

TRITT

FAMILY NEWSLETTER

With pertinence to the following known name variations – Tritten, Dritt, Trait, Trate, and Treat

ISSUE NUMBER 17

APRIL 1997



Nancy Tritt

MOUNTAIN WALKING IN THE OBERSIMMENTAL

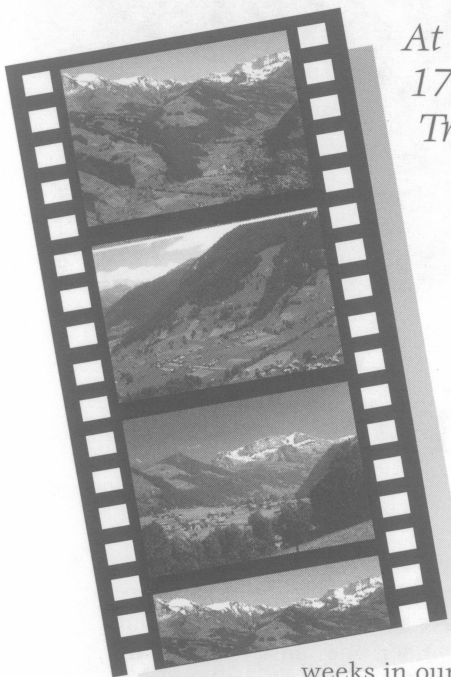
by Donald G. Tritt

The region in which our earliest ancestors lived is reached by a 25 mile drive south from Lake Thun to the end of the Simme Valley. Once the Upper Simme Valley (the Obersimmental) is reached, the first major town is Zweisimmen, a town at 3,000 feet with a population of about 4,000. The next town in the valley is St. Stephan, where our ancestral church is located. St. Stephan is home to about 1,300 and is situated at about 3,300 feet. The last village in the valley is Lenk; at about 3,500 feet, it has about 2,300 inhabitants. A short distance beyond Lenk the road ceases for

it is here that the high Alpine chain rises quickly to an altitude of about 10,000 feet, a height where there is almost always snow. This sight is magnificent. On the valley floor, one can see a rich carpet of alpine flowers. Raise your eyes a bit and you can see the vivid green of conifer-covered mountain sides. Look a bit more to the heavens and you can see the white snow-capped Alps, and above that, the view is topped off by the vivid blue sky, a memorable sight to fix in one's mind.

see page 4

1997 HOMESTAY IN LENK,
Switzerland and Third International Reunion
June 17 - July 1, 1997



At the time of mailing this newsletter, the following 17 people have made reservations for the 1997 Tritt Family Research trip to Lenk, Switzerland:

- David L. Cramer (Shippensburg, Penna.)
- Gladys V. Cramer (Shippensburg, Penna.)
- Jeanette & Richard Miller (Shippensburg, Penna.)
- Helen R. Myers (Webster City, Iowa)
- Thomas T. Myers (Redondo Beach, California)
- William & Sandra Treat Naiva (Canandaigua, New York)
- Leonard & Connie Tritt (Carlisle, Penna.)
- Donald G. Tritt (Granville, Ohio)
- Al & Jan Tritten (Eugene, Oregon)
- Robyn & David Wampler (Gardners, Penna.)
- Mercedes & Perry Woolsey (Alpine, Utah)

We greatly welcome additional family members. To register call Donald G. Tritt at 614/587-0213. A detailed description of this trip was given in issue 16 of the Tritt Family Newsletter; however, in brief, this trip will feature living for two weeks in our ancestral valley, a weekend reunion of family members from the United States and Europe, and several planned day-long excursions by private deluxe motor coach to nearby places of scenic and historic interest.

Another trip to Switzerland will not be scheduled again for approximately ten years. If you are interested in this trip, please act promptly since time is very limited and the final arrangements must be completed very soon.

A VISIT TO *St. Stephan*

by Sue Tritt Wieschendorff - written in 1982

After visiting Germany and Austria this last August, we met our friends, the Marcums, in Switzerland. We had leased a chalet near Interlaken on the Brienzensee for a week with plans of day trips to see the mountain tops and Swiss villages. One of these trips was to the Ober-Simmmental Valley where the Tritt family lived in the 1600s before migrating to Alsace, France.

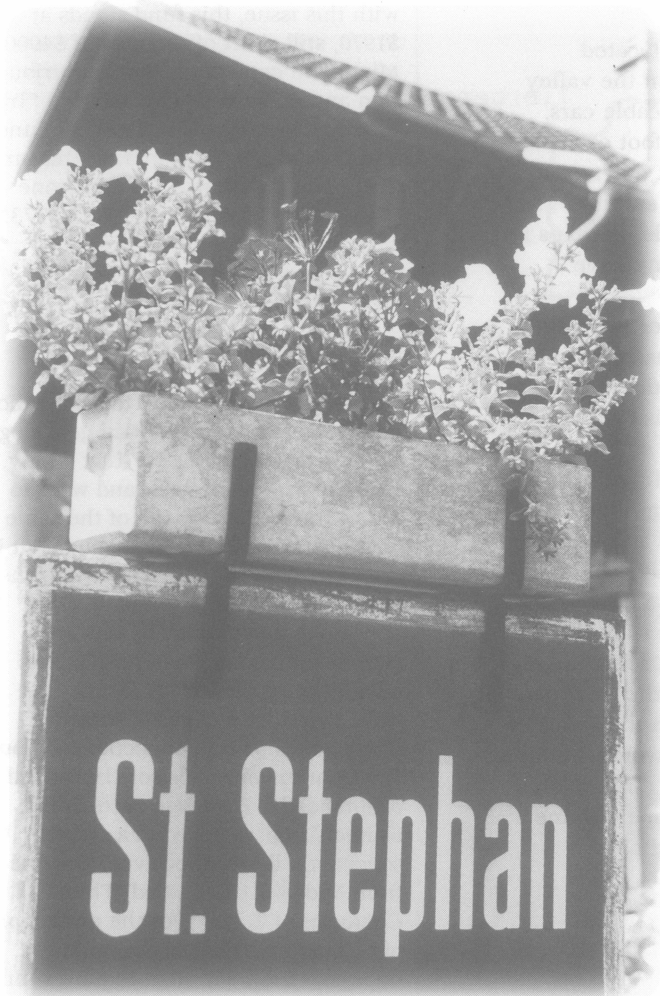
We took a ferry that morning across the lake to the Interlaken train station and boarded the train to the Simmental Valley. We quickly realized that it was not a popular tourist trip, much to our delight. The people around us were dressed in hiking gear - leiderhosen, sweaters, heavy knee socks, hiking boots, and carrying rucksacks.

It was a crystal clear day and the valley grew more beautiful as we made our way through it. The farmlands, chalets, barns, haystacks, gentle hills were picturesque. Our relatives actually lived here!

