



OFA Bulletin

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Oberholtz	Uberholtzer	Overholser	Oberheuser
Overhults	VanHulser	Overhuls	
Overhalser	Overhalt	Atherholt	Obold
Uberholser	Overholtzer	Overholt	
Overhulster	Oberholser	Oberholtzer	

Overholser Family Reunion August 2nd, 2025 St John's Center Church, Rt 625 Terre Hill PA Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, USA

President's Column

Greetings in the New Year to all our OFA members. Please put the 2025 Reunion date in your calendars and don't forget our **gathering on the night before at Yoder's Family Restaurant**. It's important to have time to visit!

We are seriously thinking of changing our Reunion Date in 2026. There are so many conflicting reunions and other activities on the first Saturday in August. Bring your suggestions and we will toss them around at our business meeting.

At this year's Reunion, we will be having a background slide show. It will have pictures from Switzerland, the Palatinate, castles on the Rhine River that were toll stops in the 17th century, and on to America. We can stop & discuss if interested. If this has enough interest we will continue it, adding homesteads here in America, and more.

We'll see you all in August, with pot luck lunch (we provide meats and drinks).
 Blessings, Michael Martin

Come Join US

**Overholser Family
Association Bulletin**

Vol. XXXXIV No 1 Winter 2025

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Welcome New OFA Members!!!

Fred Oberholzer, South Africa

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Dewey Oberholtzer, Marietta PA

George & Evelyn Rohrer, Lancaster PA

Stanley & Lovely Stauffer, Lititz PA

Carl Garber, Lititz pa

New Way to CONTRIBUTE!

You can support the OFA by visiting our website
at www.overholser.net and clicking the Donate button.

We have PayPal for your convenience. Please e-mail
gmartin@overholser.net if you have any questions.

Abhorring the Potatoe

The potatoe was unknown to Europeans until the 16th century CE. After Christopher Columbus discovered the Caribbean Islands, Spanish conquistadors began searching the New Lands for whatever deemed valuable to them. They found the native population ate blobs of soil called potatoes! Food shortages in Europe at that time were due to extreme cold temperatures in summers, killing off the grain supplies. So the Spanish brought back potatoes to plant in the Old World. But mainland Europeans could not get past the idea of eating something from under the soil. No Way! They would rather starve! And many did.

But the lowly potatoe did find a companion. It was introduced in Ireland, and helped sustain the 10,000 Swiss-German refugees who were moved from London to Ireland by Queen Mary. And the lowly potatoe found its way back to the Americas as a main staple food of the European immigrants.

Known Oberholzer Connections

From North America & around the Globe to Switzerland

See the OS (Oberholzer in Switzerland) Line on the OFA Website, and at the OFA Reunion

AO Anna Oberholtzer c1699 - sister of JL Jacob of Brecknock

OS11215.27151.

EO Elsa Oberholtzer of Hagenau Alsace, France niece to MC Marcus

OS11215.27951. m Nov 17, 1706 Christian Fretz - 1749 Haenau, Alsace

mother is Maria Oberholtzer of Bembach, Alsace OS11215.2795

HJ Hans Jacob Oberholtzer of Hatfield Immigrated 9/5/1730 Philadelphia

OS11215.2a411

HW Heinrich Oberholtzer Jr of Worchester brother to HJ Hans Jacob of Hatfield

OS11215.2a412

JF Jacob Oberholtzer of Franconia 1702 immigrated to Philadelphia Penns Woods

OS11215.27931

JL Jacob Oberholtzer of Brecknock brother of AO Anna Oberholtzer

OS11215.27152

JS Joseph Oberholzer of St Louis MO

OS11111.12563.15133

KO Kasper Oberholzer 1821 - immigrated 1857

OS11215.2a912.5233

MK Maria Oberholtzer of Sinsheim m Jacob Kundig in the Palatinate/Kraigau

OS11215.27121. c1718 Immigrants to America

MC Marcus Oberholtzer of Coventry came from Alsace France

OS11215.2792

ML Martin Michael Oberholtzer Immigrant 1710 Lancaster/then Bucks

OS11215.2794

MT Mark Overholt Died prior to father's will

OS11215.27922.1

MV Marcus Oberholtzer c1760 - Rockingham Co VA

possibly s/o OS11215.2771

OS Farmer Oberholzer in Switzerland is also AU Farmer Oberholzer in Austria

AU Farmer Oberholzer in Austria, Mayor of the local town of Molk

This Line connects the Oberholz Swiss Line to all known O families.

