



CHARLES WASHINGTON GETTZ (1829-1920) AND FAMILY

Compiled by Richard D. Kerr

[The following is excerpted from A History of Delaware County, Pennsylvania and Its People, John W. Jordan, editor, published by Lewis Historical Publishing Company, New York in 1914.]

The Gettz family of Pennsylvania has been closely identified with the agricultural and horticultural interests of the state since their first appearance in it shortly after the revolutionary period.

(I) GEORGE GETTZ, the first of whom we have record in this country, emigrated to the United States in the latter part of the eighteenth century from Germany, and brought with him the habits of thrift and industry which characterize the Germans, and transmitted them to his descendants. He located in the southern part of Philadelphia where he followed truck farming. There he purchased a small farm, which he cultivated to its fullest extent. He set out many fruit trees and had two houses erected on this land. He was a member of the Lutheran church, and died at the same time as one of his sons, about the year 1840. He married Catherine Bruner and became the father of seven or eight children.

(II) GEORGE GETTZ, son of George Gettz and Catherine (Bruner) Gettz, was born [in 1794] on the homestead farm which he later inherited. For a time he rented a small farm on Bucks road, then removed to Fifth and Morris streets, and returned to Bucks road, near Eleventh street. During the war of 1812 he was in active service, and he affiliated with the Whig party; upon the formation of the Republican party he gave his political adherence to that organization. He and his wife were members of the Lutheran church. He married Margaret Westenberger, daughter of Jacob and _____ (Librain) Westenberger, both of German descent, and who lived on a large tract of land which they owned on Point Breeze avenue, and which he cultivated; he also owned a number of smaller farms and was a man of considerable wealth. They had nine children all of whom are now deceased. Mr. and Mrs. Gettz had children:

1. Charles Washington Gettz, see forward;
2. George Gettz, died in Delaware county, Pennsylvania;
3. Francis Gettz, died in Bucks Road;
4. Elizabeth Gettz, also now deceased, married Benjamin Hunter;
5. Edward Gettz, died in Philadelphia;
6. Margaret Gettz, married the Rev. S. A. K. Francis, and lives in Philadelphia;
7. & 8. two others, died in early youth.

(III) CHARLES WASHINGTON GETTZ, son of George Gettz and Margaret (Westenberger) Gettz, was born in South Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 22, 1829. He was the recipient of an excellent education which was acquired in private schools, and upon its completion, engaged in farming on his father's place. Later he rented from his mother a farm of fourteen acres, and cultivated this as a truck farm. About 1877 he removed to Haverford township and there purchased a plot of eighteen and one-half acres, at four hundred and fifty dollars per acre. He erected a fine, well built house on this land, made

many improvements upon it, and is now considered as one of the oldest truck farmers in the township. He raises all kinds of garden truck, both of the older and the more modern variety. He was one of the organizers of the Trinity Lutheran Church, and he and his wife are still members of it. He has been a member of the church council, and for a period of thirteen years he was superintendent of the Sunday school. He has helped in many ways to organize other Sunday schools, and it is due directly to his influence that the attendance is as large as it is. In political opinion he is a Republican, and has served as a member of the school board and also as assistant assessor. He has always taken an active part when projects were discussed which appeared to be for the general good of the community. He was a member of the committees which had charge of the construction of good roads, and the general improvements, and much credit for these improvements is due to him personally for the good results achieved. [He died in 1920.]

Mr. Gettz married (first) February 1, 1852, Maria Field [born 1827], and they had children:

1. George Charles Gettz, is a farmer living near Lancaster, Pennsylvania;
2. David Gettz, see forward;
3. Herbert Winfield Gettz, see forward;
4. Luther Gettz, married Phoebe Free, died in 1885.

Mr. Gettz married (second) December 10, 1866, Sarah R. Simon, born [1839] in South Philadelphia, and had children:

1. Samuel Gettz, has a truck and dairy farm near Manoa, Delaware county, Pennsylvania;
2. Lillie Gettz, married Thomas Hughes, has five children, and lives in Haverford;
3. Franklin Gettz, is a clerk at Bonsall's store, is married and has two children;
4. Sarah Eva Gettz, married William R. Hagy, has six children, and lives on the Eagle road in Haverford township;
5. Howard Gettz, is a truck farmer and lives near his childhood's home.

