that above.

When we asunder part,
It gives us inward pain;
But we shall still be joined in heart
And hope to meet again.

"Heritage of the Past and Present"

48th Reunion

August 17, 1980

Dr. Jason F. Dreibelbis



Thank you President Earl for such a kind introduction. I am pleased to be here today and share with all of you some of my feelings about our ancestors and our country. I have chosen two areas for us to think about. First, the "Heritage of the Past" in which I will address indentured servants and their lives, the hardships they endured to make a life for themselves in a new and strange land, and to make this country what it is today. Second, the "Heritage of the Present"

and how important it is to maintain our heritage throughout strengthening our families.

Heritage of the Past

Heritage is defined as an inherited quality or characteristic. There are a few things I would like you to consider as we honor our family of the past at a reunion. We are all here because we can trace our ancestry back to one, lone individual, John Jacob Dreibelbis, who had quite an ordeal, not only on his way over, but also after he arrived in America.

Paul M. Dreibelbis, also of Pittsburgh, in his addresses in 1976 and 1978 very ably the route of John Jacob Dreibelbis and the conditions which caused him to leave Switzerland and Germany. "Uncle Charles" (Charles B. Dreibelbis) in the family genealogy he wrote, mentioned in several places that John Jacob was "undoubtedly a redemptionist." It is also highly possible that he was an indentured servant. The difference in the plight, flight, and life of these two terms is slight and we shall hear more about indentured servants and redemptionists shortly. We know that John Jacob Dreibelbis was indentured to Casper Wister, a Philadelphia merchant and button manufacturer, and that he worked for him for an unknown period of time. We have no record of John Jacob from September 26, 1732, when he arrived in Philadelphia on the ship, *Mary*, until 1743 when his first owning property was recorded. We know that he soon became the second largest older and taxpayer in Berks County, which at that time included what is now Schuylkill County, and that he willed substantial property to his children.

The fact that he even survived the trip and his early days in Pennsylvania – let alone became rich – is certainly testimony to his industry, character, and stamina. We can only speculate what kind of a person he was, since it is all history now. However, he must have had numerous, positive qualities which served him well. Our common parent must have been a remarkable and resourceful person to have emigrated from a life of poverty in the war-torn, strife-ridden Palatinate region to enjoy a station of great prosperity in life in Berks County in such a relatively short period of time.

The tests he survived were twofold, the ship's passage coming to America as well as his indentured service, the exact nature of which we can only speculate. However, genealogists, Charles B. Dreibelbis and Raymond E. Hollenbach, as well as nationally known authors, have compiled a substantial record which justifies our conclusion. From page 5 of Hollenbach we read:

“Just what it what Johann Jacob Dreibelbis did and where he lived during the first eleven years he was in Pennsylvania is not definitely known, but he is said to have been sold as an indentured servant to Casper Wister, Germantown button manufacturer and land speculator. However, this could not have been for eleven years, because such indentures were usually limited to three years for adult persons. It is possible that he worked for Wister for wages after the term of his indenture expired. He began to acquire land at a rapid rate in 1743, indicating that he had in some way or another acquired sufficient funds to be able to do this.

There is a tradition that either Casper Wister gave him his first tract of land, or that he purchased his first tract from Wister. This I have been unable to verify. The first tract of which I can find record was 153 acres and 25 perches out of a manor-tract of the Penn family which totaled 2989 acres.”

The idea that Casper Wister gave him his first tract of land could be more than tradition for when an indentured servant had served his time, whether it was three years, six years, or as much as twenty-one years, as we shall hear later, depending on age, how well he behaved and the relationship he had with his master, he could have been given, as freedom dues, the 153 acres of land (though 50 acres was customary) along with two suits of clothes, 14 bushels of corn, 10 bushels of wheat, one ax and two hoes. Whether he was indentured for three or eleven years is not all that important, but it is important when we think what it meant to “be” an indentured servant.

It is possible that some of John Jacob's strength, character, and persistence to gather enough wealth to acquire his first 153 acres in 1743 was a result of his family upbringing as well as his will to succeed.

Let us look at a number of factors which could have applied to him. What was an indentured servant? What was the difference between a redemptionary and an indentured servant? What decisions had to be made to leave a homeland? How did John Jacob Dreibelbis become indentured? What were the conditions endured to get to America? What was the trip like? What happened upon arrival?

The John Jacob Dreibelbis family originated in the German speaking part of Switzerland and moved into the Palatinate area of Germany which was a very beautiful prosperous place. However, the ebb and flow of armies especially during the Thirty Years' War and the Dutch War, along with the wars to unify Germany - - wrought the type of havoc you can well imagine was inflicted by the armies of old. Religious strife and the rule of petty tyrants contributed greatly to the inhabitants' unhappiness. The German people of the early 1700's were ripe for a move to *any* place. Since Pennsylvania had the greatest population of Germans, it was particularly attractive and most continued to come here. Clifford L. Alderman tells us of colonial Pennsylvania in *Colonists for Sale* on pages 79 and 80:

... Pennsylvania was probably the best-situated colony in America for industrial and commercial development. It had immense natural resources. West of Philadelphia rich farmlands were being developed. They not only produced food of all kinds but also flax to be spun into linen thread for household uses and clothing and hemp for rope needed to fit out the vessels that were being built from the limitless supplies of lumber in nearby forests. By 1692 iron ore had been discovered and was being smelted, the beginning of what would become Pennsylvania's mighty steel industry. As for the weaving of cloth, the first settlers of Germantown were from industrial Krefeld near the Rhine in Germany, known as the “City of Weavers”. Irish and French settlers also were skilled in textile work.

By 1730 Pennsylvania was exporting wheat, flour, biscuit, barreled beef, hams, pork, bacon, cheese, butter, apple cider, beer, beeswax, leather, linseed oil, skins of several kinds and tobacco, although Pennsylvania never rivaled Maryland and Virginia in that crop. Ships to carry all these products were built, and before 1730 there were sometimes as many as twenty at once on the building stocks in Philadelphia, some of them big, three-masted, full-rigged ships,

barks and barkentines. Smaller vessels were also built, many to be sold in the West Indies.

