

**Rebecca Maud Kurtz (1891-1969) Diary Year 1908: First Quarter**

Week of January 26

| 1908     | Daily Life | Family and Community News   | Church Events | Notes   |
|----------|------------|---|---------------|---|
| Saturday | It snowed. | Uncle Jake Beiler and Linnie came. Pop and I were up with Grandpa last night. |               | This is the first entry in Grandmother Rebecca Kurtz Mast's 1908 diary. The diary was a composition book given to her by her brother Ira Kurtz. |

Week of February 2

| 1908      | Daily Life   | Family and Community News   | Church Events                                      | Notes   |
|-----------|--|---|--|---|
| Sunday    | Cold and windy.  | Jake Beiler was up last night. They went home in the afternoon.   | Linnie and I were at Sunday School, 53 were there. | Rebecca's grandparents on the Kurtz side were Abram (1820-1908) and Rebecca (Stoltzfus) Kurtz (1827-1894).<br><br>Her aunts and uncles who lived to adulthood on the Kurtz side were:<br>Abraham (Abe) S. Kurtz (1855-1912) married to Susanna Yoder (1853-1943)<br>Sarah Kurtz (1858-1924) married to Jacob (Jake) Z. Beiler (1852-1936)<br>Elizabeth Kurtz (Betsy) (1860-1916)<br>Isaac (Ike) S. Kurtz (1862-1922) married to Susan Esh (1864-1949)<br>Barbara (Babbie) Kurtz (1864-1933) married to Samuel (Sam) Petersheim (1861-1943)<br>Annie Kurtz (1870-1938) married to Gideon (Gid) F. Zook (1872-1927) |
| Monday    | Cold. Washed.  | Grandpa is getting weaker. Abe was up last night. Harvey and Anna have a cold.  |  |   |
| Tuesday   | Ironed. I was at the store. Sewed. Hung up the dried beef in the smokehouse. | Pop and Kate were up last night. He is not so good.   |  |   |
| Wednesday | Cold and snowed.   | Grandpa is getting weaker. Uncle Ike and I stayed up last night. His children all came home this eve, stayed all night. |  |   |
| Thursday  |  | Grandpa is very weak. His children all stayed tonight. Abe, Sam and Aunt Annie were up.                                 |  |   |
| Friday    | Swept and baked. Kate and I washed and ironed.                               | Grandpa is very weak. Sam, Gid, and Ike were up last night.   |  |   |

**Rebecca Maud Kurtz (1891-1969) Diary Year 1908: First Quarter**

|          |           |                           |  |  |
|----------|-----------|---------------------------|--|--|
| Saturday | Nice day. | Grandpa died at 5:10 P.M. |  |  |
|----------|-----------|---------------------------|--|--|

Week of February 9

|           | Daily Life   | Family and Community News                                    | Church Events  | Notes  |
|-----------|--|--|--|--|
| Sunday    | Nice day.  | 47 people were here. Jake Beiler's went home.                |  | Pop and Mom are Jacob S. (1867-1923) and Lydia (Mast) Kurtz (1870-1961). Jacob's family stayed Amish in the 1877 split. He transferred his letter when he married Lydia whose family went with the progressive group to build a meeting house. (Mast, 1982)<br><br>Rebecca's brothers and sisters in February, 1908, were Linnie, David, Crist, Ira, Harvey, and Anna. |
| Monday    | Washed and ironed some.  | Sue was here.  |  |  |
| Tuesday   | Read out the room. Washed the dishes. Finished ironing. Gid fixed the cellar. Got red beets ready. Put prunes and peaches in soak. | Gids, Ike's girls, Rachel Reno and Sue were here.            |  |  |
| Wednesday | Boiled prunes and peaches. Made apple sauce, cabbage. Boiled meat. Got dishes ready. Swept upstairs. Pealed potatoes.              |  |  |  |
| Thursday  | Rainy day.   |  | Grandpa was buried. His age 87 yrs. 11 mo. 12 das. The pallbearers were Johnie Beiler, Aaron K. Stoltzfus, Isaac M. Kurtz, Levi Keller. Stephen and Jonas preached on Rev 14: 12 and 13. |  |
| Friday    | Washed. Swept.   | Sue was up.  |  |  |
| Saturday  | Rainy day. Kate commenced cooking over.  | Jake Beilers went home. Mom and Pop were at Lydia Hoffman's. |  |  |

Week of February 16

|        | Daily Life | Family and Community News   | Church Events  | Notes  |
|--------|------------|---|--|--|
| Sunday |            | Uncle Davies were here for dinner. Pop, Mom, Betsy, Ira, Harvey, and Anna were at Abe's for | Kate, Linnie, Dave, and I were at Sunday School. 110 were there. Were also at Bible Reading. Hen Stoltzfus was | Rebecca's grandparents on the Mast side were John M. (1829-1901) and Rebecca (Stoltzfus) Mast (1830-1918). |

