



THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

As I sit at my desk here in beautiful historical Oley Valley this cold January day, I look out and see that the ground is white. Oley is only about 60 miles from Philadelphia and short of the first ridge of the Appalachian Mountains so we don't usually get very much snow or extremely cold weather.

Speaking of snow and cold weather brings me to think about the trip to Florida that Ruth and I will be making in February. Being down there a week will be a break from our winter weather. However, when I think back to my early days in North Dakota, these Oley Valley winters seem mild. Have you noticed North Dakota on the national weather maps this winter?

Some of you perhaps don't know my age but in two years I'll be 70 so we are looking to the future. With about 4 acres of lawn to mow, a vegetable garden and a number of flower gardens to take care of, we are concerned about how long we can continue to keep things in shape here. Maybe we need to check out Florida?

While in Florida I will stop in to see Kate Stirk to check up on the Stirk line. This involves the descendants of Anna Overholser, daughter of III Martin, who married Hetzel Stirk. Kate has been doing research on the Stirks. Now that she has a computer to work with, I'm interested in seeing what she has been able to accomplish.

Since I have mentioned one of the fourth-generation descendants of Immigrant Samuel O. (arrived 1727), how about someone taking on the project of one of the other fourth generations? At this time the only one of these lines that has been substantially completely listed is the IV Christian line. Robert M. Oberholser of Freehold, N.J. accomplished this project in 1980.

75th ANNUAL REUNION

Date: Saturday, August 25, 1984  
Place: Terre Hill Fire Hall,  
Terre Hill, Pa.

Details in the August issue of THE BULLETIN. See you then!

LINEAGE CHARTS

We are gradually accumulating lineage charts in outline form of the 9 children of III Martin Oberholtzer. We now have them for ANNA OBERHOLSER STIRK (1788-1875) and JOHN OBERHOLSER (1793-1875), compiled by Pres. Spencer Overholser. They are available at copying cost (15¢ per page) from the Editor, Jim Kehew, 413 Appletree Road, Camp Hill, PA 17011. Anna's has 6 pages and John's 5. Please enclose a long stamped addressed envelope.

You probably have noticed the material in THE BULLETIN is not restricted to the descendants of Immigrant Samuel. I have been encouraging you to send material to the editor. How about sending in material relating to any of the other lines to our editor? Genealogical articles, charts, etc. submitted to the editor are thereby available to be published in THE BULLETIN. This should be helpful to genealogical researchers in the future.

Anyone who attended the Reunion at Terre Hill last August will be interested to know that Rosy Oberholzer of Oberholz, Switzerland telephoned us in January. She said that she enjoyed attending the Reunion and that she would like to attend another one, adding that we shouldn't be surprised if she decides to come again soon.

Have a happy and prosperous 1984!

J. SPENCER OVERHOLSER



OVERHOLSER FAMILY ASSOCIATION  
BULLETIN

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Editor - JIM KEHEW  
413 Appletree Road  
Camp Hill, PA 17011

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Family Association, P.O. Box 106,  
Oley, Pennsylvania 19547

WHERE TO SEND

GENEALOGICAL QUERIES

J. Spencer Overholser  
PO Box 106  
Oley, PA 19547

BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES

Robert M. Oberholser  
RD 2, Ardena  
Freehold, NJ 07728

CONTRIBUTIONS

Mrs. Marjorie Carroll  
Treasurer  
319 Monroe Avenue  
North Hills, PA 19038

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solely by voluntary contributions  
of the members.)

NEWSLETTER ITEMS, NEW MEMBERS, &  
CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Jim Kehew, Editor  
413 Appletree Road  
Camp Hill, PA 17011

FOR BACK ISSUES

J. Spencer Overholser  
PO Box 106  
Oley, PA 19547

ROSY OBERHOLZER WAS GUEST  
OF HONOR AT REUNION

Those who attended the Reunion last August had the pleasure of meeting one of our most distant members and one who lives in what is traditionally considered the place from which our forebears, the Overholzers, came. She was ROSY OBERHOLZER from Oberholz, Switzerland. She came especially to attend the Reunion, her first although she has visited several members of the Association twice before in the recent past.