No wonder there was such a tremendous demand for labor in Pennsylvania in the late seventeenth century and during the eighteenth . . .

Many of the people chose to leave Germany. These were the ones who had enough money to purchase passes and begin a new life. They also had the quality of being able to hold on to their money for there were many scoundrels ready to relieve them of it in the emigration ports.

Sometimes the people ran out of money and had to borrow some before or during their passage; these then became redemptionaries. They would pay the money back to the lender in accordance with the terms of the loan and begin life as a free person. Or they might serve only a short time to repay a relatively small debt. Sometimes a relative would meet the ship and pay the remainder of the debt.

Most of the people, however, did not have enough money, so they became totally indebted to the captain of the ship, or others, for their passage to the new world. They were, in effect, physically sold for three to six years to a master in America who had paid for their passage. There was not too much difference between a redemptionist and an indentured servant; it all depended upon who bought you or who paid you out, and the number of years of service you had to give to pay off your debt. Redemptionist or indentured - - the trip with the hardships and conditions was the same.

Getting people to emigrate to America was *big* business. There was a set of people called Newlanders or soul-vendors whose business was to provide the ship captains with a full load of emigrants for the trip to America. These people were the real confidence men of the 1700's; they were the ones who told the stories of the streets paved with gold, free land, that the emigrant would only have to open his mouth and a roast pigeon would fall in. These "con-men" would travel about the countryside selling the wonders of the new land. When sufficient people could not be convinced to sign with a captain voluntarily, the Newlanders resorted to shanghaiing even entire families. Sometimes, the soul-vendors would trick the peasant into thinking they were going as passengers or that they had inherited a large sum of money from a relative who had been in America for some time. Often the information was imaginary, gleaned from opened mail, or from letters which were forged by handwriting "experts" readily available in Rotterdam, Holland. A most shameful trick was to get emigrants, who were most unwise as to the ways of the world, to entrust their money to Newlanders during

the trip down the Rhine River to Rotterdam. It would be "safe from thieves or accidental loss" they were told. When the ship sailed, however, the Newlander was nowhere to be found.

I should like to summarize for you an account of one Gottfried Mittelberger who was accompanying an organ, built in Germany, to Pennsylvania. He traveled as a paying passenger, but his experiences on the voyage, which were not unusual, and those during his stay

in Pennsylvania, prompted him to write about them. This account describes in detail the common, everyday trials and tribulations that John Jacob Dreibelbis probably endured himself. As Clifford Alderman writes:

"The unexpected and shocking frightfulness of their venture began with the passage to Rotterdam. There were thirty-six customhouses along the way, one for each of the little duchies and principalities through which they passed. Again and again the riverboat had to stop for an examination of the cargo and the payment of customs duties or tolls imposed for passage through the region. It took such boats four or five, sometimes six, weeks to reach Rotterdam. For Gottfried Mittelberger himself, the entire journey from Enzweihingen to Rotterdam lasted seven weeks. The boat was packed from stem to stern, and the terribly crowded conditions made the river trip a nightmare. But this trip was easy compared to what lay ahead for the passengers.

First came a long delay in Rotterdam while the ship that was to take them to America loaded cargo and waited for late-arriving shipments. Mittelberger did not say just how long they were there, but he wrote that the usual delay for such vessels was five or six weeks. During this time the several hundred passengers had to shift for themselves.

The people had not expected this delay, and since food and other necessities were very high priced in Rotterdam, they found the money they had brought dribbling away. Some became penniless and others spent almost all they had, with their transatlantic passages still not paid. This made no difference to the promoters of the emigration to America; in fact, they were counting on it.

At last the time for embarking came. The shipping company took no precaution for the safety of the passengers as they crowded aboard, pushing and shoving, each anxious to have the best choice of accommodations. Mittelberger saw a man with two children crossing

a slimy, ramshackle gangway into the ship; the children slipped, fell overboard and were drowned.

Mittelberger himself seems to have suffered no privation during the voyage; his passage money was assured and presumably he had a cabin to himself and dined with the officers. But what he observed tore his heart with pity and anguish.

He wrote that the emigrants were packed like herrings into the space set aside for them. Bunks two feet wide and six feet long had been placed side by side. Into each bunk went a passenger and all his belongings, including tools and implements, water barrels and provisions, if he had any left.

The vessel crossed the North Sea and put in at Cowes on the Channel of England. There some cargo was discharged and examined, customs duties paid and more cargo loaded for Philadelphia. The ship was in Cowes nine days. Then she began the Atlantic passage. From Rotterdam to Philadelphia the voyage lasted fifteen weeks.

Mittelberger wrote "The journey is made amid such hardships as no one is able to describe." But he did describe it to the best of his ability, and the account is enough to turn one's stomach.

He wrote of the vile conditions in which the emigrants lived. The rations were scanty, stale and had a sharp smell. Some of the meat was so putrid that a dog would have turned up his nose at it. Warm food was served only three times a week. The water was often black and full of worms.

A foul stench filled the passengers' quarters. Almost all were sick and, unable to reach the upper deck in time, vomited in their bunks. Many suffered from fever, dysentery, constipation, boils and the seafaring man's disease of that time, scurvy. Scurvy results from a lack of green vegetables or such citrus fruits as lemons and limes in the diet, and causes the gums to swell and bleed. Mittelberger called it mouth-rot.

On the stormy Atlantic, when a gale rose, conditions were made worse. As the vessel rolled and pitched, plunging down deep into the troughs between the tremendous seas, people were thrown about helter-skelter. In their terror, they thought the vessel was lost, and they cried and prayed piteously to be saved.

The passengers grew irritable and fights broke out between them. Mittelberger wrote that those who were not ill sometimes came near

killing each other in these brawls. And among the people were some who lost no opportunity to rob and cheat others in the hope of improving their impoverished condition.