(IV) **DAVID GETTZ**, son of Charles Washington Gettz and Maria (Field) Gettz, was born in South Philadelphia, January 30, 1854. He was educated in the public schools of Point Breeze and then assisted in the cultivation of the home farm until his marriage. For a period of sixteen years he then rented his father's place and, in 1893, removed to Haverford township to a farm which he had purchased some ten years previously. This consisted of eighteen acres on the Westchester Pike, and cost about five hundred dollars per acre. He erected a good brick house on this land, and solid, well built barns, and made many other improvements, and has resided on this property since that time, cultivating the land as a truck farm. While he is a staunch supporter of the Republican party, he has never aspired to political office. He and his entire family are members of the Lutheran church. Mr. Gettz married, 1877, Hannah E. Simon, born in Southern Philadelphia. She is a daughter of William Simon and Margaret Simon, and they have had children as follows:

1. Margaret Gettz, who married Fraser Horton, a dairyman, and lives in Haverford township;
2. Mary G. Gettz;
3. Bertha H. Gettz;
4. David L. Gettz, who is a partner of his father, married Emma Stanley and has children: Margaret, Lydia and Viola Gettz;
5. Martha Gettz, married Rees Hagy and has two children, Ruth Hagy and Mary Hagy, and lives in Llanerch, Pennsylvania;
6. Edith Gettz;

7. Mabel Gettz;
8. Russell Gettz.

(IV) **HERBERT WINFIELD GETTZ**, son of Charles Washington Gettz and Maria (Field) Gettz, was born in South Philadelphia, March 25, 1862. He received his education in the public schools of his section of the country, and from his earliest years has been identified with the tillage of the soil in some form. He had a natural inclination and aptitude for gardening, and this he developed still further by taking up the florists' trade, which he followed for a period of twenty years. He owned his own greenhouses on the West Chester road, but after the death of his wife he abandoned this calling and became manager of a farm of seven acres owned by a man in Philadelphia. In 1893 he purchased a half-acre lot from his brother, David, and upon this erected two houses, two greenhouses, other outbuildings, and set out seventy fruit trees, thirteen shade trees, ornamental bushes and flowering plants, and has lived there since that time. He affiliates with the Republican party in politics, and has served as registry assessor for eighteen years continuously. He is interested in a number of building associations; is a member of the Grange, at Newtown Square; the Pomona, of Chester and Delaware counties; and the state and national grange, having passed with his wife through all the degrees. Mr. Gettz married, April 15, 1885, Mary Emma Hansell, born in Delaware county, died February 24, 1912, a daughter of Alfred Hansell and Rebecca Hansell. They had no children. Mr. Gettz is a member of the Lutheran church.

[In his Rural Pennsylvania in the Vicinity of Philadelphia (published in 1897 by George W. Jenkins & Co. in Philadelphia), a verbal tour of people and places at that time, Rev. S. F. Hotchkin offered the following comments.]

Charles Getz and his son Samuel live on the north side of the Pike, and Herbert and David Getz on the south side. They have pleasant homes and truck farms.

An Odd Fellows Hall at Manoa is a two-story building. A Lutheran mission church organization uses the building, and conducts a Sunday-school. The old Lutheran Church in the southern part of Philadelphia oversees the work. Rev. Dr. Francis is the pastor of both churches, and preaches here occasionally. Charles Getz is the useful Sunday-school Superintendent, and a chief supporter of the good work. [Eventually, Trinity Lutheran Church was constructed next to the Odd Fellows Hall on West Chester Pike, on land made available by the Getz family, and Charles Getz continued his support of the church.]

[Additional note: Gladys Gettz, granddaughter of Charles W. Gettz, was raised on his farm in Manoa, and at the age of 100 served as the grand marshal of the 2012 Haverford Township Day parade, the theme of which was the centennial of the incorporation of the township in 1912.]

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