A charming woman, Rosy is the wife of GOTTFRIED OBERHOLZER and the mother of three sons and three daughters. She and her husband operate the Gasthaus Kantonsgrenze, or Guest House on the Canton Border (that is, on the border of two cantons or states), in the tiny town of Oberholz (population 13 families) 25 miles east of Zurich near the town of Wald. They run a ski lift to the top of a nearby mountain and during ski season, serve as many as 1000 people a day at their restaurant.

Rosy has done some research into the Oberholzer background but has not made a connection between her husband's family and Immigrant Samuel who, tradition has it, came from that region before emigrating to the Palatinate and then to America.

Since Rosy does not speak English, RUTH OVERHOLSER was her interpreter at the Reunion and read the statement of greetings Rosy had written and which appears in this issue. Her children, who speak fluent English, translate THE BULLETIN for her.

She visited with SPENCER and RUTH OVERHOLSER at their home in Oley, Berks County, before returning to Switzerland. The Overholzers have visited Rosy in Oberholz five times, as well as other members of the Association, including HARRY and GLORIA OVERHOLTZER and MILDRED PETTIGREW, all of Pottstown.

Rosy gave each one at the Reunion several postcards depicting her restaurant and the town of Oberholz and the surrounding countryside. The town is situated in a beautiful valley surrounded by mountains.

It was a real pleasure having Rosy as our guest of honor and we hope she returns many times in the years ahead.

*So live that you wouldn't be afraid to  
sell the family parrot to the town gossip.*

*Jumping at conclusions is about the only  
mental exercise some people take.*

## ROSY OBERHOLZER'S GREETINGS

Translated and read by Ruth Overholser

The name Overholser comes from Oberholz. History tells us it goes back more than a thousand years. In those times the area was all wooded and families lived from the land. As families grew, they cleared more and more land to till.

About 1300, several families colonized or settled together in a single area. This was a half day's journey by foot from the town of Wald. These people lived near the area of the wooded place and so were called the "Bauern im Hof in obern Holz", which means "the farmers in the village above the woods." Later they were given the name of Oberholz or Oberholzer.

1523 - The Reformation. The villagers, who had all been Catholic, visited the church in Wald which had become Protestant through Zwingli. In the end the Catholics went to the church at Eschenbach and remained Catholic. The other group stayed in Wald and became Protestants.

A story tells about two brothers who decided each would attend the church whose bells he heard the loudest. So the one "above" the woods heard the bells from Eschenbach and became Catholic and the other living "below" the woods heard the bells in Wald and became Protestant.

With time, more families came to Oberholz. It is written that the Oberholzers were hard-working, ambitious people. Later the Oberholzer lands were divided amongst the families and each had a small amount. To this day there is a Catholic Oberholzer corporation dating from those long ago times. Now only two Oberholzer families are left to belong whereas 20 families belonged at one time.

Gradually the young people went elsewhere to make their way, until now they are everywhere in Switzerland. It is known that a certain Oberholzer went to Holland generations ago. Later some also came to the United States, among them Samuel, but from which family of Oberholzers he came I do not know. If I have time, I would like to look for more information but we do know that the Oberholzers went out into the whole world.

Dear Oberholzer friends: It makes me very happy to bring you greetings from Oberholz and to get acquainted with you. I hope that the Oberholzer Freundschaft will re-

## NEED HELP?

Most members of the Association are primarily interested in their own genealogical line. One of the best services we can provide our members is putting you in touch with others who are compiling information on the same line so that a mutually-beneficial exchange can take place. The only hindrance to this is that we don't know what line our members are interested in or belong to.