Mittelberger told of hearing passengers cry: "Oh, that I was home again and had to lie in my pigsty!" "O God, if I only had a piece of good bread or a fresh drop of water."

Many died. One would think that the promoters of the emigration would have made some effort to keep the passengers healthy, since it would have been to their profit when the vessel arrived at Philadelphia. But they evidently considered it cheaper to lose a substantial part of the human cargo and to deliver others in poor physical condition than to spend more to give the people decent quarters, food and water.

Those who died were heaved overboard without ceremony. One wretched woman died in childbirth, unable to deliver the child because of her condition. Her quarters were far aft, and since the body could not easily be brought forward and on deck through the close-packed mass of humanity, it was stuffed through a porthole and into the sea.

The small children among the passengers suffered the most. Mittelberger wrote that those between one and seven years old seldom survived these voyages. He added that measles and smallpox often broke out aboard the transports and the younger ones usually contracted one or the other and died.

Of the older passengers, those who were able to creep on deck occasionally for a breath of fresh air sometimes suffered falls in rough weather, as the ship tossed in mountainous seas, and were crippled. Others were swept overboard, and Mittelberger made no mention of any effort to save them.

Mittelberger was not a skillful writer, but his diary conveys a vivid image of the passengers' quarters - the fearful smell, the moans of the sick, the cries and pitiful prayers of others, the wailing of children, the disorder, the gauntness of those close to starvation. It must have been living hell.

As the voyage neared its end, after what must have seemed an eternity, a new catastrophe fell upon the passengers. The food supply had been scanty at best - except that for the officers' table, of course, and doubtless the crew's - but now even that ran short, due to the unusual length of the stormy voyage. The emigrants were

fed only ship's biscuit - hardtack - that had long since spoiled and was infested with weevils.

What a dreadful trip the future indentured servants endured. However, with the ship landing in Philadelphia, the troubles of the emigrants were far from over; in fact, what lay ahead might well be worse than what they had just experienced.

Anyone who could not pay for his voyage was not even allowed to go ashore. Those lucky people who had relatives able to redeem them by paying the remaining portion of their passage were allowed to depart, the rest waited for the next phase of their adventure. Again as Alderman describes in *Colonists for Sale*, pages 8 and part of 9:

A handful of them had managed to keep enough Dutch florins or German rix-dollars to pay for the voyage or had relatives waiting who would pay the money, so they were allowed to depart. The rest waited for their unknown fate.

Each day thereafter, prosperous English, Dutch and German colonists came from Philadelphia and surrounding towns, some as much as a twenty - to forty-hour ride away, and boarded the ship to bargain for the services of the penniless passengers. Those who suited their buyers signed indentures - - bonds which required them to serve their new masters for from three to six years without wages in return for the passage money and food, clothing and lodging during the service. The buyer would then pay the captain or an agent of the shipping company the amount agreed upon for the passage and take his human purchases with him.

All these unfortunate people were to become slaves with white skins - indentured servants who were indeed slaves in every sense of the word until they gained their freedom. Nor did all gain that freedom when their terms of servitude had expired.

Strength was what most buyers wanted. They had little use for scholars, teachers and other educated people, although there was some interest in mechanics. Hands to work in the fields of Pennsylvania were in great demand - - most of all, those who could hew down great forest trees, remove stumps and undergrowth and clear land for new fields and meadows. A muscular, healthy young man would get off with three years of servitude, but women, children and older men had to serve six years. Children between five and ten signed indentures, or had them signed for them by their parents, that required them to work without pay until they came of age at twenty-one.

There was an announcement in a Philadelphia paper, three months after it had docked that the ship, *Mary*, had indentured servants for sale. As we think of our heritage of the past, one can only wonder if John Jacob Dreibelbis was one of the early sales or one of the later ones!

Not only prosperous businessmen came to select and buy, but also "soul-drivers" made purchases. These buyers would survey the available individuals, or freight as they were called, still under the ownership of the ship's captain, purchase a group and then drive them about the country like a herd of cattle from farm to farm, tavern to tavern and sell them for the best price they could get. Out and out slavery in its full definition. This practice was so disliked and the "soul-drivers" brought such a bad name upon themselves that the practice all but disappeared by 1758, fifteen years after the record shows John Jacob as a landholder in Berks County.

However, whether bought by a kindly, prosperous businessman, whether sold by a soul-driver, or by whatever means, these huddled masses who had survived the five to six month journey across the Atlantic Ocean became the absolute property of the master. The majority of the masters were cruel, but they controlled their lives totally. Indentured servants could not marry without permission, served from three to six years until a certain age was reached. They were given additional time to serve if they ran away, as is extra time of servitude to pay the master back for the money it cost to locate when they ran away. Certainly this was not the land and conditions which the Newlanders described as they enticed the people to sign up for passage to the wonderful new land.

So a substantial part of our personal, family heritage from the past comes not only a strong will, endurance, and desire for life itself in spite of the hardships of the voyage, the indignities of servitude and indentured master/servant role. It is a heritage of we can all be proud, a heritage which should encourage all of us to strive to emulate build upon as we make our lives more meaningful to all we meet. On page 153, Alderman summarizes:

The story of the German and German-speaking Swiss people in Pennsylvania is one of which their descendants may be proud. In spite of all their hardships in reaching America and working out their indentures, they made the Pennsylvania Dutch country the prosperous agricultural region it still is today and contributed much to Pennsylvania's industrial importance.

Heritage of the Present

I would like now to move from presenting the Heritage of the Past to discussing the Heritage of the Present. Remember the trials of John Jacob Dreibelbis and his country-as they toiled to build a part of this country for us to enjoy and to live in today. A great country developed, but one which will remain that way only if we all apply our energy, skill, and our background to keep it that way.

The very foundation of life as we know it in America is under attack, perhaps on the road to deteriorating. Pleasure seeking and the "easy way" seem to be paramount for families. Among many people, materialism seems to be god.

