

William Fenstermacher (1740-1801) P-157404  
5th Company 3rd Battalion, Northampton Co. Militia

My Fenstermacher line originated in the Palatinate of the Rhine near present day Luxemburg. Mathias/Matheis Fenstermacher and family travelled up the Rhine to Rotterdam, Germany. There they took passage on the ship "Glasgow" Walter Sterling, Master, arriving at Philadelphia 9 September 1738. The ship manifest listed Mathias (then 60), Jacob (29) and Wilhelm (25). Another record added "6589 Achtelbach " with a note "Glasgow 1738". And, a third record said they "came to join Philip" (more on him to follow).

Mathias, b. 24 September 1678, son of Hans Conrad Fenstermacher settled in Long swamp Twp. some 50 miles north of Philadelphia. He appears there on the Tax Rolls from 1758 to 1761; he was 83 by that time.

Mathias Fenstermacher, m. 25 Oct 1707, Anna Catharine Ruppenthal of Achtelbach. Five children were born there according to church record (six actually, see next paragraph). This began about two decades earlier than their move to America from Nohefelden. (The family obviously had relocated.)

Philip Fenstermacher, a 6th child was born to Mathias and Anna Catharine is not shown in the church record. However, the birth order shows Philip to be the fourth child born and is older than William. Another unpublished document was found in the DAR Library in Washington, D.C. by a high school classmate of mine, now DAR member attesting that "Philip Fenstermacher arrived (in Philadelphia) on the ship "Samuel", 30 August 1737, then 20 years old".

William Fenstermacher, b. 11 Oct 1740 was the son of Jacob, the oldest of Mathias six children, and Margretha Schweig. Jacob is said to have founded the Longswamp Reformed Church. William married Margaret Elizabeth (last name unknown); their son, Philip married Maria Gertraut Harter, daughter of Johann Martin Harter Jr. and Christina Margaretha Maurer. Martin Jr., Sergeant, 2nd Battalion, Northampton Co. Militia together with his father, in Patriotic Service, were the subjects of a previously written biography.

William Fenstermacher was found serving in the 5th Co., 3rd Battalion, Northampton Co. Militia twice (Pa. Archives 5th Series, Vol. viii, pgs. 234 and 449). William served under Captain Conard Ritter in one and under Captain Conrad Reader in the other; I suspect it is the same man. The first period of service in the Pa. Archives says 1778 (no other details) but records from the Heidelberg Church Cemetery, Lehigh Co., Pa. say 18 June 1777. The second period of service on 26 October 1780 can be assumed to be correct because the two citations agree. Coincidentally, it can be noted that Major Fredrieck Sechler named in the Pa. Archives page 449 citation was previously mentioned in my biography of Sergeant John Sechler of the Philadelphia Associators. A lot of my five proven Revolutionary Ancestors lives seem to be intertwined.

And finally, we find William Fenstermacher buried in the Heidelberg Church Cemetery in Lehigh Co. Pa. which was previously part of Northampton Co. before that county was divided. His headstone attests that he was born 11 October 1740 and died 27 November 1801.

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