In analyzing our membership list, we find that we lack this information for the great majority (two-thirds) of our members. Of the 150 members we already have it for, 127 (or 85%) of them are in the same line, III Martin-IV Christian. This is mainly due to the prodigious effort of Robert M. Oberholser of Freehold, N.J. in compiling "a record of the ancestors and descendants of Christian Oberholser (1798-1884) and Susanna Kurtz (1805-1860)" and publishing it in 1980 in an 86-page booklet, THE SALISBURY TOWNSHIP OBERHOLSERS. In conducting this monumental and painstaking research, Robert persuaded many of Christian and Susann's descendants to join the Association, with the result that they form one-third of our membership, a tribute to one man's perseverance.

We would like to know what line or lines YOU are particularly interested in so that we can record this information to facilitate the exchange of data among members. We would like to hear from you. Just drop us a line (a postcard will do) telling what line you are in and if you are interested in the names and addresses of others in the same line. You needn't go into detail with charts and tables (although we would be glad to receive these too for our files), just the basic information will do.

Send it to the Editor, Jim Kehew, 413 Appletree Road, Camp Hill, PA 17011. We will report on results in a future issue of THE BULLETIN.

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maintain a good friendship between those in Switzerland and those in the United States. You are all invited to visit Oberholz. The first visitor came in 1949 from Ohio. Ruth and Spencer Overholser came to visit in 1969 with Bernice Fraser and since then we have had a fine friendship. I visited Ruth and Spencer at their home in Oley in 1978 and 1981. I hope our friendship will continue and I wish you all Auf Wiedersehn.

46 ATTEND 73rd ANNUAL REUNION

The 73rd annual reunion of the Association was held on Aug. 20, 1983 in the Terre Hill Fire Hall with 46 present. After renewing old acquaintances and enjoying a bounteous covered-dish luncheon, the President, SPENCER OVERHOLSER, called the meeting to order. The meeting was opened with prayer by FRANK LIVINGOOD. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved. Spencer reported receiving correspondence from WARREN OVERHOLTZ, RUTH MELLINGER and JANE OVERHOLSER ELLIOTT. MARJORIE CARROLL then gave the Treasurer's report:

Opening Balance 8/27/82		\$164.92
<u>Income</u>		
Collection: 1982 Reunion	\$218.50	
Contributions thru 8/12/83	360.50	
Interest thru 6/28/83	20.73	
Total Income		<u>599.73</u>
Balance		764.65
<u>Expenses</u>		
Rental of Fire Hall for 1982 Reunion	\$ 25.00	
Printing of Feb. 1983 BULLETIN	69.90	
Postage & Misc. Expenses for BULLETIN	101.49	
Augury Press	5.00	
Everton Publishing Co.	3.50	
Postage for Aug. 1983 BULLETIN	80.00	
Prizes for 1983 Reunion	20.00	
Rental of Fire Hall for 1983 Reunion	25.00	
Total Expenses		<u>329.89</u>
Balance 8/19/83		\$434.76

A motion was carried that the Treasurer's report be filed for audit.

The Necrologist, ROBERT M. OBERHOLSER, reported the following:

Births

AMY LYNN MARTIN to Clifford and Susan Martin, May 13, 1983  
 JONATHAN CHAD HARTING to John and Karen Harting, May 27, 1982  
 KIMBERLY ROSE SMEAL, June 7, 1982  
 ELIZABETH ANN SKILES to Jere and Jan Davis Skiles, July 28, 1983  
 ADAM ROBERT BROWN to Rev. Robert and Rebecca Harting Brown, Apr. 12, 1983

Marriages

LORI OBERHOLSER, daughter of Buell Willard and Christine Oberholser, to THOMAS E. DAVEY,  
 Nov. 27, 1982  
 ELLEN CATANESE, daughter of Naomi Robinson and Nicholas Catanese, to ALLEN KING,  
 Aug. 16, 1982

Deaths

CLARENCE M. OBERHOLSER, Sept. 14, 1982  
 DOROTHY S. OVERHOLSER, wife of the late Dr. Winfred Overholser, Apr. 6, 1983  
 ERNEST BOYER, June 1983