One of my favorite pictures, issued by the U. S. Army, shows a family - - a woman and a man holding a child - - standing in front of an American flag. The picture is entitled MY BIRTHRIGHT - - *Our Moral Heritage*, and symbolizes how the family and country stand together, the strength of each supporting the other. It is incumbent upon those of us who hold the values of strong supportive families, living in a country which provides protection for that family to live and grow, to hold and work toward maintaining those values. By continuing to exercise our duties, we can preserve our strength for mutual benefit.

Those of us here today are building upon and strengthening our heritage by attending this family reunion. Each of you has said, in one way or another, that this family "Dreibelbis" is important to you. You pass this importance on to others here, to your families, and even to your neighbors when you return home and tell them of the gathering.

Friends and acquaintances continually surprise me with their reactions when they hear about our organization, the "John Jacob Dreibelbis Cousins of America." Even some of those with an interest in genealogy have said they have nothing like our annual family reunion. Oh yes, some families have reunions the same as we do, but they are all too few. And just think, all this evolved long, long before the current interest generated by the television special, *Roots*.

We strengthen our heritage by listening to and applying talks like that which Paul M. gave a few years ago as he spoke of our past. This reminds us that, "He who does not profit from the past is doomed to repeat its mistake". We strengthen our heritage of the present by reading and actively continuing our genealogy, by visiting Dreibelbis places, hallowed by our ancestors such as shrines, geographical places of import like the bridge, the homestead, the cemetery, by planting the dogwood trees at the Berks County Historical Society, by installing the

plaque here inside of St. Peter's Church, and by planning the 250th anniversary of John Jacob's landing in America after the dreadful voyage previously described. All of these places and events remind us that our family is important to us. Even the commercial world has used our heritage in the dishtowels, ceramic tiles, and post cards portraying "our" bridge, along with the *Pennsylvania Dutch Cook Book* which includes Eleanor Dreibelbis' Funny Cake recipe. All these items and mementos strengthen our families, and help us build upon our heritage of the present because they make us proud of something from the past and give us something upon which to build for the future.

We also develop our heritage of the present by keeping in touch with each other; expanding our knowledge of our family tree and cousins provides a foundation, a strength, and an enrichment to our lives. We can be comforted knowing that we are part of a much larger family group.

On September 4, 1932, when the Dreibelbis Clan met at Kutztown Park, Kutztown, Pa., Jacob Hoyt Dreibelbis gave the main address and told of one instance when he lived in the Philippine Islands. His mail began to go astray, and he had a call one evening from Fort McKinley where a package and several letters had been received and were marked, "Opened by mistake by J. H. Dreibelbis". Upon checking J. Hoyt discovered a soldier by the name of Dreibelbis, even having the same initials as his. A second experience was the location of one David Dreibelbis who was visiting near J. Hoyt's (then) home of Douglaston, Long Island, N. Y. These were the only two Dreibelbises he had ever met outside of his "home" area of Iowa in ten years. J. Hoyt goes on to tell of meeting many others and expanding his horizons, even to the point of looking over the faces of 600 Dreibelbis descendants as he delivered his address.

Another example of serendipity, finding the unexpected, occurred when I was living in Chatham, New Jersey. A seminarian from Drew University was typing my Doctoral dissertation on off hours in one of the offices of the university. One day I received a telephone call from Corrine Dreibelbis Whitlow, the wife of the seminarian. She had seen my name on the manuscript and called me, hardly believing that another Dreibelbis could be living close to her. We visited several times, established a Christmas card exchange that continues some 20 years later even though she now lives in the state of Washington.

That phone call from her, expanding our familial relationship, has lead to another; for, she wrote to me that her physician brother, Robert E. of Anaheim, California, was planning a trip east to see "Dreibelbis

Country" and asked if I would send him a map of the area, marking some of the places he should visit. I sent the map but also arranged for him to visit my father, Paul L., who took him on an extended tour. Some of you will remember the very nice letter of appreciation from Dr. Robert's son which was read at the 1977 reunion.

This contact with Robert E. developed into a visit to his home when I was in Anaheim for an educational conference. He invited me for supper and I spent a delightful evening with him and his family. Our discussion was devoted to the Dreibelbis history, families, and background.

As you can see, horizons can be expanded simply by having the name Dreibelbis and by meeting new cousins.

In summary, I leave you with these thoughts. We build our heritage through the memory and honor of our original ancestor in America, John Jacob Dreibelbis, his three sons and four daughters who form the various branches of the family tree represented here today. By profiting from the background of our common parent to strengthen our own families we will leave an inheritance to our descendants so they too can have a foundation for their lives.



Dreibelbis Station Covered Bridge - The bridge was built in 1869 by the great grandson of John Jacob Dreibelbis, Simon H., a stone mason and carpenter who constructed a number of stone-arch and wooden covered bridges. It is 175 feet long and is of Truss construction. In 1976 it was placed on the National Register of Historic Structures.

Manassas Dreibelbis was a promoter to construct a bridge at this site. For, to cross the Maiden Creek to reach Virginville or Lenhartsville, wagons had to go up stream a good distance where a ford was located. He and others petitioned the County Commissioners and, after inspection and study authorized its construction.



Manassas Dreibelbis owned the land upon which the bridge was built. He operated the buildings seen on the left. It was first a mill to process flax to make linseed oil. After the farmers no longer grew flax, the mill was converted into a clover seed mill, and a little later an apple butter cooker was added. The apple butter and cider pressing business operated until 1962. A saw mill was also operated here.

The mill and small group of houses was called "Dreibelbis Station" because the Lehigh-Slatington Railroad had a station here.



Dreibelbis Family Cemetery - Our family cemetery was completely refurbished by the 1932 reunion committee. Brush and trees were cleared away, the monument set, and the railing installed. Most of the ancestors buried here had no formal grave markers. Many, (most?) colonial cemeteries simply had a field stone at each grave.