OW Henry Oberholtzer Immigrant 1738/9 Ourwalt, Owerwasser

OS11215.27665

RO Rudolf Oberholtzer Immigrant 1737

?OS11215.27952.1

possible kin to ML Martin Michael Oberholtzer

SA Jan Oberholtster of South Africa of Elsenz; 1696 immigrant to South Africa

OS11215.27721

SL Samuel Oberholtzer of Lancaster County

OS11215.27933.

Possible Connections:

JO John Michael Oberholz c1818 "Germany" - 1860's NJ from Alsace-Lorraine

m Pauline Haas c1833 "Germany" - 10/1877 Omaha NEB

See OS11215.27951

JASr John Overholser of Ireland possible bro/o SA & MV

HG Hans George Oberholzer Arrived October 22, 1754 on *Halifax*

Sporry-Oberholzer Families

The Sporry family originated a couple dozen miles east of Oberholz. In the village of Berent-schwyll in die Rieden there was an Adrian die Sporry von Wapplischwyll in the year 1541.

In *der Meien Winckhel* also in 1541 was a Uly Sporry. Walty Sporris Schurwiss and Heiny Sporris Mulliwisli are also listed in Berentschwyll in 1541. Heiny Sporry resided in the area of Hinterburg. - Pg 39 - 43 In 1541 in the village of Adetswil there were 11 houses. The families included Blassy Sporry, Clein Heiny Sporry, Osswald Sporry, and Ruedy Sporry. In 1468 in Adetswil is listed:

Hanns Spoery, sin wib; a Hanns, sin bruder; a Heiny, sin bruder; sin junckfro

- *Unser Baretswil*, A Sierszyn 1983

The Sporry family married into the Oberholzers very early in their history. They are part of the Oberholzer Coat-of-Arms.

Fur Trapper Peter Bizaillon

By Dennis L Oberholtzer

Pierre Bizaillon was born about 1662 in Saint-Jean-d'Aubrigoux, Haute-Loire France. He migrated with his three brothers to New France around 1680, and began fur trapping by 1686. Brother Etienne traded furs with the Ottawa Indians, and was killed by the Iroquois in 1697. Brother Benoit worked with the Sioux and farmed outside Montreal. He drowned in June 1700 while in a canoe outside Montreal. Michel traded with the Illinois Indians, and helped in the First Fox War of 1715. He was later banned from trading in Pennsylvania, and lived the remaining years in Laprairie.

Peter (English for Pierre) Bizaillon attempted several business adventures as far as the Mississippi River, but came to Pennsylvania around 1688 "poor and miserable". He became a trader and fur-trapper in south-east Pennsylvania. He joined the trading company of Jacques Le Tort. Le Tort was a Huguenot refugee from the war which happened in the Palatinate. Le Tort and Bizaillon purchased property side by side along the Susquehanna River in West Donegal Township. There in 1694, Peter met his old friend Martin Chartier, who had married a Shawnee woman, and assimilated into their tribe.

By 1696 Peter lived at St John's in Chester County PA, along present day Route 340 near Compass. That area was 30 mile from the nearest inhabitants at that time. There he continued to trade with the Native Americans. While there was an overabundance of furs going from Canada to France, England was very willing to pay a higher price for furs. William Penn and other Penns Woods officials were skeptical of Peter's contacts, and arrested him sometimes on false or minor charges. But James Logan wrote William Penn on Peter's behalf: "Peter has long traded here, and behaved himself well ..."

In October 1708 Bizaillon was granted to build a house from Logan. That was a 500 acre tract purchased in 1738 at St John's. Peter had been working with Franz Ludwig Michel, a Swiss explorer in locating mines in Conestoga. The Susquehanna Indians quarried a silver mine, and a soapstone quarry on Williams Run near Christiana. There was also a copper outcrop above the London Grove Tavern, later to be called Nickel Mines, which would be built to be used for experiments, surveying, and as a travel stop for newly arriving immigrants. That may be where Bizaillon met the Oberholtzer family immigrants in 1710.