The seven of us were the only passengers to disembark at the St. Stephan station and we joked about doubling the population of the town because no one was in sight! It was a lumbering town with huge stacks of wood down by the train station. We walked the main street a ways looking for people and hoping to find a shop to bring back a remembrance of the area. Finally, an old man, through "sign language," told us of a restaurant where we could eat lunch. Afterwards, we found a wood-carving shop (very small) and inquired about some of the items that obviously were made right there - bread boards, boxes, plates, beautifully hand carved and painted in that delightful Swiss style of hearts and flowers. The owners of the shop spoke not a word of English and we didn't know enough German to communicate. After many frustrating moments, they sent for a young man next door who spoke perfect English (he had been to school in

London). We all had a wonderful time, and just about missed our train!

I showed them my passport with my maiden name, Tritt, on it and the shop owners, an elderly man and his wife, became so excited. Evidently, the name Tritten is prevalent in the area, and when I told them my relatives had lived in St. Stephan in the 1600s, they were thrilled. We also learned that the man, Hans Kunz, is a furniture maker and wood carver and has produced this particular design in furniture making that is found only in this area - no one else does it. We had established an immediate bond even though none of us spoke the other's language. Through the interpreter we ordered some of his crafts and his wife, Elise Kunz, would paint on some of them. They were delighted to make them for us, and we are delighted to give them this Christmas - a direct link to the way of life and customs of the Tritt family in the 1600s.





Left to Right: Donald G. Tritt, Margrit Tritten, Hugo Lüscher, and Pascal Tritten

All around the southern end of the Obersimmental are located numerous beautiful hiking trails. Many of these start from the valley floor; however, numerous other trails can be reached by cable cars. Once the upper regions are reached by whatever means, foot or cable car, one can walk on relatively flat trails, or, one can walk down to a nearby village and take a train back to Lenk. During our summer 1997 two-week visit in Lenk, some free days have been set aside, perhaps for mountain walks if desired. For such walks, cousins in Lenk have offered to be our guides.

One walk of historical significance to early inhabitants of this valley and certainly to the early Trittens, was the use of a path ascending in a southward direction from Lenk over the Rawil Pass, then descending on the southern side to Sion in the Valais. In early times, this 8,000 foot pass was used for trade; from the warmer Mediterranean side came wine products and from the north came dairy products. Travel from village to village could easily require between ten and fifteen hours.

Because of the historical significance of this trade route across the Rawil Pass, walking it has long been on my personal "life list" of activities to be accomplished. During a summer 1996 visit to Lenk, I was finally able to make this walk. Accompanying me on this walk were Margrit Tritten, Pascal Tritten, her adult son, and Hugo Lüscher, a long-time family friend and native of Switzerland. Walking at the slow pace required for this rather steep ascent, I could put myself in the shoes of our earliest ancestors. Clearly they worked in a difficult world, but one which gave them values upon which to build a better life. In a related manner, I can say looking out upon the beauties of the upper Alpine world can provide a perspective which fulfills one's own life.

APPEAL for 16th Century Research Funds

by Donald G. Tritt

In previous issues of the newsletter, we have described the need for a specialized fund to research quite obscure records of the 1500s (some of these even as far back as the 1400s). Since no records exist earlier than this time frame, this fund would enable us to fill in the 100-150 year gap between the era when record-keeping began, up to the record of the 1562 birth of Jakob Tritten, the earliest known Tritten and progenitor of this line of Tritten-Tritt throughout the world. In terms of genealogy, we have reasonably good access to records from 1562 forward. What we do not have is information from 1562 back to the beginning of record-keeping in the Obersimmental.

Thinking of the larger research effort, people ask us how they may be of help. Certainly one way is to consider a contribution to this special designated-use fund. As we go to press with this issue, this fund stands at \$1970, still short of the goal of \$4000. Might you consider a small contribution and make your check out to "Tritt Family Research - 16th Century Fund" and mail to : W. Wayne Tritt, Treasurer, Tritt Family Research, 24 Old Stone House Road, Carlisle, PA 17013-9773.

WARNING - Once Again!

This past year we received two solicitations purporting to contain genealogical information about the Tritt family. We have examined these and want to report these offerings are of the same bogus sort that we warned you about in the past. One is titled "The Tritts Since 1739" and is issued from Bath, Ohio. It appears that Ohio may be finally clamping down on such misleading advertisements because, for the first time, the order form does state "No direct genealogical connections to your family or to your ancestors is implied or intended." However, such a disclaimer is not attached to a second solicitation that we received, this one from Midvale, Utah, titled "Three Centuries of Tritts." For the protection of serious genealogical research, we hope that Utah will soon require similar disclaimers.



TRITTEN/TRITT Coat of Arms

by Donald G. Tritt

As we come nearer to publication of Volume I of the TRITT FAMILY HISTORY, we thought it would be of interest to family members around the world to identify an authenticated coat of arms. Throughout our many years of research, various coats of arms have surfaced. However, none of these have been confirmed as pertaining to the Tritten-Tritt line which originated in St. Stephan, Switzerland. Since our primary goal has been to research the genealogy of the family, we have given scant attention to the issue of a coat of arms. However, as we approach issuing Volume I, we wanted you to know that we have begun inquiry into the possibility of a documented family coat of arms. We hope to have more information for you in the next issue of this newsletter. Should one be located, we would consider its use on our newsletter masthead and on items offered for sale to members, such as note cards, enamel pins, kitchen magnets, postcards, etc. Remember, we are always in need of appropriate and quality ways to add to the treasury in order to cover the cost of publishing this newsletter.

1997 Meeting, Tritt Family Research

Thursday, August 14 - Sunday August 17, 1997 in Carlisle, Pa.

On Thursday evening, Friday and part of Saturday, further editorial work will be done on Volume I of TRITT FAMILY HISTORY. We will also prepare family record sheets that will be included in the book. The business meeting of TFR will be held on Saturday afternoon, starting at 1:00 PM. In addition to meal time together, some other social events will be planned. Our work sessions and annual meeting will be held at the Days Inn in Carlisle, Pa. For details on accommodations and reservations, contact the Days Inn at (717) 258-4147 and tell them that you are with the Tritt Family Group. AAA/AARP discounts will be accepted. Reservations must be made by August 1, 1997.

DRITT CEMETERY UPDATE

by Leonard W. Tritt

Review of the laws of Pennsylvania regarding cemeteries indicates there is little or nothing we can do to assure preservation of the Dritt (Tritt) Cemetery in York County, Pennsylvania. This cemetery, believed to be the oldest in the country known to be exclusively used by Tritt ancestors, is located on a hilltop on lands owned by Jacob Dritt over 200 years ago. Years later, the land became part of a farm.

