

# GEORGE MICHAEL ELLER & HENRY ELLER

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Contained in the ["Eller Chronicles" Volume XIV, Issue 1](#)

## FOREWORD

This was begun with the records of J. J. O'Brien, father of J. A. O'Brien, both of whom together with Rose Shilt and Mary Eller compiled this work.

When reading these records, there may be some errors owing to the fact that bible records and court records often don't correspond.

The research started from records of Maryland to Ohio including the Ohio counties of Montgomery, Preble, Miami, and Darke.

Were it not for the dedication of other family historians such as Daniel W. Howe and James W. Hook, the Howe and Eller genealogies could not have been completed. Special thanks are due to those who have gone on before, and my personal thanks to those in the present who have assisted, including but not limited to the O'Briens-father and son, Rose Shilt, Karen Shuttleworth who typeset the manuscript, and others whose names are too numerous to list.

## GEORGE MICHAEL ELLER, THE IMMIGRANT

GEORGE MICHAEL ELLER died in Frederick County, Maryland before 25 Aug. 1778 when his will, written in the German language and translated and put on record by Thomas Schley, was proved in the Frederick County court. The fact that his will was written in German indicates that he was born in Germany.

No George Michael Eller is shown in any list of foreigners who took the Oath of Allegiance to the State of Pennsylvania between 1727 and 1775 nor in any other list of immigrants that this writer has seen.

He may or may not have been the Michael Eller who came on the ship "Phoenix" and took his oath 30 Sept. 1743, or he may have been the George Eller, aged 20, who came on the ship "St. Andrew" with Hans Georg Oehler, aged 43, both of whom took their oaths 7 Oct. 1743. Or he may have come to America as a lad before 1727 before importee lists were kept and, of course, he may have been one of those immigrants whose name was lost in the mutilation of the 1727-1775 lists that occurred before they were gathered together and published by the State of Pennsylvania in Vol. 17 of the second series of Pennsylvania Archives. Finally, he may not have landed in Pennsylvania at all but in Maryland which state kept no record of individual German importees.

William Eller, 1819-1894, son of John Eller, grandson of Leonard Eller and great grandson of George Michael Eller wrote the following in a family Bible, published in 1880, and now owned by Mrs. Paul W. Harrop, 1613 W. Riverside Drive, Dayton, Ohio.

"William Eller was Born July 26, A.D. 1819 John Eller was my father he was Born in Ashe County, North Carolina his father was Lenard Eller he was Born in at fort (ford, fork) littors North Carolina his father came from Bebon (Baden) Co. Bermany in the year 1690."

All parts of this Bible record are proved by public records except the birth place of Lenard (Leonard) Eller, the place (Bebon Co., Germany) where Lenard's father was born and the date 1690 that he came to this country.

Fort (ford, fork) Littors, North Carolina and Bebon Co., Germany have not been located at this writing by this writer and 1690 as the arrival date of the father of Lenard (Leonard) Eller, born in 1754 is not tenable. The date 1690 would not have been unreasonable as the birth year of Leonard Eller's father and 1730 to 1745 as the time of his arrival in America.

{Note by J.W.H. - Peter Eller, elder brother of Leonard Eller, lived on land described in the land grant as "beginning at a spruce pine on the Upper Ford of Rones Creek." Trading Ford on the Yadkin River was an early landmark in Rowan Co. It was located about 6 miles north east of the town of Salisbury, probably where the present road to Lexington crosses the Yadkin River near the fork of the two branches of the river. It is mentioned as early as 1701 and doubtless was on the primitive road called the "Trading Path" down which many of .the settlers travelled on their way to North Carolina from Pennsylvania and Maryland. Littors Fort (Ford, Fork) of above Bible record may be the same. At any rate, the river crossing of the road that runs from Salisbury to Lexington is very near the place where all the Ellers first settled in North Carolina.)