- see *A Surveyors House in Paradise*, OFA Website

Peter [also] purchased 500 acres of land on the edge of the Schuylkill River in Coventry Township. He later either sold or had the land reclaimed to the Free Society of Traders. From 1708 to 1713, some of the land was held by warrant to Matthew Brooks. *"The survey for Brooks was that of a 500 acre tract identical with lots 1,2,3,and 4 of the Topo map near Wenilworth and Pottstown. Marcus' eldest son Jacob, transferred the lands of lot 2 (formerly that of Marcus) and lot 4 to Christian Brewer. Lot 3 was held by Crissinger until Marcus' second son Marks returned from Bucks Co, obtaining a warrant for lot #3 in 1741."*

- John L Overholt, 3/29/1981

MC Marcus Oberholtzer

Marcus Oberholzer and his wife Elizabeth were born in Europe, and lived for a short time in Holland before traveling to London on May 6, 1709 in the first group of ships carrying Palatinate Refugees.They were settled by Thomas Fairman, a surveyor for William Penn, on 300 acres of the 500 acres previously held by Peter Bizaillon, a fur-trader protege of Richard Logan, Secretary of the colony [of Penn's Woods]. The land and a house built in 1700 were on the west bank of the Schuylkill River in present day East Coventry Township in Chester County.

- Marcus (1664-1725) and Elizabeth Oberholtzer Family, John L Overholt to OFA

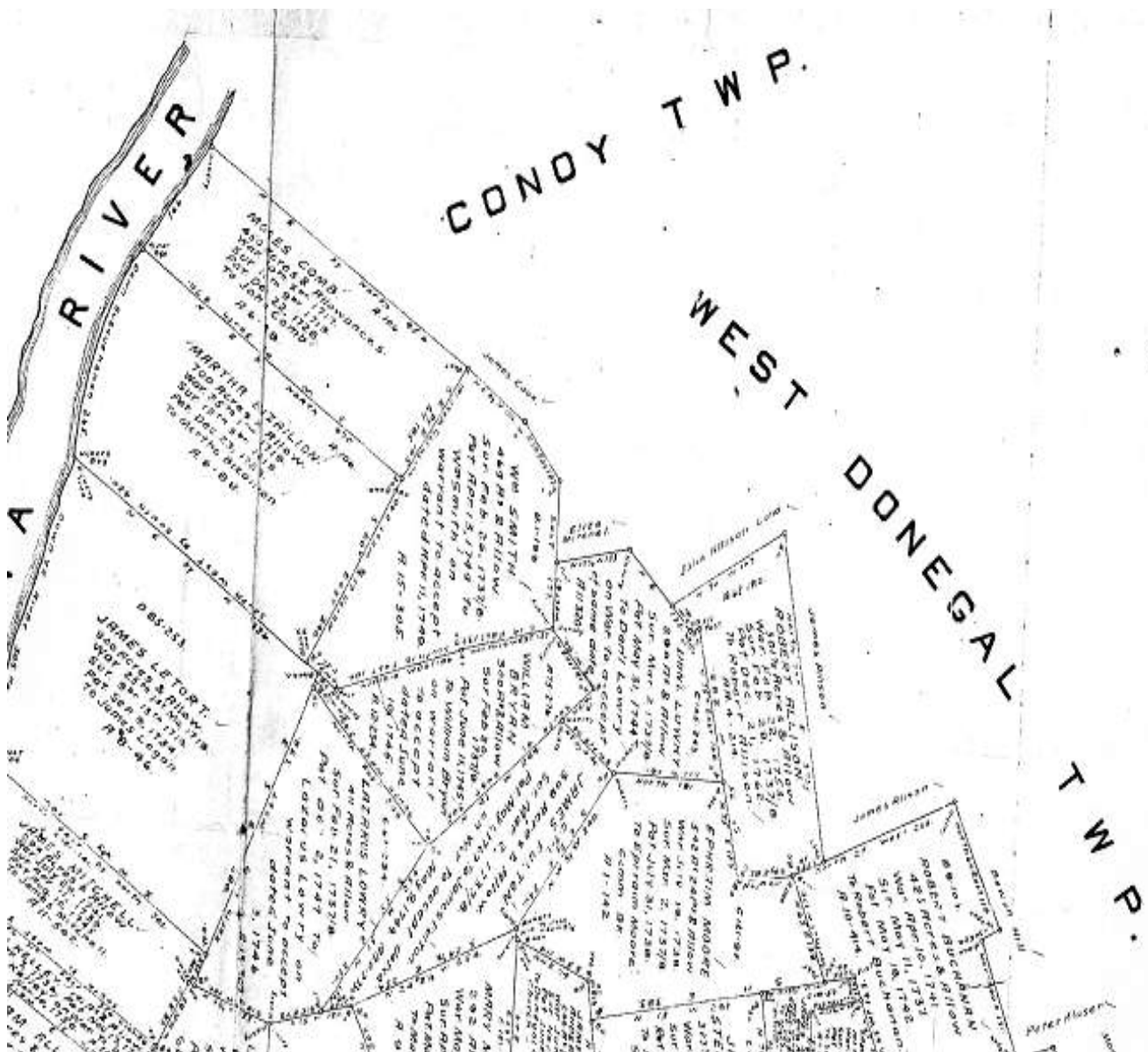
David Fairman wrote his will in 1711 and died in 1714. *"Pennsylvania Archives records that Marcus appeared in the court/commissioners board and said that Fairman pretended to settle him on 300 acres of land on the west bank of the Schuylkill River but died before giving him title. He paid 48 pounds of the warrant for 300 acres of land. It was surveyed and patented by his youngest son Henry in 1734 as I recall and by his eldest son Jacob when he sold land to Christian Brewer."*