The farm, which contains the cemetery, became one of numerous others nearby which were bought thirty or forty years ago to assemble a large horse farm. The owner of the horse farm went bankrupt a few years ago and some of those farms are being subdivided and developed into residential real estate. This fate has not beset the farm with the cemetery, but likely will in the future.

State law does seem to provide some limited protection to a cemetery if it has a caretaker. Tritt Family Research has been maintaining the cemetery for nearly fifteen years, but the owner is likely unaware, since he has never responded to any communications. So, as decided at last summer's TFR Annual Meeting, an engraved granite stone has been purchased for \$320 to serve notice to all that this is the Dritt Cemetery and TFR is its caretaker. The premise is that the caretaker would be notified of any plans to disturb the cemetery. This is no assurance the cemetery will be preserved, but may some day discourage its destruction or alteration. Since the cemetery is not subdivided from the farm and TFR has no ownership or legal control, this action is about the best we can do to prolong the cemetery's status.



Patron Sponsors

The publication of the TRITT FAMILY HISTORY will be a very costly venture. In order to provide all family members an opportunity to participate in this project in a manner other than research and writing, the first volume will be partially supported by Patron Donors. These donors will receive a deluxe bound limited edition volume, numbered and signed by the authors. The patrons will be recognized in the book.

Patron donors can contribute in three different classifications. The bronze category will contribute \$100 and receive one special edition book. The silver category will contribute \$300 and receive three special edition books. The gold category donors will contribute \$500 or more and receive five special edition books. These contributions can be made in honor or in memory of a friend or family member and will be so listed.

If you are interested in assisting with the financial support of this project, please complete the enclosed form and your check made payable to TFR Book Fund. Mail to W. Wayne Tritt, 24 Old Stone House Road-North, Carlisle, PA 17013-9773.

Patron Donor

Name: _____
please print

Address: _____

Bronze _____ Silver _____ Gold _____
\$100 \$300 \$500

Complete if applicable:
In Honor of: _____

In Memory of: _____

Signature: _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Make checks payable to: TFR Book Fund and mail to:

W. Wayne Tritt
24 Old Stone House Road
Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17013-9773

TRITT ROAD

by Virginia Tritt Taylor, Brownsville, Tennessee

Tritt Road is full of memories and lots of laughs. This road is 3.75 miles long and is now blacktopped. When Maurice Tritt and I moved onto this road in November of 1943, it was sprinkled with gravel on the hills. One month later, our son Wayne was born and joined his three year old sister, Dare. Our social life was the picture show on Saturday and going to Zion Baptist Church. On Saturdays, we climbed into our two-ton Chevrolet truck and started to town (Brownsville). Now, when it rained, the road was slick and when we started up one particular hill, the truck would slide into the ditch. Wayne was on my lap, and Dare and Maurice both would come over on me. What happy memories! Maurice would give the truck more gas and we would continue down the ditch. Finally, we would get back onto the road. Three years later, Diane joined Dare and Wayne.

Several years later, Maurice was working for the State of Tennessee as vehicle inspector and farming. He got me a pick-up to carry the cotton to the gin. One day about dark, the girls and I were coming home. As we rounded the curve, the truck sounded terrible. The faster I went, the

louder the noise got. When I would slow down, the noise would get slower.

Just a few days earlier, a man had killed his wife, then shot himself. The noise from the truck had started just as we got in front of their house. We started thinking of that murder. When we got home, Wayne was in the house and we told him of our scare. "Mother," he said, "let's go back and see what it was." We four bravely got back into the pick-up and went back down the road. Before we got to their house, we noticed a stick of wood laying on the road. It was just the right size to fit into my mud grip tires. So my brave son figured out what had happened.

We bought our first farm on Tritt Road. It had a house on it and we made this into our home. The next morning after we moved in, I invited our pastor and his family over for breakfast and we, with our children, dedicated our new home to God. As time goes on, many happy memories are joined with Tritt Road.

After Maurice purchased the cotton gin, a farm with a brick house adjoining the gin, came up for sale. We purchased the land and remodeled the house. We moved



into it and Wayne and his wife, Patsy, moved into ours, on Tritt Road. They raised their two children there. So, for fifty-three years, our family has lived on Tritt Road and as Wayne and Patsy say, "We love it here. This is home."

Olga Tritt, Park Avenue Jeweler

from her obituary that appeared in The New York Times on March 11, 1968

Olga Tritt was the founder and president of Olga Tritt, Inc., jeweler at 424 Park Avenue in New York City. She founded her jewelry house in 1910, and was considered an expert on pearls and colored precious stones. In the late 1920s she herself went pearl-fishing in the Caribbean and off South America and later made trips to India to study rubies, sapphires and emeralds. "She was a great believer in going to the source," an associate said, and her travels took her almost all over the world. A story in The New York Times in 1963 called her a "designer whose work is noted for originality and yet is not astronomical in price."

Olga Tritt lived at 530 Park Avenue. She died at the age of 81 at the DeWitt Nursing Home. She was survived by a daughter, Mrs. Alva Davidson, a brother, Harold Tritt, and two grandchildren. Tritt Family Research would be interested in learning more about her and locating any of her descendants.

ZION

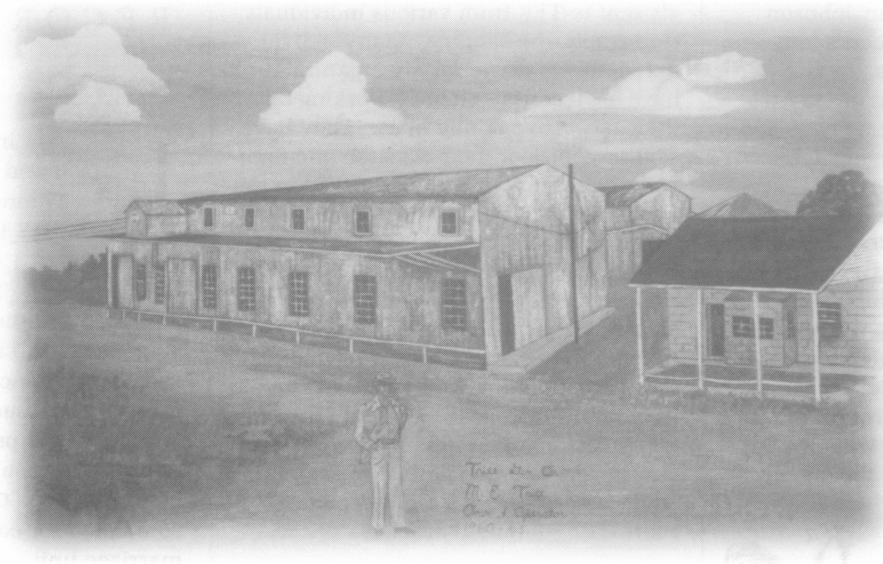
G I N C O M P A N Y

TRITT GIN

by Virginia Tritt Taylor, Brownsville, Tennessee

Zion Gin Company is on Highway 70, four miles east of Brownsville, Tennessee. It has been a gin site since 1912. We were ginning cotton (that is separating the seed from the lint) and baling the lint in 490 to 500 pound bales. Maurice and I have been owners and stockholders since 1960. We bought the gin and did a lot of repairs and remodeling. In 1965 the gin burned. The yard

was full of cotton trailers to gin. We were afraid that some of the bales had been burned, but when I checked the books, everything was there and no one was hurt. Maurice estimated the loss at \$250,000. It was partially insured by "Lloyds" of London. Maurice immediately started making plans to rebuild the gin. He organized a stockholders' gin called "Zion Gin Co., Inc." The first year we ginned 750 bales. That year was a bad year because of the drought. We have continued to grow over the years to