The wife of George Michael Eller as given in his will was Anna Maria, but the way the will reads it is apparent that she was not his first wife and very likely not the mother of any of the children named in same. The will bore no date but was proved by its witnesses 25 Aug. 1778. This writer suspects that it was written several years before his death. It reads as follows, (Will Book G.M., No. 1, p. 76, Frederick County, Maryland):

"IN THE NAME OF GOD AMEN.

I George Michael Eller of Frederick County in the province of Maryland living, am for this time sik and not right well but in my sound memory thanks be given unto God therefore seeing my nullity, ordain herein my Last Will and Testament in full love. I recommend my soul into the hands of God that gave it and my body to the earth, to be buried in a Christian like manner at the discretion of my Executors, my Executors shall in the first place pay out of my Estate all my just debts, and the overplus what the Lord gave me in this world I ordain as followith, my beloved wife, Anna Maria I give fifty pounds lawful Money, the small red cow with a white head, thirty bushels of wheat, her bed and her chest she bought (brought) to me, also the small and large Iron Potts, a half dozen peuter plates, one peuter bason, a dozen peuter spoons, and a small melt pan, three iron kettles, a small washer tup a water tup and the churn, her spinnin' wheel, her lamp her Bible her psalmody, one quart tin mog and a pint do, one quart bottle, and every year fifteen pounds as long as they can live together also her clothing out of my Estate they can agree together, the aforesaid fifteen pounds to be paid to her in the first year only out of my whole estate, and if they can agree to live longer together, then the six youngest children shall pay her the same by themselves out of my good consideration I caused to be right and is my last Will and Testament that my oldest son Peter Eller, shall have the sum of ninety seven

pounds lawfui money, and my son Leonard Eller shall have the sum of eighty two pounds and my daughter Elizabeth shall likewise have eighty two pounds lawful money; and these said three children shall have that money three years after my decease then my two Executors, namely Henry Eller and MartinGerber, shall be impowered to sell the Place, waggon and horses, all the creatures and moveables, and shall pay to my beloved wife her part (and) of the aforesaid three children their part of the same; and the overplus shall be divided by my Executors among my six youngest children namely, Jacob Eller, George Eller, John Eller, Eve Eller, Cathrine Eller and Maria Eller; further Jacob Eller shall have the Bible and to pay to George te!! shillings, also shall Jacob have the young colt, if it mare bring the same luky. this is is George Michael Eller his  
x mark and Seal X (SEAL)"

Certified, acknowledged and confirmed

This is John Bergers mark X

Henry Schmaus (Smous) No other Signature

John Bergers, Henry Smouse the above witnesses were sworn Frederick County, 25th August 1778."

"Then came the above named Thomas Schley and made oath on the holy Evangelists of Almighty God, that the within and above writing is a just and true Translation to the best of his knowledge of the original Will of the above named George Michael Eller, which is written in the German language and that he hath not knowingly or intentionally translated any matter of substance contrary to the true meaning of said Will.

Certified by George Murdock, Regr."

The phrases in the above will pertaining to his wife and the things "she brought to me" and the legacies to her that were made contingent on his six youngest children and her being able "to live longer together," indicates that she was not their mother. The name of his first wife was not found. The Evangelical Lutheran Church records of Frederick County, Maryland, records the baptism, on 8 Nov. 1756, of Marie Magdalena Aller, daughter of Michael Aller and his wife Salome. (Evangelical Lutheran Church Records, p. 40, Maryland Historical Society.)

This, doubtless, was another family because in the same year (1756) Carl Aller baptized a daughter Anna Barbara and in 1775 one Michael Aller was recorded as owing money to Mr. Hass, the same probably being for the church. (pp. 42 and 49 Ibid.)