- Letter to Barbara Ford by John L Overholt on January 28, 1981

Was Thomas Fairman the father of David Fairman, or the other way around? Or did he have a double name: David Thomas Fairman? Fairman was one of the Free Society of Traders, which would later become the London Land Company.

Marcus Oberholtzer immigrated to America in 1712. It probably took a year to prepare and travel across the river at Germantown on the First Ferry, then north to Coventry Township. He would acquire Lots 2, 3 and 4, which equaled 300 acres. The northern Lot 1 would be settled temporarily by relative Martin Michael Oberholtzer until 1717, when Michael moved his family back to Conestoga at present day Millersville. There he would purchase a 300 acre tract northwest of the original 1710 Mennonite settlement. His son Martin would later follow Peter Bizaillon, and likely work for him as a trapper/hunter on the west side of the Susquehanna River in what is now York and Cumberland Counties.

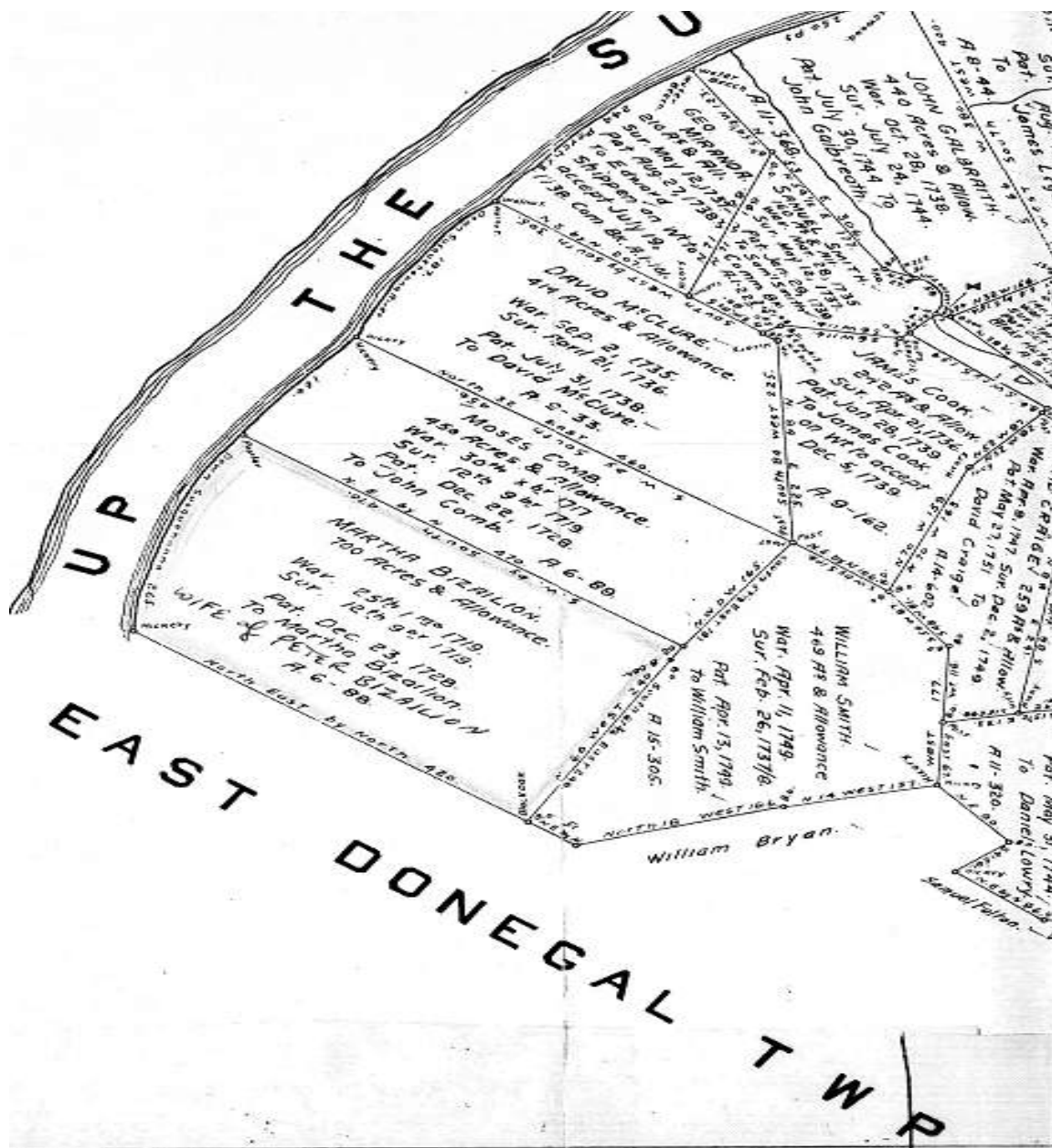
Peter moved to Paxtang along the Susquehanna River, where he likely became a purchaser of furs from the Poplar Indians living on an island in the River. It is at this time that it is surmised how ML1 Martin Oberholtzer Jr went along with Peter, and moved across the river to hunt furs for Bizaillon. Martin would die in York County PA in 1749. It is not known if Peter owned land in the Daulphin County area. But he did establish a trading post in Paxtang. His partner Chartier died in 1718.