Painting of the Tritt Gin Company in the 1960s.

a little over 17,000 bales and it is our desire to continue growing. It is a thoroughly modern gin. Maurice and Wayne formed a partnership in a seed plant and fertilizer company in 1961. After Maurice passed away in 1982, Wayne was elected president and manager, taking over the duties. I was elected secretary,

treasurer, and director.

I semi-retired two years ago and my grandson, Stewart Tritt, came into the business in 1994 to share part of the load with his father. It is a friendly gathering place for farmers as it was in the beginning. The door is always open. We would love for you to stop by if you are ever in West Tennessee.



Zion Gin Company today.

A MORE PERSONAL VIEW of Our Annual Meetings

by Donald G. Tritt

Our intent in this newsletter is to report to you what we have discovered about the Tritten-Tritt family and to inform you about upcoming family events and component research projects, all of these being quite task-oriented accounts. However, at our last annual meeting we became aware that such a report falls short of communicating the intense emotional family feelings present at each annual gathering. We want you to know about this enjoyable aspect of our work together, and to do so is a way which genuinely welcomes you to become a part of this special family bond.

Ordinarily, our annual gathering begins on a Thursday evening with no agenda other than a personal catching up to date on each other, a special time of sharing our lives since the last meeting. It is an extra pleasure to welcome newcomers to

the central research effort. The next two and a half days are spent in a work mode. In doing this we have often felt the special joys of seeing each person supplying their own differing talents toward the fulfillment of the larger goal, a telling of the Tritt family story.

At the half-day business meeting, discussions are always cordial, cooperative, and creative. When it comes time to design the content for the next newsletter, I am always pleased to see how readily people volunteer to prepare written articles.

In summary, in all our meetings and gatherings, we feel abundantly blessed, being part of a well functioning group, working positively and constructively to present the family story to the many Tritten-Tritt family members around the world. We welcome your involvement.

Poetry

by Lorene Tritt Wagner

One of our TFR members has recently published a collection of original poetry. Lorene Tritt Wagner lives in Johnson City, Tennessee and has been a longtime supporter of TFR activities. In fact, she was present at the meeting in 1977 when TFR was formed. Her poems have had good reviews in newspapers in Johnson City and Chattanooga.

Lorene's 30 page booklet is entitled "Light Poetry for Leisure Reading" and is illustrated with original drawings by her teenage granddaughter, Lydia Wagner. It contains 30 original poems written during her lifetime. The following poem is taken from her booklet. Copies can be ordered using the order form on the back of this newsletter. Lorene will give any profits from TFR orders to the organization.

Farmer's Son



It's jist like Sunday all the time

Down at Uncle Joe's.

His folks sets in the shade

While our folks plows and hoes.

Aunt Rachel rocks and dips her snuff

While Uncle Joe he chews.

Joey's never got no chores

Nor has he any shoes.

My Pa, he call 'em "lazy-bones"-

Says, "They don't half try"-

Says "Joe will lose his farm

And in the poorhouse die."

But me, I keep a thinkin' how

Folks has really got it made

Where every day's like Sunday

Jist a settin' in the shade.

Newsletter Articles Welcomed

by Richard L. Tritt, Editor

Included in this newsletter are several articles that were extracted from materials sent to TFR from various individuals throughout the country. Many individual members of our family organization have been conscientiously working on their respective family lines. They have sent us copies of their research and family record sheets. These are placed in the family archives in Carlisle and much of the material will be used for future TFR publications.

The editor of this newsletter solicits articles for inclusion in future editions. If you have a story or article related to the Tritt family that you would like to have published, please mail it to the editor by January 31, 1998. If possible, articles should be typed double-spaced. The editor will reserve the right to edit or abbreviate submitted articles.

Zip Code Extension Request

by Connie J. Tritt

As you may have noticed on some mail addressed to you, there is attached to your zip code a dash followed by four other numbers. This is referred to as your zip code extension. We at Tritt Family Research are in the process of compiling zip code extensions for all persons on our mailing list. To do this we would seek your help and cooperation by asking you to send me a letter or postcard with this information or to use the address correction form found elsewhere in this newsletter. The postal service appreciates the extension on zip codes because it aids in getting mail to you faster. When you send me your zip code extension, please include your name and mailing address; this will help me to locate and verify your address in our large continental mailing list. We at Tritt Family Research thank you in advance for your cooperation in this effort. You may mail your information to Connie J. Tritt, 7 Ironstone Drive, Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17013-9705; or if you are within the Carlisle area and wish to call me, my evening phone number is 717-258-4176.



FAMILY GROUP RECORD SHEETS

If you want information regarding yourself and your family included in the eventual publication of TRITT FAMILY HISTORY, we ask that you complete a series of Family Group Record Sheets. This sheet is the standard form for the initial recording of all genealogical information. For your use, we have included a copy of this form in this issue of the newsletter. Since you will probably need several such sheets, you might copy the one included here. One sheet is to be completed for each family, i.e., each marriage unit. If there is a second marriage, then a second sheet is to be completed.

Ordinarily, three completed Family Group Record Sheets, one each for (a) you (and all your children), (b) your parents (and all their children), and (c) your Tritt grandparents (and all their children) in combination with our own considerable collection of pre-20th century sheets could result in the delineation of your own multi-generational pedigree chart, perhaps as far back as the 1500s. Should you be able to provide an additional sheet containing information about your Tritt great-grandparents (and all their children), the likelihood is increased of being able to provide you with such a lengthy pedigree chart. Without these sheets, the linkages cannot be made and information is not readily available for future generations.

In listing all dates, please be sure to use the convention of day/month (in words)/full year, e.g., 18 July 1876. In addition, please be sure to give maiden names of all females. Both of these practices help to eliminate many errors. Send your completed Family Group Record Sheets to Donald G. Tritt, President, Tritt Family Research, 4072 Goose Lane S.W., Granville, Ohio 43023-9670.

