

RECORDS OF PRUSSIAN MENNONITE CHURCHES IN THE VISTULA DELTA

BIRTHS, BAPTISMS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS

IN THE DANZIG CHURCH 1665 - 1943

**Transliterated and Digitized by
Ernest H. Baergen
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan**

Revised September 2011

Copyright © 2010 by Ernest H. Baergen and consigned to Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan. The copyright includes both this transliterated copy of the original records as well as a Brother's Keeper 6 gedcom file. Both works are available at <http://www.mennonitegenealogy.com/prussia/> Users are welcome to copy and distribute these works in their entirety provided that no fee is charged for their distribution.

CONTENTS

Page numbers refer to the black numbers at the bottom of each page.

Introduction	ii
The Earliest Record Book of the Danzig Flemish Mennonite Church 1865 – 1943:	
Baptisms 1667 - 1800	1
Marriages 1665 - 1808	33
Births 1789 1808	73
Deaths of Members 1667 - 1807	93
Deaths of Children 1789 - 1838	131
Baptisms in the Danzig Mennonite Church 1825 - 1943.....	145
Loose Pages from Records of the Danzig Mennonite Church:	
Births 1815 - 1855; 1861 - 1867	247
Deaths 1815 - 1818; 1826 - 1828; 1844 - 1845.....	284
Marriages..... 1851 - 1853; 1872 - 1992	293

BIRTHS, BAPTISMS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS IN THE DANZIG MENNONITE CHURCH 1665 - 1943

Introduction

The records of the Danzig Mennonite Church have been transliterated from a mix of Roman (or Latin) and Gothic scripts to Latin Script and then digitized to a Brother's Keeper 6 (BK6) file for distribution in gedcom. This Latin Script hard copy which can be electronically accessed from various online directories has been deposited in the Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan Archives.

The original records were found on the web site of Mennonite Library and Archives in North Newton, Kansas at www.bethelks.edu/mla. In this hard copy, the page and frame numbers printed in red refer to the number of the page or frame as posted on that website.

The original records contained various spellings of given names, surnames and place names. In the BK6 file, place names are standardized to reflect the spellings in the GRANDMA project where possible. In this document, however, all names are listed as closely as possible to the way they were in the original record. Where the given names were abbreviated in the original records they have been entered as the full name using the usual and customary spelling of the time. The BK6 program utilizes a reference number which standardizes the various spellings of all given and surnames.

The dates have been standardized to *dd/mm/yyyy* to comply with the BK6 format. Some dates were originally recorded on the basis of the Early Roman calendar which consisted of only 10 months. Hence, December was frequently written as Xber, the 10th month. November was sometimes written as 9ber for the ninth month and on less frequent occasions, October was written as 8ber and September as 7ber. Corresponding abbreviations of the names of the first six months were not used in these records.

In his book *The Danzig Mennonite Church: Its Origin and History from 1569-1919*, H. G. Mannhardt describes the migration of the followers of Menno Simons after the Reformation, from the Netherlands to the Danzig area beginning as early as 1530. The Danzig Mennonite Church was founded in 1569. A schism had developed in Holland between the more strict Flemish and the more tolerant Frisians. Their differences were not about dogma, but about their views concerning church discipline and the ban or shunning within marriages. This schism erupted in Danzig in 1588. Consequently, two Mennonite churches were established at Danzig: a small Frisian Mennonite Church and a larger Flemish Mennonite Church. In 1808 those two congregations merged again. The records of the Frisian Church have not been found. Therefore the records that we have prior to 1808 are those of the Danzig Flemish Mennonite Church. The languages of the European North Shore communities were primarily variations of Low German. The language in the church, on the other hand, was primarily Dutch in origin until it gradually changed to German following the death of the elder Hans von Steen in 1781 and all of that is reflected in the church's records.

After World War II, the Danzig Mennonite Church was burned to the ground but some of its records were rescued from those ashes. Because many of the pages of the original records were seared around the edges and some were water damaged, not all the pages are legible. The earliest records available began in 1665. Lists of baptisms recorded prior to that date were lost to fires. From 1665 to 1789 the records were compiled in four distinctly separate lists, namely births, baptisms, marriages and deaths. In some instances cross-referencing between

these four sets of records makes it possible to fill in the blanks caused by the fire-damage to the original record books.

The dates of events were not always the same from one record to the next. The records were saved in several handwritten copies and this may help to explain why some dates differed. In those instances where the dates in the different categories or in the Family Books are not the same, the date entered in BK6 tends to be the date recorded in the earliest category of the original record.

Since the records were in four separate lists it is difficult to make family connections in the early records. Other factors increase that difficulty. The given names of the first recorded forefather was customarily passed on to two or more succeeding generations. The names of mothers were very seldom recorded. In some situations, females were listed by their given name along with the name of their father. In other situations, women were listed as the wives of their husbands. Married women and widows were often referred to as the husband's surname plus the suffix "sche". i.e. Dycksche was a woman who had married a man named Dyck. The pattern of recording changed in 1789 with the compilation of Family Books which used the full names of females. In the early 1800s it became customary to give children two or more Christian names. In most instances this made identification much easier. However, recordings of later events sometimes reversed the order so that Johann Heinrich at birth might be called Heinrich Johann at his death.

In this document and in the gedcom file, many dates of birth are shown as "Abt" dates. The original records did not include the date of birth for each person but in many instances, the age at death or the age at marriage was recorded, often in years, months and days. From that information, the "Abt" date of birth was calculated. Where no age is cited, the "Abt" date of birth was calculated on the basis of the approximate age at baptism as outlined by H. G. Mannhardt on page 119 of his book cited above. According to him, baptism usually occurred at an average age of 25 until 1759. By 1760, the average age had dropped to 20, by 1780 it was about 19 and by 1801 the average age was 18 years. After 1825 the average age was 16 years.

This work does not pretend to be mistake-free since errors could have occurred at every stage of its development beginning with the initial recording and through to its final production. All residual errors, therefore, inevitably appear in the newly created BK6 file. Nevertheless, the end-product represents the best intentions and efforts of all who have contributed to its development which began some time before 1665 CE. After the initial publication, numerous errors, especially in the source references surfaced. This revised edition is an attempt to correct most of those. Some date errors and incorrect family linkages were also found and corrected.

The author who compiled these records in the digital and print forms consigns all rights and properties to a registered charitable organization, the Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan.

The author gratefully acknowledges the contribution of Ed Schmidt, John Tiessen and Jay Hubert in the development of this project. Ed Schmidt was pivotal in initiating the project. His gentle guidance and constant encouragement were essential to its completion. The technical assistance from John Tiessen and Jay Hubert have added immensely to the level of accuracy that we have jointly been able to attain.

Ernest H. Baergen
December 2010
Revised September 2011