Warrant Map above reveals the properties of Martha Bizaillon next door to James Le Tort, along the east bank of the Susquehanna River.

The lower map shows Martha's property south of Moses Comb.

Traveling with furs by boat from future York County or upstream from the hill country was a much easier method before wagons came into use.



Peter and his wife Martha bought two tracts of land in the Columbia area of the Susquehanna River. One tract was in Conoy Township, and the other in West Donegal. It is interesting that both properties are in Martha's name. That way if Peter got in trouble, the couple would not lose their lands. By 1730 Peter retired with his wife Martha Combe (1693-1764) on the 700 + acres in Conoy Township.

Peter died on July 18, 1742 aged 80, and with his wife are buried in St John's Churchyard at Compass PA. He had one daughter, Jahanna Bezeillon, born about 1690.

Our New Secretary Thomas E Armstrong

Tom was born to Paul David and Betty Jane (Muckey) Armstrong on January 22, 1959 in Prescott Arizona. Two years following, the Armstrongs moved back to Lancaster PA, where Tom's father was born and raised. Tom attended and graduated from Conestoga Valley School District. He also graduated from Penn State with an Associate in Business Administration. In 1980 he married his beloved wife, Janice C Williams and moved to Marietta PA, where he still resides. They are the proud parents of two daughters, one son, twelve grandchildren, and one great granddaughter.

In 1990 Tom ran for the House of Representatives and successfully defeated an 18 year incumbent. During his tenure in the Pennsylvania General Assembly he served on a number of committees including his chairmanship of the Information Technology Subcommittee of the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee. Tom led the first legislative information technology blueprint for a state, nationally. He also was appointed to the National Conference of State Legislatures, Council of State Legislators - Eastern Region, and the Local and State Government Advisory Committee of the FCC.

Upon his leaving the State House in 2002, he represented a technology firm nationally, acquired his CDL and worked for several firms in the transportation industry.

A little over two years ago he started his genealogy journey. Since his grandmother on his dad's side was a Brubaker, he was fascinated with his Anabaptist roots and continued to "dig". Tom's 5th great grandparents are John H Brubaker and Barbara Oberholtzer. When he struggled to find her parents, he then was led to Dennis Oberholtzer; who wonderfully found the connection he was seeking. Within the last several weeks, he found another connection to the Oberholzers on his father's dad's side; his 11th great grandmother Dorothea Oberholzer who married Hans Schaufelberger. Both Barbara and Dorothea are descendants of Jacob Oberholzer and Annli Cuntz.

Tom is excited to join our family and continue to build and strengthen our association.



