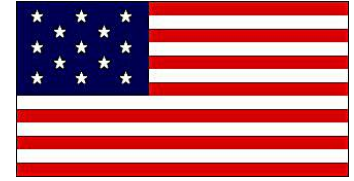


1st Pennsylvania Rifles
Regimental Colors



Pennsylvania Longrifle

Michael Schmeier
Private Pennsylvania Militia
27 August 1776 – 15 November 1783

Michael was born on 1 January 1745. He was the son of **Johann Philip Schmeier** (26 June 1698 – c.1750) and **Maria Solome Stephan** (2 August 1699 – c.1759). Both of Michael's parents were born in Wolfersweiler, Germany, and immigrated to America. They arrived in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on the *Pennsylvania Merchant* on 18 September 1733, along with their son **Johan** and daughter **Elizabeth Catherine**. Shortly thereafter, they relocated to Macungie Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Two years later, on 3 December 1735, Johann received a land warrant of 200 acres along the Little Lehigh River near the juncture of Spring Creek and the Little Lehigh where they had been living — a tract of land located in an area that eventually became part of Lower Macungie Township. Michael was born at home in their house on Spring Creek Road, and was living there when the American Revolutionary War broke out in 1775. On 27 August 1776, Michael enlisted in the Pennsylvania Northampton County Militia as a Private in the 5th Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment (also known as the 1st Continental Army Regiment). The 5th Company, commanded by Captain Peter Trexler Jr., consisted of Militiamen from Macungie Township. Michael's company was called to active duty on 1 January 1777, and three days later they began marching from Macungie to Philadelphia where they joined other units of the Pennsylvania Militia. The Pennsylvania Militia initially was assigned as a mobile reserve with the mission of assisting in the defense of New Jersey from British invasion. Subsequently, they were called upon to fight in the Battles of Brandywine (10–11 September 1777); Germantown (4 October 1777), and Whitemarsh (5–8 December 1777). At Brandywine, under Major General John Armstrong, the Militia held the far left of the American line at Pyle's Ford. They were also assigned to guard the Continental Army's supplies. After a day's fighting, the American Army was forced to withdraw or face being surrounded. General Armstrong brought the militia and the supplies out under cover of darkness. At Germantown, General Armstrong led the American right. His mission was to skirt the British left flank and attack them there and in their rear. The overall attack was going well until the center of the line was held up at the Benjamin Chew House. The attack then collapsed after a friendly fire incident in the fog, in which Major General Adam Stephen's men fired on Anthony Wayne's troops, causing the Army to withdraw, including Armstrong's Militia which had advanced nearly to the center of Germantown. British General Howe launched a surprise attack on the Americans where they were encamped at Whitemarsh, but the British plan had been compromised by spies, and the Americans were well prepared. After three days of non-decisive skirmishing there, the British withdrew and returned to Philadelphia for the winter. The engagement at Whitemarsh was the last one in 1777. After Whitemarsh, George Washington also withdrew the Continental Army to Valley Forge for the winter, and the Pennsylvania Militia's role in the Revolutionary War was essentially over. However, the Pennsylvania Militia remained in existence on inactive duty, and on 14 May 1778, became known as "Rangers on the Frontiers". The responsibility of the Rangers was to protect families living on the Pennsylvania frontier from the Native Americans who had allied themselves with the British from 1778 to 1783. Michael was still assigned to 5th Company, 2nd Battalion, when the Rangers were established, but subsequently was assigned to other companies, including the 6th Company, 1st Battalion, and the 7th Company, 1st Battalion. Michael served 48 days on the Frontier, of which 12 were spent assisting in burying numerous American dead that were killed in an Indian attack. Michael was discharged from the Rangers on 21 June 1782, but remained on the rolls of the Militia until it was disbanded on 15 November 1783. Sixteen years later, Michael was one of the leaders of armed rebels who protested a tax being levied on houses and land in what came to be known as the Fries Rebellion during 1799 and 1800. He was arrested for his actions, and sentenced to nine months in the Norristown, Pennsylvania, Jail where he died of yellow fever on 5 November 1800. President John Adams later granted amnesty to all participants in the rebellion. Michael is buried alongside his wife, **Maria Magdalena Küchel** (18 March 1748 – 23 October 1814), at Zion Lehigh Evangelical Lutheran Church Cemetery in Lower Macungie. Michael and Maria were married circa 1768, and had 8 children: **Catherine, Gertrude, Maria, John Jacob, Magdalena, Abraham, Rachael, and Elizabeth**.