

Bentzel Family History

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The first Bentzel immigrants to this country were Baltzer and Philip Bentzel, who came to Baltimore, Maryland in 1745. They were born in Germany. What research was done indicates that Baltzer Bentzel's wife Maria Sophia evidently accompanied him to America.

Johannes Bentzel, their father, arrived in America four years later at the port of Philadelphia, arriving there and taking the Oath of Declaration at the Philadelphia courthouse on Thursday, August 24, 1749. Johannes Bentzel is the father of the Bentzels who settled in Dover Township, York County, Pennsylvania. In research the records show that there were Palatines. Johannes came in the ship "Elliott" and its records show that there were 87 by list and 240 souls aboard. Wives and children were not listed by name, just number. It is assumed Johannes either came alone or with his wife Sovia or Sophia. If he came alone, we must assume that his wife came with their other two sons, Henry and John Bentzel, arriving at the port of Philadelphia, qualified September 14, 1753. These four sons of Johannes and Sophia were born in Germany. The first indication is that Baltzer Bentzel, a shoemaker by trade, settled in Dover, York County, Pennsylvania. The father Johannes likewise settled in Dover Township.

There is one thing that stands out in regard to the Bentzel family, their staunch faith in Almighty God. On a whole, the incoming immigrants and most of the later generations were and are of the German Lutheran and Reformed faith. However, like most of our immigrant forefathers, when coming to these shores, if a church of their faith was not near at hand, they worshipped God in whatever church was nearby. Nothing deterred them from worshipping God. They walked miles to and from such services and that twice a day, sat on benches with or without backs. If there were no benches they stood for hours to hear the word of God preached to them. This was done regardless of the backsliding or sins they may have committed, but a sinful creature and their faith in Christ and his forgiveness for their sins was the basis for their faith and lives in this new land where they lived dangerously in order to hew and hack out their farms and livelihood. They prized their home, which regardless of it only being a rough sod or log cabin was to them, since it was theirs, a castle, and it was so called, my castle, by many of them. Their farm, no matter how small, was a plantation to them.

They loved their families and took great pride in them. Mothers and fathers were "Mother and Father" and as such ruled their households. Their children respected and obeyed them and each child had his or her respective chores to perform in the home and plantation.

Our forefathers usually had very little money or possessions when they arrived in this country, but with faith, hope, and love of God and others, they hewed us a heritage that we should cherish down through the ages, regardless of how we or our nation fail to live up to their expectations.