The late Rosa Oberholzer from Oberholz Switzerland was given this award:

**Thanks and Recognition to Rosa Oberholzer
For the valuable and versatile work as an actuary (Registration clerk)
1946-1989 Oberholz Corporation**

Translated by Dennis L Oberholtzer. It is most interesting to find the Oberholz Corporation still in business after roughly 1000 years. It would be nice to know more about the company.

Thank You to Judy Pease for copying the picture in her possession.

Fording Waters

Most of us know very little about travel in the early 1700's by the first European immigrants. We are so accustomed to driving over bridges, we no longer even take notice of the water under our feet. But back then, the early settlers had to take several hours to cross a creek. They had to be careful not to get the food supplies wet, or it would be lost. They needed dry clothes to put on after they crossed through the cold waters. The wagons full of supplies had to be carefully brought down the muddy steep incline, so as to keep it from tipping over into the water. The bottom of the creeks had to be determined, so as to be able to cross without being bogged under water, or getting swept away. And then the wagon had to be pulled up the bank on the other side, without harming the horses.

We would do well to appreciate the hard labor of our fore-fathers. Without their determination and fortitude, we could not drive our 4 X 4 Fords across the ford.

Presidents of the Overholser Family Association

1906 - 1920	SL	Martin L Overholser	Millersville PA
1920 - 1937	SL	Dr George W Overholser	309 N 9th St, Reading PA
1937 - 1939	SL	Christian H Oberholser	Lionville PA
1939 - 1956	SL	Dr Winfred Overholser	Washington DC
1956 - 1986	SL	J Spencer Overholser	Oley PA
		1956-1969 Landover Hills MD; 1969-1974 Bowie MD; 1974-1986 Oley PA	
1986 - 1988	SL	John Oswald, PHD	Conchohocken PA
1988 - 1990	SL	Mildred Pettigrew	Pottstown PA
1990 - 1992	JF	Willard E Overholtzer	Rancho Cordova CA
1992 - 1994		Charles Carroll	North Hills PA
1994 - 1996	MC	Darwin Overholt	Doylestown PA
1996 - 1998	JF	Willard E Overholtzer	Rancho Cordova CA
1998 - 2000	SL	Ernest Weinhold	Sunhill Rd, Manheim PA
2000 - 2202	MC	Darwin Overholt	Doylestown PA
2003 - 2004	SL	Dennis L Oberholtzer	49 Paradise Lane, Paradise PA
2005 - 2006	SL	James Overholser	Roanoke VA
President Emeritus		Spencer Overholser	Oley PA
2007 - 2008	AS	Jack Sholl	California
2009 - 2010	SL	Paul Weiler	Waynesboro PA
2011 - 2012	SL,JF	Dennis L Oberholtzer	49 Paradise Lane, Paradise PA
2013 - 2014	SL	Carroll G Street "Jake"	York PA

2015 - 2018		Michael Martin	Rahway, New Jersey
2019 - 2020	JL	Kristopher Overholt	MD; Austin Texas
2021 - 2022	SL	Michael Shrader	Elizabethtown PA
2023 - 202_		Michael Martin	New Jersey
202_ -			

Connections to other O Lines in North America

See *The Oberholtzer Book* by Barbara Ford 1995

TN Line	part of JL Jacob Oberholtzer of Brecknock
MT Line	part of MC Marcus Oberholtzer Line
JAsr Line John of Ireland	father of AB, JA, CA
JM Line	part of JA Line
JBsr Jacob Oberholtzer of Berks Co	father of JB Jacob of Berks Co
JG Jacob 1801 - dp1870	is now AS8, and part of AS
Jacob Overholser m Elizabeth Longnecker is AS8, twin of AS7 Hannah	
Both Jacob & Hannah born same day, recorded in different calendars.	
JJ John Oberholtzer	is JC2, s/o JC Jacob Oberholtzer of Northumberland Co
CV Christian Overholser - 1828	is brother of AC of Ontario and IC Isaac Overholt
HO Lline	is part of the MV Line (MV1 is HO)
MM Martin Matthew	1710 Immigrant to Lancaster Co; father of CH & Obold
BC Benjamin Oberholser of Canada	has a sister BCR Elizabeth Oberholser
VO Abraham of Ohio	may be AC43 Abraham
ES Elizabeth Oberholtzer	is daughter of JF18 Samuel Oberholtzer