If all facts were known they might show that George Michael Eller was married three times and that his first son Peter was a child by his first wife and all others by his second. Peter was a grown man with a wife and child as early as the late seventeen sixties. His brother, Leonard, was horn 20 March 17 54. Peter Eller was called "my eldest son" in the George Michael Eller will and the latter's children, Jacob, George, John, Eve, Catherine and Maria, called "my six youngest children," were given the residue of the estate in equal shares. The son, Peter, was given 97 pounds and the son, Leonard, and daughter, Elizabeth, were given 82 pounds apiece. All of this adds 'up to the fact that Peter, Leonard and Elizabeth were his eldest children and that Peter probably was some years older than the other two, and maybe, their half-brother.

It would be sheer guesswork to give a name to George Michael Eller's first wife.

His son, Peter, whose wife was Elizabeth, named his first daughter, Catherine, doubtless in honor of his wife's mother whose name was Catherine. Miss Addie J. Stoker of Lovelock, Nevada and some other descendants of Peter and Elizabeth

Ellers say that this daughter's full name was Catherine Martha which, if true, could mean that Martha was in honor of her father's mother, the child thus bearing the name of her two grandmothers. No sound evidence, however, has been found to support this conjecture.

## Religion

Tradition in the Eller families who descended from Peter and Elizabeth Eller of Wilkes and Ashe Counties, North Carolina is that these Eller ancestors came from the Palatinate of Germany as German Baptist Brethren or Dunkers, sometimes called Dunkards. The North Carolina branch impressed by the similarity of their faith with that of the American Baptists whose church, in the late 18th century, was growing so rapidly in western North Carolina, flocked to that church in great numbers. By the end of the 19th century it would be difficult to find any Ellers in Wilkes and Ashe counties in North Carolina who were not Baptists. The same may also be said for their descendants in Iowa and Nebraska. The Eller family of Roanoke County, Virginia, descendants, this writer believes, of George Michael Eller, are members of the Church of the Brethren some of them presently serving as pastors.

The German Baptist Brethren Church was organized by Alexander Mack and his wife and six others in Schwarzenau, Germany in 1708. It was a thoroughly democratic movement holding against infant baptism or other exercise of force to gain members. It opposed state religions, the taking of oaths and joined the Quakers of England and elsewhere in opposing war or individual participation in war. This latter belief is the reason that present day descendants so often search in vain for a Revolutionary War ancestor.

The new church along with members of other sects who refused to join one of the three state religions, namely the Catholic, Evangelical Lutheran and German Reformed (Calvinists), that were given exclusive religious liberty by the treaty of Westphalia in 1648 which ended the 30 years' war, were notoriously persecuted and driven from place to place. In 1719 Peter Becker, one of the founder members of the German Baptist Brethren Church in Schwarzenau brought his church in Krefelt, Germany to Germantown, Pennsylvania. He was followed in 1729 by Alexander Mack who found going congregations at Wissahicton near Germantown, at Coventry in Chester County and at Conestoga some fifteen miles south of Lancaster, all in Pennsylvania. From these starting points the church spread to Conowego in York County and thence to Maryland including Pipe Creek in 1758 and Beaver Dam in 1762/3. The Pipe Creek Church, organized about 1758, was located, I believe, at Union Bridge in Carroll County about two miles northeast of the Eller farms. Beaver Dam Church, organized about 1762 was located, I believe, on Beaver Dam Creek and was still nearer to the Eller farms. The Annual Meeting of all Brethren Congregations in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia were held at Pipe Creek in 1778, 1783, 1787, 1799, 1804, 1814, 1830 and 1867. (See "History of the German Baptist Brethren" by Martin Grove Brumbaugh, 1890 and "History of the Church of the Brethren in Maryland" by ). Maurice Henry, 1936.)

The exceedingly sparse records of the Conestoga Church show the following adult baptisms of new members which are pertinent to this genealogy. First, on 24 April 1748, Adam Dick and his wife, Odilga.