Unfortunately, the monument contains errors in dates and names. Correcting these mistakes is a goal of your current officers. Research is not complete but birth date of John Jacob is 1709 not 1714, His wife (s) were Christina and Barbara not Mary, The birth date of Abraham's wife, Anna is 1745, not 1751. Some researchers have different dates for Joseph. When sufficient funds are available from the contributions of Cousins, and after further research, appropriate corrections will be made if possible.

According to the records of the Rev. Joseph J. Stoudt, D.D., historian of German families that settled in Berks County, there were buried 11 Indians and 1 slave on this private family cemetery.

The "Dreibelbis Private Burial Ground" is located along the Reading Railroad, east of Fleetwood, Pa. within a square of the buildings of the one time John Jacob Dreibelbis Homestead. It can be reached from the road leading to Dryville by turning right onto a gravel driveway immediately after passing through the railroad underpass.

“John Jacob Dreibelbis”

August 19, 2007

L. Lyle Dreibelbis

(preliminary text)



Good Evening Cousins:

It is an honor, a once in a lifetime experience for me, and a privilege to be with you this evening. Thank you for that introduction. This is the 275th reunion, a very special occasion. Mark called me and said I had been selected to speak this evening, and the subject is my choice. There is only one subject, "John Jacob Dreibelbis." His life interests me and I have done considerable research on it.

A short review of his life: he was born in 1709, came to Philadelphia on Ship Mary through Rotterdam, and Cowes in 1732. Was indentured to a Mr. Wister, and was with him for 11 years. Went to Coxtown and became the largest land owner and taxpayer in the area. I have three questions about this life line.

1. Why did he stay in Germany until 1732?
2. Did he stay with Wister for 11 years?
3. How did he accumulate enough wealth to buy so much land?

I am going to attempt to answer these questions. It has taken a lot of research. You don't find the answers in headlines or front page stories. It takes a lot of reading, looking for snippets of information that may have a bearing on the story, and then putting these pieces together to form a logical, reasonable story. (And it is a story - not fact.)

THE MOST IMPORTANT CLUE is the fact that John Jacob's father, Jacob, was a Master Carpenter. This came from a notation in the Hassloch Church Records. At that time, a Master Carpenter was a member of the Carpenters Guild, and was the only carpenter who could take on apprentices for training. The Guild also had a close relationship with the Church, which is probably the reason the record could be found in the church.

The Master Carpenter could take boys at 12 to 14 years of age and teach them carpentry. It took seven years for an apprentice to attain the

rank of Journeyman Carpenter. During this seven year period, he received no pay for his work. He was actually being trained by working on the job. He did receive room, board, and clothing. When he became a journeyman, he still worked for the Master Carpenter but received pay. He could go out on his own and work also, but under the direction of the Master Carpenter. After ten years as a journeyman and with the recommendation of the Master Carpenter, he could become a Guild Member and a Master Carpenter.

It was customary for Master Carpenters to take on their own sons as apprentices. Carpenters were a very important trade in Society and were a very close knit group. Carpenters' daughters usually married carpenters. It is very likely that John Jacob took this opportunity and became an apprentice at age 12. In seven years he would be 19, and could work with his father for two more years, until his father's death in 1730, as a journeyman carpenter.

Let me read to you other important findings in my research.

1. In 1721, an order was issued to larger communities that a school girl must be hired to motivate girls to read and write. This implies that boys were compelled, and girls were encouraged to go school. So, I believe John Jacob went to school and could read and write and do numbers. He probably started at age seven, and finished at age 12.
2. On Oct 14, 1727, the provincial Council adopted a resolution requiring all vessels importing Germans and other foreigners to prepare lists of such persons, their occupations, age, and place from whence they came. If Captain Gray, Master of "The Mary," had done this, most of my questions would have been answered. I found three ships arriving in 1733 with these lists. Most of the people were "Peasants," a lot of "farmers," then weavers, and smithies. Out of three ship loads, about 200 men, there was only one carpenter. This tells me that there was ample work for carpenters in Germany. There is no real reason for carpenters to want to leave. It also tells me there is a great shortage of carpenters in the colonies.
3. Another Snippet: The carpenter in Colonial America had been a man with considerable bargaining power. As one of a small number of skilled artisans in a young eager society eager for new houses, commercial buildings, and wooden ships and wharves, he often made more than two times as much as his English counterpart. This tells me there is incentive for young carpenters to go to the Colonies even though there is work at home.

4. 4. Another snippet: Americans were substantially better off than their European brethren. Not only were they better fed and housed than most Europeans at the time, they were significantly more likely to become property owners. The only way to become a property owner in Germany was to inherit it as an heir.
5. Another snippet: In most cases, the work of the indentured servant would be household or agriculture unskilled labor. There was also a great demand for skilled craftsmen. If an indentured servant had a skill that was in demand, like weaving, smithing or carpentry, the chances of negotiating a shorter contract was quite good.
6. Who was Casper Wister? He came to Philadelphia in 1717. He paid his own way, but landed penniless. His first jobs were carrying ashes. He finally made arrangements to become an apprentice to a brass button maker. He started his own button manufacturing business and was quite successful and had wealth by 1732, when John Jacob arrived.

Out of these few words I have concluded John Jacob had an opportunity of his lifetime. If one follows the "path of least resistance" then John Jacob became a carpenter. It was the easy thing for him to do.

The family surely discussed going to Philadelphia at the dinner table and laid out a plan for each of the children. Mary Magdalena left for the Colonies in 1731, but being a woman, no records on her were kept.

NOW let's go back and review the situation in Germany: It was not a good place to live; it had been torn by numerous wars. The Thirty Years war was from 1618 to 1648. All the countries of Europe were in this war, but the battle field was Germany. From 1600 to 1700 the Armies of France constantly pillaged and warred in the Palatine area. Many towns and villages were burned to the ground.