FAMILY GROUP RECORD

To indicate that a child is an ancestor of the family representative, place an "X" behind the number pertaining to that child.

HUSBAND

Born _____ Place _____
 Chr. _____ Place _____
 Marr. _____ Place _____
 Died _____ Place _____
 Bur. _____ Place _____
 HUSBAND'S FATHER _____ HUSBAND'S MOTHER _____
 HUSBAND'S OTHER WIVES _____

WIFE

Born _____ Place _____
 Chr. _____ Place _____
 Died _____ Place _____
 Bur. _____ Place _____
 WIFE'S FATHER _____ WIFE'S MOTHER _____
 WIFE'S OTHER HUSBANDS _____

SEX M F	CHILDREN List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth Given Names Surname	WHEN BORN			WHERE BORN			DATE OF FIRST MARRIAGE TO WHOM	WHEN DIED	
		DAY	MONTH	YEAR	TOWN	COUNTY	STATE OR COUNTRY		DAY	MONTH
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
11										

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

OTHER MARRIAGES

TRITT *Family History* A PROGRESS REPORT

by Richard L. Tritt

During the last year, work has continued on Volume I of TRITT FAMILY HISTORY. A critical review of materials was conducted in conjunction with the 1996 annual meeting of TFR, August 16-18, in Carlisle. Several areas that needed additional research were noted and various individuals were assigned to work on those areas.

The three editors of the publication met for four days, October 10-13, in Boiling Springs to review all the drafts of the various articles slated for Volume I. Those present were Donald G. Tritt of Ohio, Harold Hegyessy of Utah, and Richard Tritt of Boiling Springs. The editors also met with several of the authors and began to investigate possible publishers. The text of the book will be completely finalized and proofed before it is given to a designer to lay out the pages with selected photos and illustrations. A pre-publication sale of the books is being planned in order to determine the number of books to be printed.

Subject areas that are still being researched are the Dritt House in York County, Jacob Dritt of York County, the Saint Stephan-Tritten Coat of Arms, and the children of Christian Tritt of Berks County. In-depth research has revealed that some information that has been accepted as fact for many years, is not correct. All information in the proposed publication will be documented.

Two of the editors met for another four day work session on March 13-16, 1997, and all three editors will be present at the 1997 annual meeting in Carlisle on August 14-17 for another review of drafts. Individuals attending the annual meeting work-sessions will help finalize the family record information that will be included in Volume I.

Officers of TFR

Donald G. Tritt, *President*
4072 Goose Lane S.W.,
Granville, OH 43023-9670
Telephone (614) 587-0213

Richard L. Tritt, *Vice President &
Newsletter Editor*
204 Forge Road,
Boiling Springs, PA 17007
Telephone (717) 258-6181

Wm. Wayne Tritt, *Treasurer*
24 Old Stone House Road, N.
Carlisle, PA 17013-9773
Telephone (717) 766-7397

Connie J. Tritt, *Secretary*
7 Ironstone Drive,
Carlisle, PA 17013-9705
Telephone (717) 258-4176

Cynthia J. Wagner,
Assistant Secretary
5710 Cloverdale Road,
Harrisburg, PA 17112
Telephone (717) 652-5602

News From Our First Trip to Switzerland

The following article originally appeared in the June 24, 1989 edition of the Berner Zeitung, a newspaper published in Bern, Switzerland. It was written by Anne-Marie Günter who interviewed Donald Tritt and Harold Hegessey during the 1989 Tritt Family Remigration Tour. It was translated for us by Graham David Tritt.

Two men from the new world are looking for their roots in the Simmental valley. Normally the old books rest in a secure archive underneath the church of Lenk. Generations of pastors have inscribed the dates of christenings, marriages and deaths, and now the county clerk, Hansruedi Schneider, has readied them in his office for the two Americans Donald Tritt and Harold Hegessey.

The people of Lenk understand the feelings of the professor of psychology from Ohio and the retired Air Force pilot from Utah: for them also, the books are more

than just pages of handwritten data, which though beautiful in appearance, for the inexperienced are unreadable. They tell the stories of men who have lived in the Simmental valley, and Donald Tritt and Harold Hegessey know that among these people were their ancestors.

The men from the new world are searching for their roots in Europe. For them, the books are a treasure of information about the Tritten families of the upper Simmental valley. Donald's wife Marilyn summarizes the feelings that impel the men: "It is exciting to follow these traces into the past." And she says - out of politeness or conviction, is not clear - that one can be proud to have Swiss blood.

Donald Tritt explains the procedures, "We go from the known towards the unknown." The investigators from America started from a date which also determined the date of this tour of a group of Tritt descendants back to the upper Simmental. 250 years ago exactly, in 1739, the brothers Hans Peter and Christian Tritt left on the ship "Robert and Alice" for Pennsylvania. They did well, there, in the land of unlimited possibilities and their

descendants have spread to all parts of the United States. "Their desire for land was strong, and there was plenty of it. You only had to survive the attacks of the Indians," as Harold Hegessey puts it.

The Tritt brothers were the start of an indirect trail to Switzerland. Their father, Hans Peter was a tailor in the service of Baron Otto von Streiff von Lauenstein in the town of Diedendorf in Alsace. According to the entry there in the marriage registers, his father was born on 6 January 1711 in St. Stephen. The travel back into time now led into the Bernese Oberland, and now, the men are carefully transcribing all entries in the archives relating to Trittens.

The two Americans' interests in genealogical research did not just start with the appearance of Roots by Alex Haley, the story of the background of the negro slave Kunta Kinte. Harold Hegessey's grandmother was a Tritt, and had asked her grandson to look for the background that she had not been able to find. And the 45 year old Donald began to wonder why he had such a strange name, when he was a Boy Scout.

QUIET OLD COUNTRY HOMES *Reflect Life of Pioneers*

by Mrs. Etta Green

originally published in the *Powell Valley News* of Pennington Gap,
Lee County, Virginia, on January 3, 1953

It's a great treat sometimes to slip away from the daily routine of things and spend a few hours visiting in a quiet country home, especially when the home has retained its pioneer background amid the changing scenes of progress.

Charlie Tritt and his sister, Miss Laura, live in the house built 82 years ago by their father, William Tritt. Charlie, who is 82, was born there and Miss Laura, now 84, was two years old when the family moved into the house. Charlie married when he was a young man but his wife lived only a short time. Miss Laura has never married.

The house, which was a log affair in its primitive stage but later remodeled and weather boarded, is located on a 180 acre farm purchased originally with a shot gun. It sits above the highway to the right, going east, between Woodway and Dryden.

There is no end to the heirlooms and rare old furniture, much of it hand-made from curly walnut, maple or other decorative woods growing on the farm. In the basement, the spinning wheel sits to one side - not used any more, and by it is the old reel that measured the material as it was woven. It was arranged to tick off every one-fourth yard. Attached to the wall is the old coffee mill.

