

The WILL of Michael Miller (b. 1689- d. 1739)

Written 23 March 1737; Proved 20 August 1739

“In the Name of God Amen, the 23 Day of March, in the year of our Lord 1737, in the County of Lancaster. For being very sick and weak in body but of Perfect mind and memory thanks be Given unto God therefore Calling unto mind the mortality of my Body and knowing that it is appointed for all man once to Die, Do make and ordain this my last will and Testament thou it to say principally and first of all I give and recommend my soul into the Hands of God that gave it. And for my body I recommend it to the Earth to be Buried Christian like and decent manner to the decision of my Executors nothing Doubting that at the general resurrection I shall receive the same again by the mighty power of God and as trusting those goods, as that wear with it has pleased God to Bless me in this Life.

I give unto my Beloved wife Barbara the half of all my Estate and Artifacts and the rest half to my Children and my Son Jacob to have Equal Share with the rest of my Children Named and willed Bequeathed rectifying Confirming this and no other to be my last Will and Testament.

In witness, whereof I have here set my Seal this Day and year above written.

Signed, Sealed, Published, Pronounced and Declared by the said M.M.

Mickel Müller “X” as his last Will and Testament in the Presence of the subscribers- Jacob Brubacker, Christian Stoneman, John Dehuf, Jacob, Shelly”.

Lancaster Co.: Aug. 20th Ano. Dom. 1737.

Then personally appeared Christian Stoneman and Jacob Shelley, two of the witnesses to the within written will and on their solemn affirmation according to Law Declared they were present and saw and heard Michael Miller, the Testator sign, seal, and declare the within will to be his last will and testament and that at the Doing thereof, he was of sound mind, memory and understanding to the best of their knowledge.

Coram Sa: Blunston 1 D. R.

Be it Remembered that on the 20th day of Aug. Anno. Dom. 1739 the last will and Testament of Michael Miller Deceased was proved in duo form of Law and Administration with the will of the said Deceased. Annexed was granted unto Barbara Miller, administratrix, there being no Executors appointed by will. She having first given Bond well and truly to administer the Deceased estate and bring an inventory thereof, into Registers office in Lancaster County, on or before 20th of Sept. next, And also to render an acc't of said administration on or before 20th of Aug. 1740. Given under the seal of said officer. Sa: Blunston Dep. Reg.

NOTE: The original Will was written in poor English froth with spelling errors proving that writer of the Will did not have a good command of the English language. German was Michael Miller's native tongue and he was unable to write as he could only place an "X" next to his name "Mickel Müller". The above transcription was edited so the Will could be more easily understood.

Verbatim Transcription: http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~tunicoi/david_ionathan_white/will_michael_miller_1737_lancaster_pa.jpg

Witness Jacob Shelley (1690 – 1752) was Michel Miller's brother-in-law who was married Mary Kneisley (1708-1758), the younger sister to Michael's wife, Barbara Kneisley. Witness Christian Stoneman /Steinman, (1696 – 1755) was married first to Elizabeth Kaufman (d/o Michael Kaufman) but after her death, he married 2nd to Elizabeth Kneisley-Coffman (widow of Andrew Coffman) in 1755. She was the older sister of Michael Miller's wife, Barbara. They were all part of the same Mennonite community in Hempfield Twp., Lancaster, PA.

SOURCE: Wills: Abstracts of Lancaster Co., PA, Wills, 1729 – 1819 Book A, Vol 1; T-Z Surnames: Will Abstracts 1729-1819: Lancaster Co, PA. <http://files.usgwarchives.net/pa/lancaster/wills/willabstt-z.txt>

The following is an excerpt from “*Barnard Miller and Allied Families The Miller Family or Michael Miller and his Descendants*”, By Kenneth Duane Miller, Des Plains Publishing Co., 1952; pgs 155-160

“Michael Miller was our immigrant ancestor and according to the best information now available he and others on their ship came from Zurich, Switzerland. How long they were on the high seas we do not know but we know Michael and his friends reached Philadelphia in 1717. Michael had with him a little son named Jacob. It is possible the mother found her final resting place in the angry seas. This group of people settled on good farm land just west and northward of what afterward became the city of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Michael lived on 170 acres just north of what is now the great highway No. 30 connecting Philadelphia, Lancaster and York with the western areas. Michael seems to have disposed of his 170 acres and to have acquired 500 acres farther north adjacent to that of Anthony Kneicely and surrounded by others of his friends. For a second wife, Michael married Barbara Kneicely, the daughter of Anthony. They were the parents of seven children who carved from the wilderness homes for themselves.

Michael may have been much older than his second wife or he may have died young due to the extreme hardiness of life which he lived. He died in 1739 leaving his family of young children to the care of his wife who seemed to be an excellent manager as she held the family and the property together for 40 years. A copy of Michael's will is given below. It is apparent he could not write as he makes his mark to this important paper but his name had the German form Müller although all subsequent generations spelled it Miller.

In 1742 or 43 Barbara married Frederick Woolslegel but there were no children by this marriage. Woolslegel died but Barbara continued to live on and to manage her affairs until 1777 when according to her will she died in “extreme old age.” That she was a vigorous and positive character is shown by the fact that she cut off one of her sons in her will because of things he had said and because he had not been good to her. A copy of her will is hereto attached. Thus far we have not found the last resting place of Michael or Barbara. Below is a list of Michael's children. Something of the history of each of these children is available but it is the purpose of this writer to record only the direct line of descent.

FIRST GENERATION:

By 1st wife: Jacob

By 2nd wife Barbara Kneicely:

1. Michael
2. David
3. Samuel
4. Elizabeth
5. Christian
6. Barbara
7. Maudlin”

SOURCE: “Barnard Miller and Allied Families; The Miller Family or Michael Miller and his Descendants”, By Kenneth Duane Miller, Des Plains Publishing Co., 1952; pgs 155-160. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=wu.89062851894;view=1up;seq=147>

The Will of Barbara Kneisley-Miller-Wolslegel

WILL of BARBARA WOLSLEGEL of Hempfield Twp., Lancaster, PA

Written: April 1, 1771 and Executed: February 21, 1777

Children: Elizabeth wife of -- Wolgemuth, Barbara wife of Samuel Wolgemuth, Christian Miller, Michael Miller, Magdalena Bossler and Samuel Miller.

Executors: Christian Miller and Jacob Neff

“April 1, 1771, Barbara Miller of Hempfield Twp. Lancaster Co., Pa., being of high age makes her will. Heirs: Elizabeth Wolgemuth and Abraham, Barbara Wolgemuth and Samuel, Christian Miller, Michael Miller, Magdalena Bossler, David Miller, Samuel Miller. Christian was to have 200 pounds currency more than the others because he took good care of her. Samuel Wolgemuth was to receive but one shilling because he sold his share contrary to her wish and advice. The fellow who bought it had no use of it either.”

On April 14, 1772, she made a codicil ordering David to pay 24 pounds currency he owed her to Barbara's children and then cut him off with one shilling because he and his people had shown her no love and because David had said that she in selling her estate had sold his land.

Letters testamentary were granted to Christian Miller and Jacob Neff to the estate of Barbara Woolslegel. Son Christian Miller, Neighbor Jacob Nave, Christian Kilhoffer, and John Kauffman.”

NOTE: There is no mention of her step son Jacob, nor mention of a former marriage, but such must be the case as all the sons bear the name Miller.

SOURCES: <http://files.usgwarchives.net/pa/lancaster/wills/willabstt-z.txt>

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