Second, on 29 March 1752, Daniel Seiler. Third, on 26 Aug. 1753, George Eder and wife, her name not given. It is possible that George Eder was the same as George Michael Eller. Fourth, on 14 April 1754, Henry Eler (sic) and wife, her name not given (Ibid). Very likely he was the Henry Eller who with George Michael Eller later acquired land called Hammond Strife on the waters of Little Pipe Creek in Frederick County, Maryland. The records of the Conestoga Church from the Sept. 1755 to the year 1763 have not been found. (Ibid)

One of the churches that served the Pipe Creek and Beaver Dam Brethren may have been on a 4 acre tract of land described as a part of "Browns Delight," that, on 8 Oct. 1765, was deeded to the "Dutch Congregation of Pipe Creek" by John Grider, (Garber). This land was located on the Clemson branch of Sam's Creek in Frederick County about two and a half miles southeast of the farms of George Michael and Henry Eller. If these nearby churches had made records that were now extant they, doubtless, would show George Michael Eller and Henry Eller as members. Neither is shown in the records of the Evangelical Lutheran or the German Reformed Churches of Frederick County, Maryland except for the marriage of Elizabeth, daughter of George Michael Eller who is recorded in the Evangelical Lutheran Church as having married Henrich Reb, 10 June 1777. Very probably Reb was a member of the church.

Both the Evangelical Lutheran and the German Reformed Churches were organized early in Frederick County. Simon Kern, Michael Hoffner, Philip Kuntz and others, "who built the church in the mountains," declared their loyalty and faith on 31 Oct. 1746 "when the Swedish Pastor, Mr. Nasman, was here." (Evangelical Lutheran Church Records, page 490 at Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore.) Apparently this was not the Frederick Town Church because that church was not built until 1761. (Frederick County Deed Books B, p. 574 and F, pp. 535-536.) The Reformed German Church was built about 1747-48. Thomas Schley (b. 1712; d. 1789) who brought a party of Germans to Maryland about 1740-45 and served as their teacher, interpreter and friend, was a member of this church and its organist for many years. He was an educated man and translated the wills of deceased Germans for the county records.

One of the wills which he translated was that of George Michael Eller shown above.

The Estate of George Michael Eller was settled by the executors Henry Eller and Michael Gerber, 26 Oct. 1779. It was valued at 956 pounds, 15 shillings and 5 pence, a substantial sum for those early times. The widow received 50 pounds, the son, Peter Eller, 97 pounds, the son, Leonard and daughter, Elizabeth Reb, 82 pounds each and "the youngest children, namely Jacob, George, John, Eve, Catherine and Maria" the balance, amounting to 645 pounds, 15 shillings and 5 pence, in equal portions.

George Michael Eller is first found in the records, 14 April 1773, when he was deeded 100 acres of land in Frederick County, Maryland by Edward Gaither and his wife Eleanor. (Deed Books, pp. 96-98, Frederick County, Maryland.) When he appeared, 17 Aug. 1773, to pay his alienation fine his name was given as George Eller, the Michael being omitted. This land was a part of a tract called Hammond's Strife. Hammond Strife, containing 1230 acres, was patented to John Hammond 10 Aug. 1753 and was located about 10 miles north east of Frederick Town and just east of the town of Johnsville in the District of Johnsville in Frederick County. The land drains into Little Pipe Creek that forms part of the border between Frederick and Carrol Counties in Maryland.

George Michael Eller, whose will was written in the German language, doubtless could not speak English and, therefore, could have been recorded in the public records either as George or Michael. He could

have been the Michael Eller who .. was granted 25 acres of land in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, 12 April 1733 (Pennsylvania Archives.) From here he could have removed first to Frederick County, Maryland and from there to Rowan County, North Carolina with Jacob, Christian and Melchoir Eller who settled there about 1760. A Michael Eller is found on the tax list of Rowan County, North Carolina in 1759. (The Rowan Story by James S. Brawley, p. 352.)