**Rebecca Maud Kurtz (1891-1969) Diary Year 1908: First Quarter**

|           |  |   |         |   |
|-----------|--|---|---------|---|
|           |  | supper.   | leader. |   |
| Monday    | Washed. Stripped 89 laths tobacco. Had Petersheim's bailer, bailed 8 bails wrappers and 3 fillers. |   |         | <p>Harvesting Tobacco:<br/>Laths are narrow strips of wood to which the tobacco is fastened. The laths are hung in a ventilated tobacco shed. Stripping is when the main vein is removed. Wrappers are bails of large sized leaves. Fillers are bails of broken leaves (Cigar).</p> <p>Betsy (Elizabeth) was Rebecca's aunt. Betsy was single and had lived with her father, Abram Kurtz. His will named trustees to care for her and provided funds for that care.</p> |
| Tuesday   | Stripped 171 laths and bailed 2 bails wrappers.  | Christy has measles.                                    |         |   |
| Wednesday | Had 9 eggs for Kirlan @ 3 ___ dz. Mom patched. Snowed and rained. Stripped 60 laths tobacco.       |   |         |   |
| Thursday  | Nice day. Stripped 124 laths.  | Grubb's chimney was on fire. Pop was at Reppard's sale. |         |   |
| Friday    | Baked pies. Swept and scrubbed. Stripped 13 laths but it was too dry.                              | Mom was at Uncle Sam's.                                 |         |   |
| Saturday  | Stripped 50 laths tobacco.   |   |         |   |

Week of February 23

|           | Daily Life  | Family and Community News          | Church Events  | Notes  |
|-----------|---|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Sunday    | Snowed.   |                                    | Pop, Mom, Kate, and Linnie were at church. I stayed with the children. Christy has the measles. Kate and I were at a singing at Uncle Aaron's. | <p>Rebecca's aunts and uncles on the Mast side were:<br/>Malinda Mast (1852-1933) married to Christian U. Stoltzfus (1845-1929)<br/>Katie Mast (1855-1912) married to Aaron K. Stoltzfus (1854-1930)<br/>John S. (Johnny) Mast (1861-1951) married to Christiana (Stinnie) S. Zook (1864-1936)</p> |
| Monday    | Washed and ironed. Made a cap. Mom started a rug.       |                                    |  |  |
| Tuesday   | I started a platted rug. Dyed some clothes.             |                                    |  |  |
| Wednesday | Rainy. Worked at my rug. Took down all the tobacco. 283 | Mom and Pop were at Keller's sale. |  |  |

**Rebecca Maud Kurtz (1891-1969) Diary Year 1908: First Quarter**

|          |   |  |  |   |
|----------|---|--|--|---|
|          | laths.  |  |  | Stephen H. Mast (1964-1927) married to Sarah K. Stoltzfus (1864-1941)<br>David M. Mast (1868-1947) married to Elizabeth Stoltzfus (1869-1953) |
| Thursday | Nice day. Stripped 183 laths tobacco.   | David has the measles.   |  |   |
| Friday   | Finished stripping tobacco. Had about 100 laths. Had 1339 laths.                                      | Dr. Martin was here. David is better. Ira has them too. Health officer was here. Quarantined us. |  |   |
| Saturday | Finished bailing tobacco. Have 18 bails wrappers and 5 fillers. Framed a picture varnished the frame. | Anna has the measles.  |  |   |

**Week of March 1**

|           | Daily Life  | Family and Community News  | Church Events | Notes   |
|-----------|---|--|---------------|---|
| Sunday    | Rainy.  | Linnie and I were at King's in afternoon. Kate Kurtz _____.  |               | Kate was Rebecca's first cousin and best friend. Kate was the daughter of Uncle Isaac (Ike) S. and Aunt Susan Kurtz. Kate and Rebecca lived near each other and attended Conestoga Amish Mennonite Church all of their lives. Later, their farms were in the same neighborhood. |
| Monday    | Damp day. Washed. Washed for Kate. Finished my rug.               |  |               |   |
| Tuesday   | Nice day. Ironed. Cleaned chicken house.                          | Kate has the measles.  |               | Appraisal of Abram Kurtz's household goods is included in the filing of his will. The Horverter's were the attorney and Notary of the Public listed on Abram's will. John M. Stoltzfus and Henry Hertzler were named in the will to settle any disputes.                        |
| Wednesday | Men hauled out tobacco stems and ashes. I sewed.                  | Babie and Aunt Sue were here to see Kate. Linnie, Kate and I were at doctors for medicine for Kate.            |               |   |
| Thursday  | Nice day. Pop, Clem and Bill hauled manure. Mom finished her rug. | I swept, baked pies, cake and cookies for Kate. She came downstairs today.                                     |               |   |
| Friday    | Swept. Baked pies and bread. Snowed and rained.                   | I got supper over. The children were all home dividing things. Jake Beilers came about 4 o'clock.              |               |   |
| Saturday  | Nice day.   | The Hovorters were here. I was over all day. The things were praised. John M. Stoltzfus and Dan were praisers. |               |   |