Miss Laura showed me coverlets woven on the loom and patchwork quilts made by her mother more than a hundred years ago. One in particular, "The Kentucky Rose," is one of the most beautiful pieces of handwork one can imagine. She also showed me ever so many beautiful pieces of linen made from flax on the farm.

Framed and hanging on the wall is an old tax ticket belonging originally to



Samuel Tritt House

their grandfather and dated 1852. It reads:

"Black do do," (the negro slave) \$1.08; land (500 or 600 acres) \$3.32; salary and interest, \$3.88; total \$8.28."

When I had enjoyed their friendliness and hospitality as long as I felt that I could spare the time, and was fixing to take my leave, Miss Laura pointed out another farm house rising to view in the dim distance to the north.

"Now," she said, "I'd like for you to go and see the house where our grandfather, Samuel Tritt, Sr. lived." So, accompanied by a relative of the family, Mrs. G. J. Tritt, we made our way down a long stretch of country road, along a wild onrushing creek, to the old Samuel Tritt home, said to be considerably more than 150 years old, and occupied by his granddaughter, Mrs. Callie Crabtree, her son and grandson.

Here again I found the quiet, friendly, home-like culture of an earlier age. Mrs. Crabtree is 81 years old but does the milking, raising chickens, and does all the household work. Her home, like Miss Laura's, held ever so many lovely pieces of needlework she had done in

her younger days. And there was similar hand-made and handcarved furniture.

She took us to the kitchen to show us the five-foot wide fireplace with mantel all the way across. In the center of the fireplace, suspended in an iron frame, hangs a big, old cast-iron kettle in which, Mrs. Crabtree said, the old colored servant used to boil meals for the large household and work hands.

Well, on an on the friendly hostess showed us reminders of earlier generations who had occupied the house, and talked of them,

and I came back home with a new appreciation for those early settlers who blazed our country's trail, and those whose memory is still enshrined in peaceful, quiet old country homes.

Lorene Tritt Wagner sent us the above article in 1983. Miss Laura and Mr. Charlie were children of William and Emily (Lucas) Tritt, and grandchildren of Samuel Tritt, Sr., who came to Lee County with his mother Elizabeth Hoover Tritt (and her other children) before 1810. There are two errors in the article. The William Tritt home was not made of logs; it was the Samuel Tritt house that was log. During a later generation the logs were covered by weather boarding.

Mrs. Green's statement that the 180 acres were purchased with a shotgun is an exaggeration. A few acres are said to have been acquired in that manner, but part was obtained by patent, and part by purchase as adjoining tracts became available. Both houses were still standing in 1983, but Samuel's had been sold out of the family.



Treasurer's Report

W. Wayne Tritt, Treasurer
Carlisle, PA

January 1, 1996 to December 31, 1996

Balance January 1, 1996.....\$6116.44

Income - all sources.....\$4634.62

Total expenses.....\$1808.26

Balance December 31, 1996.....\$8942.80

Because of the generosity of our many supporters, we realized a total of \$4220 in donations in 1996. \$3000 of this amount was from book patron donors, making this account total \$6300. In addition, \$250 was added to the 16th Century Research Fund, which now totals \$1970. We also received a gift of \$350 from a donor who wishes to remain anonymous to cover the cost of a granite marker to be placed at the Dritt Cemetery near Long Level in York County, Pa. Receipts from the sale of newsletters, maps, cookbooks, etc. amounted to \$254. Along with general fund giving of \$640 and \$140.02 interest on our bank account, our total income for 1996 comes to \$4634.62.

As is always the case, our major expense was the printing and distribution of our annual newsletter. Last year we paid \$796.88 for printing and \$338.50 to mail the newsletters. This does not include an \$85 bulk 3rd class mailing fee which for 1996 was paid prior to January 1 and therefore is not a legitimate expense for 1996. If you have read this report this far, you probably have realized that we need your financial help. If every recipient of this newsletter were to send us just one dollar, we would break even. Obviously, a larger gift would help much more. If you have not been one of our supporters, why not stop right now and determine what you can give, and place a check in the mail today. We will be most grateful. To those of you who have been our faithful supporters in the past, thank you very much. We solicit your continued support.

The following is a list of people who joined our book patron donors group during 1996. They will receive a special signed copy of Volume I of TRITT FAMILY HISTORY for each one hundred dollar donation.

Marilyn H. Moffitt	Sandy, UT
Delores J. Henry	Portland, OR
Richard & Nancy Tritt	Boiling Springs, PA
Roger & Janet Roberts	Levittown, PA
James F. Tritt	Marietta, GA
Hollis Clark Tritt	Spokane, WA
Bronwyn Lee Tritt	Spokane, WA
Courtney Lynch Tritt	Spokane, WA

Max & Carol Wells Adamczyk	Massillon, OH
Donald & Sara Long	Carlisle, PA
Virginia S. Tritt	Brownsville, TN
Gary B. Sliffe	Beach City, OH
Barbara Reinhold Holloman	Silver Spring, MD
Ernest James Trait	Long Beach, CA
Clair S. Tritt	Carlisle, PA
Harold M. Hegyessy, Jr.	Pleasant Grove, UT

The following donors provided additional funds to TFR during 1996. This includes donations for the 16th Century Research Fund.

Roger & Janet Roberts	Levittown, PA
Max & Carol Wells Adamczyk	Massillon, OH
Frances D. Trait	Reading, PA
Donald, Betty & Wendy Smeltz	Harrisburg, PA
Gladys V. Cramer	Shippensburg, PA
Harry & Dorothy Trate	Birdsboro, PA
Jean Kelso Alaniz	Oswego, IL
Nancy Tritt Snyder	Newport Coast, CA
Harvey & Beverly Hupp	Webster City, IA
Robert E. Tritt, Sr.	Atlanta, GA
Wayne & Esther Tritt	Carlisle, PA
Richard & Nancy Tritt	Boiling Springs, PA
Patricia Keller	Carlisle, PA
Hollis C. Tritt	Spokane, WA
Margaret Tritt	Burnaby, N.C., CAN
Jeanne Drawbaugh	Norristown, PA
Carline Larmoyeux Agee	Oak Ridge, TN
Donald & Sara Long	Carlisle, PA
Virginia S. Tritt	Brownsville, TN
Ernie & Doris Trait	Long Beach, CA
Dr. Donald G. Tritt	Granville, OH
Harold M. Hegyessy, Jr.	Pleasant Grove, UT
Constance Rood Fisher	Glendora, CA
Cassandra Faulkner	Cary, NC
Eunice & Patrick Tritt	Athens, GA

It is our intent to acknowledge every donation regardless of the amount, so if you sent a contribution during 1996 and your name does not appear in the above listings, please write so that we can correct our records. We apologize to anyone whom we may have missed.