The President then asked each one present to give his name and genealogical background. The Auditing Committee then stated they had audited and approved the Treasurer's records. Genealogical presentations were given by JOHN OVERHOLT and MILDRED PETTIGREW followed by

(Cont. on next page)



## OFFICIAL 1983 REUNION PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY DAN PETTIGREW



Seated on floor (l to r): Margaret Overholt, John Oswald holding Andrew Kendall, Chuck Carroll, Marjorie Carroll, Charlie Kendall, Joe Carroll, Jim Kehew

Seated on chairs: Martha Oberholtzer, John Oberholtzer, Vera Oberholtzer Hein, Alma Stutzman, Mildred Ohltinger, Rosy Oberholzer, Ruth Overholser, Pauline Oswald, Esta Herr

Standing: Kenneth Skiles, Anna Skiles, Samuel Skiles, Stella Skiles, Marian Livingood, Ellen Livingood, Gertrude Haines (in shadow), Robert Oberholser, Frank Livingood, Fred Skillman, Jean Skillman, Daythal Kendall, Elizabeth Kurtz, Josephine Files (in shadow), Caroline Kendall, Agnes Robinson, Pat Carroll (in shadow), John Oberholser (in shadow), Naomi Pletcher, Paul Pletcher, Kenneth Robinson, Sally Carroll (in shadow), John Overholt, Spencer Overholser (in shadow), Richard Stevens, Jean Stevens, Mildred Pettigrew

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### REUNION (Cont)

greetings from ROSY OBERHOLZER from Oberholz, Switzerland.

Prizes were presented to:

The couple married the longest

MR. & MRS. SAMUEL SKILES, married 57 years

The oldest person present

ROBERT M. OBERHOLSER, 91 on Sept. 18, 1982  
ESTA HERR, 91 in May 1983

The person traveling the farthest

ROSY OBERHOLZER, Switzerland  
MR. & MRS. JOHN OVERHOLT, Virginia

The youngest person present

ANDREW KENDALL, 19 months

Everyone then joined in singing the Reunion song led by RUTH OVERHOLSER. There was no old business. Under new business, Vice-Pres. RICHARD STEVENS said he had checked the facilities at Long's Park and the White Horse Fire Hall and recommended we continue to meet at Terre Hill Fire Hall. A motion was carried that the next Reunion be held on the 4th Saturday of August 1984 (Aug. 25) at the Terre Hill Fire Hall.

DAYTHAL KENDALL, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, requested the present slate of officers to continue for another year. The nominations were closed and the Secretary cast a unanimous ballot. The meeting was then closed by the President.

Respectfully submitted,  
PAUL J. PLETCHER  
Recording Secretary

GENEALOGICAL QUERIES

OVERHOLSER-CROM -- I am looking for the parents of my 3x Great-Grandparents and/or their exact place of birth. My 2x Great-Grandfather was JOHN M. OVERHOLSER, b. 1/19/1834 in Harrison or Tuscarawas County, Ohio, m. LYDIA CROM in 1856, d. 4/9/1927 in Coleta, Ill. His parents were MARTIN OVERHOLSER, b. 4/28/1809 in either Westmoreland or Bucks County, Pa., d. 12/20/1899 in Coleta, Ill., m. BARBARA ORFORD in 1830. She was born 12/27/1811 in Greene County, Pa. or Washington County, Md.

LYDIA CROM, b. 4/18/1835 in Wood County, Ohio, d. 5/24/1913, Coleta, Ill., dau. of JACOB CROM, b. 5/15/1800 in Pa., d. 4/22/1868, m. ANNA OVERHOLSER (b. 1807 in Pa., d/ 10/22/1866) in Harrison County, Ohio 1824.