**Rebecca Maud Kurtz (1891-1969) Diary Year 1908: First Quarter**

Week of March 8

|           | Daily Life                                       | Family and Community News           | Church Events                | Notes |
|-----------|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------|
| Sunday    | Rain in eve.                                     | Jake Beilers went home.             | Linnie and I were at church. |       |
| Monday    | Rainy. Mom sewed.                                | I was at the store.                 |                              |       |
| Tuesday   | Cut and made a petticoat. Cut an everyday dress. | Mom and Aunt Babie were up at Gids. |                              |       |
| Wednesday | Sewed.   |                                     |                              |       |
| Thursday  | Sewed at our brown summer dresses.               | Mom was over at Grandmothers.       |                              |       |
| Friday    | Swept. Scrubbed. Sewed.                          |                                     |                              |       |
| Saturday  | I finished our summer dresses.                   | Linnie was at the store.            |                              |       |

Week of March 15

|           | Daily Life  | Family and Community News   | Church Events   | Notes  |
|-----------|---|---|---|--|
| Sunday    | Rained in the afternoon.  |   | Kate, Linnie, and I went with Barbara and Ida to Sunday School. Kate and I were at Bible Reading. Brought Barbara along took her in. John H S was leader. | <p>In 1908, Sunday School was held on Sunday afternoons. Classes for all age groups were held to study the Bible. The language used was German.</p> <p>Bible Readings were Sunday evening meetings. At these meetings, a topic, such as salvation, was given and attendees shared verses about the topic. A chorister led singing and a leader sat up front.</p> <p>Singings were held in homes and were for young people. The participants took turns naming songs and everyone sang.</p> |
| Monday    | Washed and ironed. Clem and Bill were here hauling manure.                              |   |   |  |
| Tuesday   | Sewed. Men hauled manure.   | I was at the store.   |   |  |
| Wednesday | Rained. Cut and sewed carpet rags. Men hauled manure in forenoon. Thundered and hailed. |   |   |  |
| Thursday  | Rainy. Canned applesauce. Started a pattern rug.  |   |   |  |
| Friday    | Swept. Baked. Scrubbed.   |   |   |  |
| Saturday  | Pop took the tobacco ____ ____.   | Kate and I were up at Gids to work. Mom, Aunt Babie and Fanny Petersheim were at McMichael's sale at Geigertown. Kate and I were at |   |  |

**Rebecca Maud Kurtz (1891-1969) Diary Year 1908: First Quarter**

|  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  | Jakey Masts at a singing. Annie Summers came here after the singing. |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|

Week of March 22

|           | Daily Life   | Family and Community News                         | Church Events                                 | Notes  |
|-----------|--|---|---|--|
| Sunday    | Nice day.  | Mom and Pop were at Curleys in P.M. Kings in eve. | Were all at church. Kate, Annie and I walked. | Conestoga Amish Mennonite Church: By 1908, church members had been meeting in a building for 26 years. The church was within 10 miles of most members. Some members had automobiles by this time.<br><br>Snitz were dried apples, which were used in pies and Snitz and Knepp, a dish of ham, apples, and dumplings.<br><br>Chaff bags were used as mattresses. Large cloth bags were filled with straw that had been chopped up in a special device. Mom told us the fresh straw would puff up the bags so much it was hard to get in bed. After a few nights, a nest would be made and eventually the chaff bags would become flat, needing fresh straw. |
| Monday    | Rainy in P.M. Mom and Linnie washed.                                   | I went to Gids. Washed and sewed etc.             |   |  |
| Tuesday   | Canned snitz. Ironed patched etc. Mom and Linnie put a quilt in frame. | Walter Weaver died.                               |   |  |
| Wednesday | Came home in A.M. Quilted.   |   |   |  |
| Thursday  | Cleaned garret. Moved chicken coop etc. Finished the quilt.            |   |   |  |
| Friday    | Scrubbed, swept etc.   | I went to Gids.                                   |   |  |
| Saturday  | Damp day. Kate and I filled 3 chaff bags. Went up home overnight.      | Ikes went to Millwood. [alarm) (curtains up)      |   |  |

## **Rebecca Maud Kurtz (1891-1969) Diary Year 1908: First Quarter**

Sources for Notes:

Advameg, Inc. (2015) *Cigar – How Products Are Made*. [www.madehow.com/Volume-3/Cigar.html](http://www.madehow.com/Volume-3/Cigar.html).

Beiler, Katie, ED. (1988) *Descendants and History of Christian Fisher: (1757-1838)*. Eby's Quality Printing.

Gingrich, Hugh F. and Rachel Kreider. (2007) *Amish and Amish Mennonite Genealogies*. Pequea Bruderschaft Library: Gordonville, PA.

Mast, C.Z. (1911) *A Brief History of Bishop Jacob Mast and Other Mast Pioneers*. Elverson, PA.

Mast, J. Lamar and Lois Ann. (1982) *As Long as Wood Grows and Water Flows: A History of the Conestoga Mennonite Church*. Conestoga Mennonite Historical Committee: Morgantown, PA.

Mast, Martha Lydia. (2015) Conversation notes.