Many innocent people were killed and robbed of their belongings. The winter of 1708-1709 was the worst in over 100 years. They had sub freezing temperatures starting on October 1 and lasting six months. Many people, animals, trees and vineyards died. Rivers froze. Then there were taxes. A constant wave of new taxes imposed on the people. And fines, the Church went loco with bizarre fines. A man was fined for driving his cow across the road to graze, on a Holy Day. A woman was fined for hanging out her laundry, and another man fined for turning his hay.

People were becoming unhappy with this situation.

WHAT WAS KNOWN ABOUT THE TRIP TO PHILADELPHIA

It was very expensive to take a commercial boat down the Rhine. A precedent had been set by all the people who left in the spring of 1709. About 7,000 people left. Most built their own boats or rafts. It was common knowledge that if you took your own boat or raft, it took at least two people to make it a safe trip. You usually had to wait in Rotterdam for a boat to Philadelphia. It was law that the boat had to stop in England before going on to Philadelphia. The trip across the Atlantic was a high risk trip. There were storms, crowded accommodations, bad food, little water, no dignity, and lots of sickness and death. Free passage could be arranged as an indentured passenger. This meant you must find someone to pay your fare when you arrived in Philadelphia. You could not leave the ship until this payment was made.

For a man 23 years old, the going indenture was for three years. Now we are going to ride along with John Jacob on his trip to Philadelphia. He went with a friend, at least, to Rotterdam. They made a raft and took off with their meager belongings and a chest of carpenter tools. John Jacob's mother probably insisted he take some of his father's tools. We are going to start from Hassloch. Hassloch was established in 400 AD as a Roman settlement. In 600 AD it was made a village. To this day it is a village, the largest in Germany. Population today is 20,000. It may have been about 4,000 in 1732. Now there are a number of Hassloch's in Germany.

To be sure you get the right one, go to Google Earth, search for "H -A - S -S- L- O- C -H," Germany. It will take you to the right one.

("John Jacob Goes to Philadelphia" DVD started at this point.)

Dreibelbis Country Road Ramble

Special Note

Nearly all of the stops on this Road Ramble are private properties, and no arrangements have been made to tour the interior of any building or the grounds. Please remain in your car or park in a respectful and safe manner. BE CAREFUL if you get out of your car to take a photo; many of these roads are main arteries and traffic may be faster than is safe. This trip will take about 2.5-3 hours, WITHOUT the Schuylkill Haven stop. Have fun and enjoy your trip!

1 - Jacob B. Dreibelbis Homestead - Site of the reunion, just south of Virginville, Pa. Our collectible has Jake relaxing on the porch

2 - Gustavus Homestead - Turn left out of the reunion site driveway, travel .1 mile, home is on the left.

It also was occupied by Jacob B. Dreibelbis who owned the farm.

Next stop, travel .5 miles on Rt. 143 North to the end of town.

On the left you will see a cement mill; between that and the house to the left there used to be the Dreibelbis Store.

3 - Dreibelbis Store - The store would have been on this lot; it was destroyed by fire in the 1960's.

Continue north on Rt. 143, cross the "temporary" one lane bridge and travel .2 miles to the intersection of Ontelaunee Road on the left.

4 - Dreibelbis Hotel - At this intersection, on the left side of Ontelaunee Road, you will find the home of Simon Dreibelbis. This home was used as a hotel.

5 - Ontelaunee House - Across the street is the Simon Dreibelbis Hotel AKA Ontelaunee House. We speculate that he started his hotel in the first house and later moved it into the second.

Simon Dreibelbis--Simon had a 160 acre farm and was one of the early entrepreneurs of the family. He ran the hotel, served in the Pa. State Senate, owned and operated the Dreibelbis farm and mill at Shoemakersville, and was also the contractor who built bridges. His greatest achievement (of course) was the Dreibelbis Covered Bridge.

Travel Rt. 143 North, note the blue stone quarry on the left on your way (no place to stop). Stones from this quarry were used to build John

Jacob's foundation. Continue until you will reach the Dreibelbis Bridge 2.3 miles from stop 5.

6 - Dreibelbis Bridge - This bridge was believed to have been built in 1869 by the great grandson of John Jacob Dreibelbis, Simon H. It is 175' long and of Burr Truss Construction. In 1976, it was placed on The National Register of Historic Places.

Manassas Dreibelbis was a promoter to construct a bridge at this site. Previously, wagons had to ford the stream far upstream. He and others petitioned the County Commissioners who, after inspection and study, authorized its construction.

Manassas Dreibelbis owned the land upon which the bridge was built. He operated the buildings seen on the left once you cross the bridge.

This mill was used to process the flax to make linseed oil, then it was converted to a clover seed mill and still later an apple butter cooker was added. The apple butter and cider pressing business operated until 1962, after which it became a saw mill.

Dreibelbis Station--The mill and the nearby houses were known as Dreibelbis Station because the Lehigh-Slatington Railroad had a station here. On your right, you can see where the railroad bed had been.

7 - Dr. Perry K. Dreibelbis - Turn right on Dreibelbis Station Road and travel .3 miles to a small white building on the right - this was Dr. Perry's veterinary office.

Dr. Perry K. Dreibelbis--Dr. Perry had a complete horse skeleton wired together and displayed in his office. He also held choir practice there, and served as the postmaster for Dreibelbis station for 19 years.

Continue on Dreibelbis Station Road bearing right on Dunkel's Church Road. Pass Miller Road, travel ABOUT 2 ½ miles until you see the steeple of Dunkel's Church on your left in the distance.

8 - Dunkel's UCC & Cemetery - This church was abandoned when there was the possibility of a large dam being constructed on the Maiden Creek. Dr. Perry was an organist and choir director in this church.

Dunkel's Church Cemetery--This cemetery is well maintained and contains the graves of many well-known Dreibelbis cousins, Manassas and Dr. Perry among them.

Turn around and turn right out of the cemetery and head North on Dunkel's Church Road which then turns into Dreibelbis Station Road – travel several miles and at stop sign on Old Rt. 22 turn left.