We close this report with a statement of warm gratitude to all of our TFR family of volunteers nationwide who provide countless hours of labor and love so that our goal of a Tritt family history might come to fruition. And our special gratitude also goes to those of you who send us donations. Without you, we could not exist.

Nebraska Tritts

by *Thelma Tritt Kelly, Shelton, Nebraska - written in 1979*

According to my father's (Thomas G. Tritt) obituary, the family moved to Nebraska when he was four years old, which would have been in 1879. They lived on a farm north of Shelton and on a place near Ravenna where Tom's father had a flour mill on Beaver Creek.

I remember when my uncle Roy Tritt came to visit our family in the 1920s or 30s and we went west of Ravenna and found some of the foundations of the old flour mill. Uncle Roy, who lived most of his life in Belleville, Illinois, was born in Nebraska. Aunt Addie Tritt Vogt (my father's sister) wanted to visit this site too. They talked so much about fishing in Beaver Creek.

The family returned to Illinois in 1881.

However in 1898, my father Tom and his brothers Charles and Randolph came back to Shelton. They went into the masonry and construction business. They made their own cement blocks and had a cement block factory for a while.

In 1914 Charles and Randolph moved further west to Kimball, Nebraska. All the Tritts continued in construction work. A majority of the brick buildings in the community were built by the Tritt Bros. or by Tom after 1914. Some of the completed projects include the Redington building, the Catholic Church, the Shelton Public School and Auditorium, the Health Center and other buildings at the Platte Valley Academy. They also built many homes in local and near-by

communities.

Randolph and Charles constructed many buildings in Kimball since this was a booming town in that era. They too liked large construction jobs as well as building fine homes. Randolph and Charles' sons still continue to work on construction jobs.

Tom Tritt was the mayor of Shelton for several years and the Volunteer Fire Chief for sixteen years. Randolph Tritt was the mayor of Kimball for many years and his son Myron was also active in community affairs. As for myself, I'm now retired but I did teach school in Nebraska communities for twenty-eight years as well as raising three children.

Memories of Illinois and Nebraska Tritts

by *Howard C. Tritt, written in 1978*

My correspondence with Tritt Family Research has stirred memories of my father, Carl Tritt, my aunt Addie Belle Vogt, and their second cousin, Claude Shryock Tritt. These people have all passed on but it is from their stories and memorabilia possessed by my cousin Geneva Vogt by which I am able to complete my family record and help with other parts of the Tritt genealogy.

My father and aunt Addie told about living in Sweetwater, Nebraska when a tornado destroyed my grandfather's grain mill along with the rest of the town. After that disaster, the family separated. Some members remained in Nebraska and the others returned to Illinois.

Approximately 40 years ago I accompanied my parents to Shelton, Nebraska to attend the funeral of my uncle Tom. While we were there my father drove us to what had been his birthplace, Sweetwater, Nebraska. It was only a few miles north of Shelton, Nebraska. Only the street outlines remained with trees growing on the sides.

Aunt Addie told me of the hardship of crossing Illinois, Missouri and into Nebraska by way of covered wagon. I believe their starting point was Olney, Illinois. Her description of the covered wagon was much like the present day mobile home but not quite so plush. It had a stove, floor carpeting, beds and all the necessities for the trip. The wagon train would stop every Monday to rest the horses and permit the families to wash clothing. The only possession I have of that trip is my grandmother's commode.

Most of the children were born in Nebraska. Uncle Tom, Charlie, and Randolph remained in Nebraska when my grandparents returned to Illinois. My grandparents and the other children settled in East Carondelet, Illinois, where my grandfather Joseph M. Tritt farmed and built levees. A Mississippi River flood came along and again he lost everything.

The family left East Carondelet and moved to higher ground in Belleville, Illinois. He went in business with John

Vogt building streets and roads. My grandfather was killed by a train in 1905. My father and two brothers bought the business from John Vogt. The business continued until my father died in 1963.

The third person I remember was Claude Shryock Tritt. I believe he was a second cousin to my father. Claude was a Methodist minister and a poet. He resided in Sparta, Illinois. He spent his vacation from church visiting Pennsylvania and tracing the Tritt family genealogy. It is from him that I knew about Hans Peter Tritt and the Dritt house built in 1758.

Claude Shryock Tritt had several sons and a daughter named Ruth. She was a schoolteacher and presently resides in Sparta, Illinois, with her husband Roscoe Misselhorn. Roscoe is a well known artist in the St. Louis area. He has published several books with his charcoal drawings of historical buildings, places and Mississippi River scenes around St. Louis.

MINUTES OF Annual Meeting

by Connie J. Tritt

The annual meeting of Tritt Family Research was held on August 17, 1996, at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, with the following persons in attendance:

Gladys Cramer of Shippensburg, PA
Barbara Holloman of Silver Spring, MD
Richard and Jeanette Miller of Shippensburg, PA
Megan Richeson of Massillon, OH
Wendy Smeltz of Harrisburg, PA
Ernie and Doris Trait of Long Beach, CA
Harry and Dorothy Trate of Birdsboro, PA
David and Judy Tritt of Canton, OH
Donald Tritt of Granville, OH
Leonard and Connie Tritt of Carlisle, PA
Richard and Nancy Tritt of Boiling Springs, PA
Wayne Tritt of Carlisle, PA
Cindy Wagner of Harrisburg, PA

This meeting was a rather short meeting since the main purpose of gathering was for the authors of the Tritt Family History to come together and go over drafts of the book. Some highlights noted at the meeting were that Jeanette Miller has published an article in the Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage publication. Dave and Judy Tritt are still very active in Tritt family research and are doing data entry on soldiers who fought in the Civil War. This data will eventually be available at all Civil War national parks. Richard Tritt has edited and published a book on the history of Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania, and led community efforts that resulted in the creation of funds for improvement projects in Boiling

Springs. John Huppi is continuing his research for us in Europe and his report is anxiously awaited. The Dritt Cemetery in York County, Pennsylvania, was also discussed at length. See the separate article located within this newsletter for more details and the outcome of our discussion.

On Sunday, August 18, many of those who had attended Saturday's meeting left for Berks County, Pennsylvania, to attend the annual Trait/Trate family reunion. We collectively packed our contribution to the potluck feast that is available for all to partake of, and headed for the reunion by early morning. We immensely enjoyed the food and the fellowship of meeting new people and renewing friendships. A tour of some of the Trait/Trate family homesteads, churches, and graves was conducted during the afternoon. A fun time was had by all and we left very well fed and glad we had attended this large family gathering.



Top: Early Tritt family graves at the Plow Church in Berks County, Pa.