From Rowan County he could have moved back to Frederick County, Maryland where, as we have seen, he purchased land near Little Pipe Creek, 14 April 1773. If these conjectures could be proved to be correct they might corroborate that portion of the Bible record of William Eller (supra) which said that his grandfather, Leonard Eller, was born at fort (ford, fork) littors, North Carolina.

In all events George Michael Eller must have been a good provider and a thrifty settler. Not many first generation settlers in this country died leaving an estate of 950 pounds as he did. One could easily believe that he brought a goodly sum with him from his native land and that he managed to hang on to it and, perhaps, add to it during his lifetime. No one of his descendants can doubt that he left them a good and worthy heritage.

The children of George Michael Eller named in his will were, order of birth in all cases not certain:

- (1) Peter Eller<sup>2</sup>, eldest son, born say about 1746; died 1799 in Ashe County, North Carolina; married say about 1766, Elizabeth Dick, daughter of Conrad and Katherine Dick of Frederick County, Maryland.
- (2) Elizabeth Eller<sup>2</sup>, married 10 June 1777, Henrich Reb, son of Caspar Reb of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Her marriage was recorded by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Frederick City, Maryland which gave the residence of both as Peiff (Pipe) Creek and called her George Michael Eller's daughter. Witnesses were Jacob, George and Joseph Eller, Michael and Barbara Kraut, Frederick Reutenbach, Conrad Spohn, Michael Ungerer and Marie Schmausin. She was shown to be a married daughter in her father's estate settlement but her married name was not legible. (Minute Book and Proceedings of the Orphans Court, 1777-1784, Frederick County, Maryland.) Jacob and George Eller who witnessed her marriage doubtless were her brothers. Joseph Eller probably was her cousin, son doubtless of Henry Eller.
- (3) Leonard Eller<sup>2</sup>, born 20 March 1754; died in Hamilton County, Indiana in 1839 or 1840. His wife was Elizabeth whose surname was not found.
- (4) Jacob Eller<sup>2</sup>, probably was the Jacob Eller who died, 1830, in Botetort County, Virginia. His wife was Magdalena whose surname was not found.
- (5) George Eller<sup>2</sup> He probably was the George Eller who died about 1839 in Davidson County, North Carolina. His wife apparently was Susannah whose surname was not found. She is listed in the 1840 Federal Census of Davidson County as aged between 60 and 70 and living alone. She died probably in 1840 or 1841.
- (6) John Eller • No identifiable record of him was found. He may have been one of the John Ellers found in the early census records of Rowan County, North Carolina. This writer's guess is that he was the John Eller who married Catherine Fight (Fort) 10 Aug. 1785. (Rowan County Marriages.) She was a daughter of Peter Fight. (Deed Book 19. p. 876, Rowan County, North

Carolina.) One son of theirs probably was Peter EllerJ, born in Rowan County in 1788, who served during the War of 1812 as a private in Captain W. L. Dufphey's Company of the 3rd Regiment of U.S. Riflemen. (His Hon. Discharge Papers, Archives Bldg., Washington, D.C.) For these services he was granted 160 acres of Bounty Land in Missouri which he sold to Henry Fight, his brother-in-law probably, 10 December 1819. (Deed Book 26, p. 112, Rowan County.) Peter Eller, probably married 17 April 1809, Susannah Lemly and removed to Montgomery County, Virginia and there shown in the 1820 census of that county, aged between 26 and 45 with wife of same age and with six male and one female children under 16. Other sons of John Eller2 may have been David EllerJ who had a license dated 31 June 1815 to marry Sarah Leonard, a daughter of Valentine Leonard of Davidson County, North Carolina, and George EllerJ who had a license dated 9 September 1814 to marry Caty (Catherine) Eller. (Rowan County, North Carolina Marriages.)

(7) Eve Eller2 No further record found.