9 – Kerchner Home - Continue into Lenhartsville, turn right at the blinking stop sign. Travel about 1/8 mile to the last house on the left before the Rt. 78/22 overpass.

Kerchner Home--This house was built 1810-1820, is the Lenhart homestead but has been owned by three generations of descendants of the Dreibelbis' since 1929. This beautiful farm is also on the National Register of Historic Places.

10 – Dreibelbis Mill - To reach the mill, go north on Rt. 143 under the bridge, and go West on 78/22 for 11 miles. But you have two other choices...

Cabella's

1. If you wish to visit Cabella's while you're here, take the first exit for Rt. 61 North and get into the left 2 lanes. They have displays of wildlife, huge aquariums, and a laser shooting range. Have fun!!
2. Not officially part of the Road Ramble, you can also visit Schuylkill Haven, founded by Martin Dreibelbis.

Schuylkill Haven - If you want to travel to Schuylkill Haven, take the first exit and travel North on Rt. 61 for about 17 miles to the light. Turn left on Dock Street, Right on Main at stop sign, and in a few blocks, left on Parkway (total about a mile from Rt. 61). Here you will see the monument across from a high rise, in the grass median strip.

Union Cemetery--After visiting the monument, go back to Rt. 61 and turn left, go one block to Garfield Street and turn right. Continue to the entrance of the Union Cemetery and turn right. Take the first left to the grave of the Revolutionary War Soldier, Martin B. Dreibelbis and family, his son Jacob and grandson David.

10 - Dreibelbis Mill - If you are continuing onto Dreibelbis Mill, from 78/22, take exit 29A, go South on Rt. 61 for 5 miles, until you reach the light at Rt. 662. Turn left and go less than 1/2 mile and you'll see it on the left.

Dreibelbis Mill--The mill was operable at the time of it's closing; it came into the family in 1868 when Simon purchased it from Enoch Wartenluft. He then sold the mill to his son, Cleophas S. Dreibelbis. The pond has filled in with sediment and the property is no longer owned by a Dreibelbis cousin.

11 – St. Peter's UCC - Continue on Rt. 662 East for about 5 miles, turn right on Church Hill Road. At top of hill at stop sign, turn left and you will see the Church on the left.

St. Peter's UCC--The church has been closely tied to the Dreibelbis family since the 1700's. Jacob Dreibelbis signed the first church constitution, the Kirchenrecht, in 1809. Joel and Jacob Dreibelbis signed the second constitution in 1890. There are over 70 Dreibelbises buried in the cemetery. The large bell in the steeple of the church bears the inscription "Donated by Joel Dreibelbis to the German Reformed Congregation at St. Peter's Church Richmond Township in 1904."

St. Peter's UCC - In the Narthex of the church hangs a plaque, donated by the Dreibelbis Cousins of America, as a bicentennial memorial "To Honor John Jacob Dreibelbis and his descendants. The men and women who have faithfully served their community, state, and nation contributed significantly to the development of the United States of America since 1732. Dedicated in the bicentennial year – 1976." The pavilion here was the site of reunions from 1955 until the acquisition of the Jacob B. Dreibelbis farm.

Turn right out of the parking lot and make a right on Church Hill Road. Travel back down Church Hill Road and make a right on Rt. 662. Travel 1.2 miles, you will see the Mill at the Merkel Homestead on the left.

12 – Mill @ Merkel Homestead - Built in 1749, it is now storage for the country club that owns the buildings.

12 – Merkel Homestead - Travel only about 100', make a left on Eagle into Moselem Springs Country Club. The home on your left was the Merkel Homestead.

Merkel Homestead - This mansion was built in 1767, six years after the death of John Jacob. His children probably lived here under Mr. Merkel's guardianship. Both Jacob B. and Martin B. Dreibelbis married daughters of George and Christina Merkel. Note the horse head over the rear door.

Summer Kitchen--The stream going through the country club goes directly beneath the summer kitchen of the property, keeping this building cool in the heat of summer.

Turn left from the country club on Rt. 662 and travel about 5 miles, crossing Rt. 222, into the light in Fleetwood. Turn left at the light and travel a few blocks until you see the next stop...

13 – Abraham Dreibelbis Mill - The mill was part of the Dreibelbis Homestead. Water from the Dreibelbis Spring fed the waterwheel. Abraham B. inherited this mill at the age of 12 upon the death of his father, John Jacob. This is now a private home and has an indoor swimming pool!

Travel only a short distance and make the next right on Dryville Road. In only about ½ mile on the left, you will see the original Dreibelbis Homestead!

14 – John Jacob Dreibelbis Homestead - This property is currently owned by Giorgio Mushroom who maintains the yard and home. This house, built in two stages was believed to have been constructed by descendents of John Jacob. His original homestead on this property was a log cabin. Date of construction of either section is unknown. John Jacob owned 400 acres in Richmond and Rockland Townships and was the largest taxpayer in the area.

Barn at Homestead--Unfortunately, the barn recently burned down, possibly due to arson. We unfortunately lost an important part of our heritage that day.

Next, turn left out of the homestead and travel only .1 miles, under the RR overpass and turn right on the dirt lane. There will be a sign there for the Dreibelbis Cemetery.

15 – Dreibelbis Cemetery - If visiting at noon, there will be a presentation and parking is limited. If you are at the homestead at 11:30 a van will shuttle you there. (Note that the dirt road is in poor condition. Low cars may scrape their underside.) There is limited space to turn around and NO place to pass on the dirt road. If you can manage it, walking is best. It's only about ¼ mile.

Dreibelbis Cemetery--Refurbished by the 1932 Reunion Committee, a monument was installed and is maintained to this day. Unfortunately, the monument has some errors as to dates and wives. In addition to those listed as buried here, this is the final resting place for 11 Indians and 1 slave.

Proceed back to Dryville Road and turn right. Travel 3.5 miles to

16 - Christ Mertz Lutheran Church - In the church records here are the baptisms of two of John Jacob's children, in 1751 and 1756.