Bottom: One of the Trait family homes in Berks County, Pa.

REGIONAL TRITT FAMILY REUNIONS

1. A regional Tritt Family Reunion is held each year on the last Saturday in July at Lake Winfield Scott in Suches, Georgia (located between Dahlonega and Blausville, Georgia). In 1997, the date for this reunion will be Saturday, July 26. A covered dish lunch will be at 12:00 noon and you are asked to come early for announcements. For detailed information, contact:

Preston, Linda or Melissa Tritt, 275 Lewis Way, Canton, GA 30115; telephone 404-479-1087 or 404-924-2165.

2. Descendants of Edward P. Tritt and wife, Bertie Shenk Tritt, will meet Sunday, June 29, 1997, at Shaffer Park, Carlisle, PA. Bring a cold and hot dish and join us for the 1:00 PM picnic. Questions?

Call W. Wayne Tritt at 717-766-7397. 3. The Annual Trait Reunion will be held at Morgantown, Berks County, PA on Sunday, August 17, 1997. For details contact Ernie and Doris Trait, Long Beach, CA, telephone 310-431-7074.

If you would like to list your family reunion for 1998 in our next newsletter, send us the information before January 31, 1998.

John Black Tritt

by Clarinda Pearl Tritt-Smith, Shawnee, Oklahoma

John Black Tritt was the son of William A. Tritt and Catherine Black, and a grandson of Peter Tritt and Elizabeth Lefever, who established the Tritt family line in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania. John was born in Pennsylvania on March 26, 1841.

John Black Tritt spent most of his life in the west. He told stories of being part of a wagon train, on the Oregon Trail. There are some cliffs called the "Registered Cliffs" near Gurnsey, Wyoming, where he carved his name TRITT and a covered wagon above it, in the sandstone. It can still be seen today. (1992)

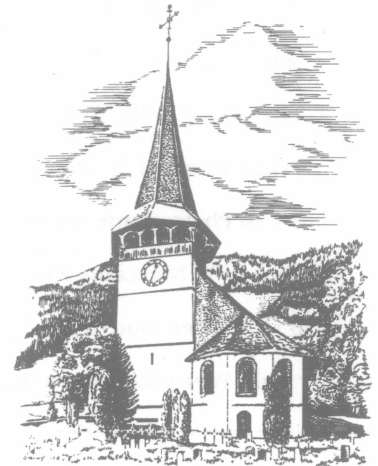
John Black Tritt told his granddaughter, Nada June Tritt-Cox, of how their wagon train was attacked by Indians, while he and another man had taken the water barrels to fill, at a nearby stream. They heard the shooting of the attack and returned to the wagon train, but kept under cover and found all the wagon members dead. They slept out under some bushes that night to hide from the Indians who might still be in the area. The next morning, when he awoke, John's hair had turned white

overnight. Nada said she can't remember his hair not being white.

John Black Tritt, at the age of 38, was in Carlisle, Pennsylvania and married his wife, Delilah A. Williamson, age 26, on October 7, 1879. She was his cousin. Delilah's grandfather was Christian Tritt on her mother's side. Shortly after their wedding, they headed west. Some reports from Pennsylvania say they were headed toward the Dakotas to hunt for gold, but their first son Alfred Garfield was born June 16, 1880, in Wellington, Kansas, so they had to go almost directly to Kansas. They homesteaded in Wellington, Kansas, where he started a farm. Within 10 years he became quite wealthy for that period, raising wheat and cattle. They had six children, all born in Wellington.

John Black Tritt died at the age of 84 on December 2, 1925. His wife died almost one year after her husband. Both are buried at Prairie Lawn Cemetery, Wellington, Kansas. Their farm was owned by the Tritt family until June 1944 when it was sold out of the family.

CHURCH OF SAINT STEPHAN Notecards



The pen and ink drawing of the Church of Saint Stephan shown on this page was commissioned by TFR. This church is the ancestral home of the Tritten/Tritt family and is located in the village of Saint Stephan in Switzerland. It is where the earliest known records of the family are recorded. This drawing is reproduced on our newest TFR sale item, a pack of ten notecards. These are priced at \$5.00 and can be ordered using the form at the end of this newsletter.

Quotables

When some people talk about their Family Tree, they trim off a branch here and there.

-GEMINI Magazine

"What would you like it so say on your headstone?"

"He's not here yet!"

-FRANK & ERNEST

Everyone has ancestors, and it is only a question of going back far enough to find a good one.

A Family Reunion is where you travel thousands of miles to see people you left home to get away from.

-TODAY'S CHUCKLE

Genealogy has been described as the process of tracing yourself back to people better than you are.

-J. GARLAND

The Law of Heredity is that all undesirable traits come from the other parent.

-TODAY'S CHUCKLE

An old genealogist never dies; he just loses his census.

When somebody tells you their dog is just like one of the family, don't you wonder which one?

-TODAY'S CHUCKLE

Newsletters Sent to Libraries

On page 10 of our 1996 newsletter was an article announcing that copies of newsletters will be sent to six selected libraries. The following library should have been included: Daughters of the American Revolution, Washington, D.C.

The following items are available for purchase from TFR. Please complete the following order form and mail to: Wm. Wayne Tritt, 24 Old Stone House Road-North, Carlisle, PA 17013-9773.

- _____ Tritt Family Cookbook - \$7.50
- _____ Civil War Diary of William Tritt - \$7.50
- _____ Annual Newsletter - Issues 1-17 (Specify Issue Number(s)) \$1.50 each
- _____ Schematic Map of Tritt Sites in Cumberland, York and Lancaster Counties, Penna. - \$1.50
- _____ 1906 Tritt Family Tree - \$10.00
- _____ "The Church of St. Stephan" - an 18 page booklet with a translation from the original German text - \$3.00
- _____ 8 x 10 Photo, matte finish, of the Jacob Dritt House in York County - \$10.00
- _____ Pack of 10 Notecards with the Church of St. Stephan - \$5.00
- _____ 8 x 10 Watercolor Print of the Dritt House - \$12.50
- _____ "Light Poetry for Leisure Reading" by Lorene Tritt Wagner - \$7.00

CHANGE OF INFORMATION NOTICE

Please detach and mail to: Mrs. Connie J. Tritt, 7 Ironstone Drive, Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17103-9705

Your Full Name _____

Current Address _____

If moving, anticipated new address _____

Please check here if you would like to have your name removed from our mailing list.

Do you know of a family member who does not receive the Newsletter, but would like to. If so, please send his/her

Name _____

Address _____

Other Changes:

Births

Marriages

deaths:

Other:

TRITT FAMILY RESEARCH
4072 Goose Lane, S.W.
Granville, Ohio 43023-9670

**U.S. Postage
Paid
Permit No. 8
Boiling Springs, PA**

Address Correction Requested