



Pennsylvania Longrifle



1st Continental Army
Regimental Colors

Gottfried Diefenderfer
Private Pennsylvania Militia
1775 - 15 November 1783

Gottfried was born on 19 February 1730 in Pennsylvania, probably in Philadelphia or in Bucks County. He was the son of **Johann Alexander Dübendorfer** (6 August 1702–1768) and **Anna Elizabeth Mack** (1705–6 April 1801), both Swiss immigrants who arrived in Philadelphia on the ship *William and Sarah* in 1727. After a while, the extended family in America was involved in the manufacture of the Pennsylvania Longrifle which, although better known as the Kentucky Rifle, was an American development derived from the German hunting rifle. About 1750, Gottfried became a farmer in Macungie Township, Pennsylvania, where he received a patent of 100 acres by warrant on 22 August 1754. At the time, Macungie Township was a part of Northampton County, but later became part of Lehigh County. Gottfried was living there when the American Revolutionary War broke out in 1775 and the Pennsylvania Militia (initially called the Pennsylvania Associators) was formed. Gottfried and two of his sons, **John** and **Jacob**, joined the Pennsylvania Northampton County Militia as members of the 7th Company, 1st Battalion, 1st Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment (also known as the 1st Continental Army Regiment). The 7th Company consisted of Militiamen from Macungie. Captain Casimir Greenemeyer commanded the 7th Company, and Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Balliet was in command of the Battalion. The Pennsylvania Militia was assigned as a mobile reserve with the mission of assisting in the defense of New Jersey from British invasion. They eventually were called upon to fight in the Battles of Trenton (26 December 1776); Princeton (3 January 1777); Brandywine (11 September 1777); Germantown (4 October 1777); and in the Philadelphia Campaign (5–8 December 1777). Gottfried's son, John, died of unknown causes at Amboy, New Jersey, just three days after the Battle of Trenton on 29 December 1776. After the Philadelphia Campaign, when George Washington withdrew the Continental Army to Valley Forge for the winter, the role of the Pennsylvania Militia in the Revolutionary War was essentially over. However, after the Philadelphia Campaign, the Pennsylvania Militia remained in existence as an inactive duty organization, and became known as "Rangers on the Frontiers" on 14 May 1778. The responsibility of the Rangers was to protect families living on the Pennsylvania frontier from Native Americans who allied themselves with the British from 1778 to 1783. The Rangers were called on twice (in 1781 and 1782) for active duty on the frontier. On 11 June 1783, the Regiment was furloughed at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and was disbanded five months later on 15 November 1783. Gottfried married **Anna Margaret Mattern (Matterhorn)** (16 October 1727–6 April 1801) on 3 May 1753. In addition to John and Jacob, they had two other sons, **Henry** and **Philip**, and three daughters, **Gertrude**, **Margaret**, and **Anna Elizabeth**. Gottfried died on 16 April 1806. He is buried at St. Paul's Union Church Cemetery in Trexlertown, Pennsylvania, along with his wife Anna Margaret, daughter Gertrude, and sons Jacob and Philip. The original name of St. Paul's Union Church was "Die Allgemeine Kirche in Magonsche Taunship Northampton County"; Gottfried was one of the eight founding members, with 17 April 1785 as the formal date of its founding. Gottfried's 5th degree grandson, **Philip**, served in the Navy during World War I as a Seaman First Class, and his 6th degree grandson, **John Philip**, served in the Navy as a Lieutenant during the Cold War era from 1956 to 1963.