From here, turn left and proceed about 200' to a 4 way stop sign. Turn right on Lyons Road and bear right in about 200' onto Forgedale Road. Turn right when you reach the stop sign at Pricetown Road, and travel about 5 miles to Walnuttown Road (you will cross Rt. 662). Turn left, go about a mile, to a stop sign on Fry Road.

17 – Dreibelbis School - On your left, is a white stucco building at #487. The land for the school was donated by James H. Dreibelbis, a civil war veteran, and was named after him. In 1963, it was converted into a home.

Turn left at stop sign onto Fry Road. Congratulations, you've completed the Dreibelbis Country Road Ramble! Travel along Fry Road until you reach Rt. 662, Memorial Highway. Turn left, travel until you cross Rt. 222, and in about 2 miles bear right on Rt. 143, back to John Jacob Homestead, site of the reunion.

Contributors

A special thanks go to these contributors who helped offset the cost of producing this booklet!



Gene's Lawn & Shrub Service
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2510 Tunnel Hill Road
Lebanon, PA 17046-2640

(717) 272-5930

Contributors



In memory of Lloyd T. & Katie R. Dreibelbis, long time attendees at the reunion and, for many years, Lloyd was the oldest in attendance.

**By their children –
Marlene, Leona & Malcolm**

Contributors



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Davenport, Iowa 52802

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Other times by appointment

Call : (563) 322-8844
or E-mail: director @GAHC.org



From Dr. Paul Cunnick, Davenport, Iowa grandson of Emma Dreibelbis

Contributors

In honor of all our

ANCESTORS,

Our Three Sons
Eric, Mark, & Dana,

and our eight Grandchildren
and one Great-grandchild

Amy	Michael	Becky
Abigail	David	Brian
Lisa	Carol	
	Emily	

and also our parents,
Dr. Jason and Eleanor Dreibelbis

Contributors



In honor of our family tradition on the farm.
We would get together for Thanksgiving
and after our big meal we would go for a
walk. This was our last walk prior to the
farm being sold.

Daughter, grandchildren and great
grandchildren of

Lloyd and Katie Dreibelbis.

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In Loving Memory





Henry A. Miller **Ellen R. (Dreibelbis) J6-2685**

Born: November 11, 1868 Born: February 22, 1873
 Died: September 15, 1929 Died: June 15, 1923



Both are Buried at Zion's Cemetery
 Windsor Castle, Pennsylvania

Presented By: **MILLER cousins** Their 43 Living of 74 Grandchildren

Contributors

The History of Virginville

Virginville typifies the many small communities that dot the landscape here in the heart of PA Dutch country. Located in Northern Berks county near the "Hex Highway" (Old Route 22), Virginville is a place where the Lene Lenape Indians roamed for thousands of years prior to being displaced in 1730 when the heirs of William Penn started selling land for development. No one is certain about how Virginville (originally called Virginsville) got its name, but it is the subject of much debate. Some say Virginville was named for the untouched beauty of the countryside and where the Maiden creek and Saucony creeks meet, both meaning virgin and purity.

The hotel was founded in 1885 by Eli Hein, who called it the Mansion House.



Offering home style PA Dutch favorites that you cannot find just anywhere! Everything is home made!!

Specialties

Chicken Pot Pie
Stuffed Pig Stomach
Clam Corn Pie

Virginville Hotel
458 Main Street
Route 143
Post Office Box 155
Virginville, PA 19564-0155
Telephone: (610) 562-7072

Contributors

The Cincinnati Ohio Dreibelbis Family

Logan Lyle Dreibelbis
Gerardine A. Dreibelbis

Judith Ann Wiggins
Josephn Wiggins

Harold E. Dreibelbis
Mary Dreibelbis

Sara Dreibelbis

Elizabeth E. Naparstek
Nicholas Naparstek

Kathryn LeCerf
Matt LeCerf
Gavin LeCerf
Mallory LeCerf

Barbara J. Dreibelbis
Maddie Barrett
Emma Barrett

Geralyn Dennis
Michael Dennis
Ryan Dennis
Jill Dennis

Allison Barmettler
Jesse Barmettler
Jackson Barmettler

Jessica Wyche
Gilbert Wyche

Contributors

In Memory of Beloved Family Members.

Charles H. Dreibelbis, Jr.

Ronald C. Dreibelbis

Charles H. Dreibelbis, Sr.

Leafa M. (Heiter) Dreibelbis

Elaine F. (Dreibelbis) Bartholomew

Cora L. (Dreibelbis) Strunk

Missing You Greatly!

Joanne (Dreibelbis) , Wilson and Richard

Dietrich

Shirley (Stern) Dreibelbis

In honor of my family and loved ones –

you are all cherished!

Jane Hornberger

Contributors

Greetings from the Comptons

In Wichita and Derby Kansas:

Bill, Kathryn,

Carl, Suzie,

Claire, Caty, Craig, Colleen, and Christian

In fond memory of A-7-4390

Sadie Dreibelbis Rhoads Fry

1897-1981

With love from Daughter A-8-6352

Bette Jane Fry Brant

Grandchildren

Tracy Jane Brant A-9-6352-1

Kyle Cameron Brant A-9-6352-2

Great-grandchildren

Celeste, Madelyn, Molly, and Miles

Notes

Dreibelbis Cousins of America Family History Correction Form				
<i>Submitted by:</i> _____		<i>Date:</i> _____		
<i>Family #:</i> _____		Mail completed forms to: Becky Dreibelbis 54 Sutphin Road Yardley, PA 19067 215-589-2025 Or via email: Becky.Dreibelbis@gmail.com		
<i>Address:</i> _____				
<i>Phone:</i> _____				
<i>Email:</i> _____				
<input type="checkbox"/> I am not in the Dreibelbis book, but believe I am a cousin and would like to be added. Please contact me to discuss.				
Page #	Line #	Corrected Information	New Information	Source of Information

Make copies for additional entries.