(8) Catherine Eller2 She may have been the Catherine Eller who married, 27 May 1788, Peter Lehman with Adam and Martha Lehman serving as witnesses. (Evangelical Lutheran Church, Frederick County, Maryland.)

(9) Maria Eller2 No further record found.

## Henry Eller (Brother? To George Michael Eller)

Henry Eller, d. 1788, brother apparently of George Michael, also owned 90 acres of land called a part of Hammond Strife that he purchased, 6 June 1767, from Jacob Flora. Thomas and Elizabeth Wood witnessed the deed. (Deed Book K, p. 1284, Frederick County, Maryland.) Henry Eller and Elizabeth, his wife, sold this land, 14 June 1771, (Deed Book O, p. 3, Frederick County, Maryland), and on 13 June 1772 bought 110 acres of land nearby on Beaver Dam Branch, a draught of Little Pipe Creek. (Deed Book P, p. 128, Frederick County, Maryland.) Henry Eller and his wife, Elizabeth, sold this 110 acre farm 16 May 1785. (Deed Book WR6, p. 4, Frederick County, Maryland.) He died in 1788, (Admin. Acct. Washington County, Maryland) leaving children, according to a deed, dated 4 Dec. 1793 in Washington County, Maryland, which show his children and in some cases their spouses to have been named

(1) Joseph Eller, whose age in 1800 census of Washington County, Maryland was over 45 and whose family consisted of a wife, aged over 45, three daughters, aged between 16-26, two daughters, aged between 10 and 16 and three sons, aged under 10.

(2) Elizabeth Eller, who married Christian Herter (Hester);

(3) Rebecca Eller, who married Christian Gerber;

(4) Henry Eller, Jr., and his wife Fronica. He removed to Montgomery County, Ohio where he died in 1832 leaving a wife Fronica and children Daniel, born 28 March 1785; died 7 June 1863; married Elizabeth Siler, born 4 October 1784; died 16 March 1872 (gravestones), a daughter Mary, born 29 Jan. 1788; died 14 August 1876 (gravestone) who married Jacob Albaugh, and probably Abraham and Joseph and other children;

- (5) Jacob Eller and his wife Margareth, doubtless the Jacob Eller who married 14 Oct. 1789, Mary Willjard;
- (6) Esther Eller who probably was the Esther Eller who married 18 March 1794, George Bechtel;
- (7) Daniel Eller and his wife Hannah;
- (8) Sarah Eller;
- (9) Magdalene Eller who married Jacob Gerber;
- (10) Maria Eller, probably the Maria Eller who married Christian Schaub, 3 1 Aug. 180 3;
- (11) Salome Eller who married Henry Schultz;
- (12) Peter Eller a minor not of age in 1795 but who signed an heirship release 5 April 1800 indicating that he had then reached his majority. (Washington County, Maryland Deeds Book H, pp. 657 and 860; BookJ, p. 396 and Book M, p. 462.)

According to a letter of Mary Hoss Headman of Knoxville, Tennessee, published in the Maryland Historical Magazine in 1945, (Vol. 50, p. 250), Henry Eller Sr. married Elizabeth Bigler (Beigler), daughter of Mark and Catherine Bigler. Mark Bigler's will, proved in Frederick County in 1787, mentions a wife Catherine, (sometimes written Marie Catherine), and children,

- (1) Catherine Bigler, who married Henry Miller;
- (2) Elizabeth Bigler, who married Henry Eller (Etter);
- (3) Phoebe Bigler, who married Lazarus Fonderburgh;
- (4) Salome Bigler, who married Samuel Tomme;
- (5) Mark Bigler Jr., who married Catherine Lease, daughter of Philip Lease who died in Frederick County, Maryland about 1769;
- (6) Israel Bigler;
- (7) Daughter Bigler, who married Mr. Randabush;
- (8) Hester Bigler;
- (9) Juliana Bigler;
- (10) Barbara Bigler. (Will Book GM, No. 2, p. 238, Frederick County, Maryland.)