BILLIE JO READ  
1200 19th  
Wheatland, Wyo. 82201

OVERHOLTS IN CANADA -- New member EUGENE SINGER is researching the OVERHOLTS who fled to Canada after the Revolutionary War. In pondering why they went, he writes: "It was a brutalizing experience to get there, and hard work to clear the land and set up for living. Add to that the drought and famine of 1787 and it is a gruesome picture. The mass settlement of Upper Canada (now Ontario) was made by displaced Loyalists, or Tories. One question I have is, why the Mennonite OVERHOLTS? The only answer I can come up with is that the German community was generally loyal to the Crown because it was England which offered a way out of the persecution of Europe. So, while they might have been non-participants, their attitudes could have shown through strongly enough in some cases to cause troubles with the rebelling Colonials. Feelings ran high and it didn't take much to cause the hotheads to burn barns and run off stock, or worse. That's my theory at least, but I wonder if any Association member has concrete documentation on why the several Mennonite families took on the task of conquering the wilderness." Gene's address is 2444 Calle Palo Fierro, Palm Springs, Calif. 92622.

LETTERS

Probably among the older relatives of the Oberholtzers (although not having attended a reunion since the 1940's) is my father, ELMER M. OBERHOLTZER, who will celebrate his 94th birthday Aug. 9th (1983) and his wife (my mother) who is 92. They have been married 69 years.

JOHN JACOB OBERHOLTZER  
Leola, Pa.

(Mr. Oberholtzer also enclosed a clipping from Time Magazine sent by his daughter, BETH OBERHOLTZER, who is employed in New York City at the Antler-Baldwin Design Studio. It recorded the marriage of the oldest son of the late Nicaraguan dictator, Anastasio Somoza, and MARISA CELASCO OBERHOLTZER, 24, "Salvadoran socialite daughter of a Swiss mother and Italian businessman father.")

I would like to join the Overholser Family Association. After living in Lancaster County for 22 years, I recently discovered that my ancestor, SAMUEL OVERHOLSER, is the grandson of the first SAMUEL OBERHOLSZ and the son of JACOB OVERHOLSZ. We knew that "our" Samuel came from the Shenandoah Valley but couldn't trace him further than that area. It is exciting to be a native of Tennessee and find out that I am now living in the area of my ancestors of six generations ago. I hope to get acquainted with other Overholser descendants through the Association.

MRS. JOHN S. (KATHERN) MAINE  
Millersville, Pa.

HOW TO JOIN

The Association welcomes into membership anyone interested in the Overholser lineage (with all its variant spellings). There are no dues. We depend for financial support on the voluntary contributions of the members, either at the annual meeting in August or by mail to the Treasurer at any time. New members' names should be sent to the Editor, Jim Kehew, 413 Appletree Road, Camp Hill, PA 17011 --- 717/761-3388.

CHRISTIAN HAINES OBERHOLSER  
Third President of the Overholser  
Family Association

By Robert M. Oberholser  
Freehold, N.J.

Editor Jim has assigned me to write a short biographical sketch of the third President of the Overholser Family Association who, by a strange coincidence, happens to be my father, Christian Haines Oberholser. And I bring to this assignment the perspective of a 92-year-old son, whose early adoration of his father has been enhanced by the passage of time.

VI Christian Oberholser was born in 1858, the son of V Martin Oberholser and Anna Mary Frances Haines, the Quakeress daughter of Reuben Haines and Jane Sonders. Leaving school at an early age to assume the management of his father's Lancaster County farm, he was without much formal education, the disadvantage of which he overcame in later life by entering into the civic and political affairs of the communities in which he lived.

In 1888 he married Margaret Baldwin, the youngest daughter of Robert Baldwin, owner of a local general store at Cains, Pa. (Lancaster County), a State Senator and a close neighbor of the Oberholser family. Three children resulted from this marriage -- Edith, unmarried and long a high school teacher in the Philadelphia school system; Edward, an executive of the Manhattan Shirt Co.; and Robert, married and the father of three children and for 37 years the Superintendent of Schools of Bordentown City, N.J.

Upon the death of Christian's mother in 1893, the family farm in Salisbury Township was sold and Christian, with his young family, moved to West Caln Township, Chester County, Pa. where he operated a rented farm for seven years. In 1900 he moved to a farm in Lionville, Uwchlan Township, Chester County, which he and

Margaret had bought from Holland Beitler.