Obituaries

Laura Lee W Landis Mar 25, 1943 - Nov 2, 2024 wife of James M Landis, and mother of Timothy James Landis and Kathleen I Landis. bur Risser Mennonite

L Damon Whitmore III passed Dec 12, 2024

Bonnie Layman Lair 1939 - 2020

Dolores Yoder Dec 8, 1931 Brookville - Nov 16, 2024 Storypoint, Troy

Anna Hoover Weber 100 years passed Nov 17, 2024 Atmore AL

Arden Ray Booher July 1, 1954 - Oct 23, 2024 nephew of Anna Booher 1927-2024
Anna was member Old German Baptist Brethren Church

Dale Edward Overholser Jan 17, 1935 - Sept 21, 2024 Springfield OH, s/o Paul & Helen (Linkhart) Overholser

Dorothy Joan Coppess Oct 4, 1931 - Sept 1, 2024 Greenville OH

Paul E Wogoman Sept 27, 1945 - Aug 16, 2024 Eaton OH s/o Russell & Beulah (Gephart) Wogoman. Survived by wife Deborah L Williams, ch: Beth Ann Watts of Middletown OH, Betsy of W Manchester OH, Devon Moyer of Brookville OH, David Douglas Ulrich of W Chester OH, and Eric Daniel Ulrich of Whitefish MT

Barbara Grover Jan 2, 1933 New Carlisle OH - Aug 16, 2024 4 children

Nancy Jane Ullery Aug 14, 2024 at 81 in Marion OH

Beth Keihl July 6, 1938 Covington OH - July 26, 2024 Versailles OH

David Alan Van Tillburgh June 24, 1956 Sidney OH - July 1, 2024 s/o Odis & Eileen (Laughman) Van Tillburgh of Sidney OH

Doyle Everet Warner Jr Feb 8, 1950 - June 26, 2024 Boyne City

Donald M Smith July 17, 1929 Piqua - May 31, 2024 Piqua s/o Lee R & Blanch (Miller) Smith

OFA OFFICERS FOR 2024

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OFA Bulletin	Dennis L Oberholtzer	717-687-6950 Leave Message 49 Paradise Lane Paradise, PA 17562-9654 223-316-1897 Earline overholserfa@gmail.com

The Second printing of

***The Oberholtzer Book,
1995 by Barbara Ford***

is now available. Price of \$40.00 includes shipping. It includes the first five known generations of Oberholzers in America and Canada.

Contact Geoffrey Martin, Treasurer for purchase information.

Note that we are not compiling lists in order to go out of existence.
We are organizing for the next line of research, stories,
etc, so that seekers may more easily find our info.

Reunions around the States:

115th Overholser Family Reunion August 2nd, 2025
St John's Center Church, Rt 625 Terre Hill PA
Overholser Family Association

102nd Overholtzer Reunion, IA Community Building, Tingley IA
1st Saturday in August; Jenesse Tull, 435 E Main St, Tingley IA 50863

Fretz Family Reunion, First Saturday in August, 11 AM
355 Kingspond Lane, Souderton PA 18964

Indian Lease/ European Purchase

During the 16th to 18th centuries, the Native American population in the eastern portion of North America lived a semi-nomadic lifestyle. While they were hunter-gatherers, this was not a sustainable lifestyle when the tribe would get too large. The need for additional food supplies was the agent of change. Learning to make bread from acorns was a start. They also learned how to grow corn (called maize). They found that planting seeds in richer soil produced larger corn kernels. In the Susquehanna area they began building what we call a longhouse. This allowed enough room for a fire in the middle, sleeping quarters, and storage of food supplies.

As time progressed, the soil would lose its ability to grow quality maize, due to loss of necessary minerals. So the tribe would uproot their homes about every 6-8 years and move to a better growing location. When the Europeans began to migrate into their territory, they expected them to migrate also. So when the Native Americans "sold" areas of land to the foreigners, they really thought they were only leasing the land. But the Europeans had them sign documents for sale of the properties. The latter expected the sale to be permanent.

Taming the Wild West

One of the members of the posse chasing the Jesse James Gang of outlaws was Dr _____ Overholt, a druggist. The chase led them near Northfield Minnesota after they had robbed a bank. After the capture of some of the outlaws, Dr _____ Overholt treated the wounded. - adapted article from an unknown newspaper

Check out the OFA Website:

<http://www.overholser.net> or Contact Us at

info@overholser.net; or Facebook at OverholserFamilyAssociation