

RECORDS OF PRUSSIAN MENNONITE CHURCHES IN THE VISTULA DELTA

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS
IN THE MONTAU-GRUPPE CHURCH 1661-1945

PART 1

Transliterated and Digitized by
Ernest H. Baergen
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

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The web site of Mennonite Library and Archives (MLA) in North Newton, Kansas at www.bethelks.edu/mla has a series of scans of the original records of the Montau-Gruppe Mennonite Church dated from 1781-1945. Those records have been transliterated and then digitized to a Brother's Keeper (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. 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 hard copy of the Montau records is compiled in two parts; the index that follows integrates those two parts.

In Part 1 and in Part 2, the scans of the Montau records are on the web site in six sets. Each set contains data from the numerous congregations in the Montau area but the records are not in any chronological order. The data in Part 3 was obtained by the MLA and made available to me on a compact disc after Parts 1 and 2 had been compiled. Most of this data predates the information in Parts 1 and 2 and some duplicates information on the web site mentioned above.

The index included here arranges only the surnames in chronological sequence and indicates the pages on which those names may be found. Anyone seeking information about ancestors in the original church records may follow this index to find the data on the web site

Earlier records of the Montau-Gruppe church dating back to 1661 are posted on the web site: www.mennonitegenealogy.com/prussia/ They have been transliterated by Adalbert Goertz and Glenn Penner. The data contained in their works listed below are also included in the aforementioned BK6 file:

- Penner, Glenn H., compiler *Mennonite Baptisms in Montau, West Prussia: 1661 to 1740*
Goertz, Adalbert, compiler *Mennonite Baptisms in Montau, West Prussia: 1741 to 1813*
Goertz, Adalbert, compiler *Mennonite Deaths, Kreis Culm, West Prussia, 1800-1840*
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Penner, Glenn H., compiler *Mennonite Births found in Catholic Church Records of Culm, West Prussia: 1787-1817*
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In addition, some marriage records were obtained from the publication:

- Goertz, Adalbert "The Marriage Records of Montau in Prussia for 1661-1704."
The Mennonite Quarterly Review 50(1976): 240-250.

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 given names and surnames were abbreviated in the original records they were entered that way in this hard copy. In the BK6 file, however, the full names have been listed 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

Since the biographical data come from disconnected sources, it is difficult to make family connections from 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. Around 1820, the records begin to state the name of the mother more consistently.

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 by subtracting 15 from the year of baptism since that seemed to be the age at which baptism usually occurred at Montau.

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.

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

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