Both Christian and Margaret died in 1940 within a few weeks of each other and both are buried in the family plot in St. Paul's Lutheran Church cemetery, Lionville, Pa.

Christian's interest in community affairs is evidenced by the fact that he served as a member of the Board of Education during his short stay in West Caln Township. In Uwchlan Township he was also a member of the Board of Education and served as President for many years during which period he was responsible for the organization of a two-year high school. He also served as Township Supervisor, Master of Uwchlan Grange, Noble Grand of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, President of the Council of St. Paul's Lutheran Church and for years superintendent of its Sunday School.

My most vivid remembrance of my father was his continued interest in competition, in games of all kinds. He continued his participation in checkers and quoits as long as he lived and played baseball on the local ball team long past his 60th birthday. A man always known to speak his opinion on important topics, he was always tolerant of the opinions of others.

Christian's interest in the Overholser Family Association has carried over to his descendants. Edward was serving as Vice-President when he died in 1968. Edith long served as Corresponding Secretary and at her death that position was filled by Christian's granddaughter, Elizabeth O. Frey, while the writer served several years as Treasurer and is presently Necrologist.

(Robert M. Oberholser is author of THE SALISBURY OBERHOLSERS, a compilation of six generations of descendants of his great-grandparents, IV Christian Oberholser and Susanna Kurtz.--Ed.)

#### WANTED: RECIPES!

The Board Members of the Association would like to put out a cookbook of favorite family recipes. We would certainly appreciate it if you would oblige by either sending as many as you like to me or bringing them to the Reunion with you. We will assemble same and then hope to

sell them at a nominal fee as a money-making project that would help to enhance future Reunions as well as help defray the costs of the BULLETIN. Please help us.

MARGE CARROLL (Mrs. Chas. E.)  
319 Monroe Ave.  
North Hills, PA 19038



OFFICERS

President	J. Spencer Overholser, Oley, Pa.
1st Vice President	John L. Oberholser, Narvon, Pa.
2nd Vice President	Richard I. Stevens, Lititz, Pa.
Recording Sec'y	Paul Pletcher, New Holland, Pa.
Treasurer	Marjorie Chubb Carroll, North Hills, Pa.
Chaplain	Rev. John R. Weiler, Easton, Pa.
Honorary Vice Pres.	Esta Buch Herr, Lititz, Pa.
Necrologist	Robert M. Oberholser, RD 2, Ardena, Freehold, N.J. 07728
Genealogist	J. Spencer Overholser, Oley, Pa.

W E L      E !

These 14 new members have joined us since the last newsletter. This makes the total number of BULLETINS we send out 393!

MRS. LEWIS BRAAS	121 West Conestoga, New Holland, PA 17557
AMY DEWEY	607 E. Dowland St., Ludington, MI 49431
SARAH LOOSE DRISCOLL	Country Villa Estates, Amberwood Dr., Riverview, FL
JOHN E. FRETZ	1935 Green Lane Rd., Lansdale, PA 19446      33569
JOAN L. GILKISON	230 Eisenhower, Mattawan, MI 49071
MARK LANDIS	122 Molly Ave., Trotwood, OH 45426
MRS. JOHN S. MAINE (Kathern J.)	65 Brenner St., Millersville, PA 17551
DANIEL T. O'MEARA	8 Grey Hollow Road, Norwalk, CT 06851
MRS. DARRELL PARKS	2126 Steele St., Asheboro, NC 27203
MRS. MAURICE LEWIS PEPPER (Marianne)	934 Twining Place, St. Louis, MO 63119
BILLIE JO READ	1200 19th, Wheatland, WY 82201
JOHN SINGER	2958 Upper Mountain Road, Sanborn, NY 14132
MR/MRS FREDERICK W. SKILLMAN, JR.	PO Box 153, Elverson, PA 19520
GLENDIA SUIT	3060 Blackhills Drive, Boise, ID 83709

**Overholser Family Association**

P. O. BOX 106  
OLEY, PENNA. 19547



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