

# Where Did Jacob Hochstetler Live Just Before Emigration to America?

By J. Virgil Miller, DJH 5684

*This is a question that has been plaguing us ever since the Newsletter began. It is easy to say, "He was born in Switzerland." We now rather say that Jacob, Sr. was born in Switzerland, and our immigrant ancestor was born in Ste. Marie-aux-Mines, Alsace. Since we think he came to America on the ship Charming Nancy in 1738 at the age of 26, he would have been born in 1712 rather than in 1704, the birth year of the Jacob of the ship Harle. Whatever his age, we still do not know definitely where he lived until he came to America. DJH says that Jacob's son John is said by tradition to have been three years old when the family arrived. Daughter Barbara may or may not have been born in Europe. There is some disagreement among historians as to which of the two children was older. But where did they live just before immigration? There are a few clues that we can pursue.*

We know that Jacob Hochstetler was one of the prominent members of the Northkill Amish-Mennonite community. Yet there are no others of the settlers in that group on the ship *Charming Nancy* in 1738.

For the *Charming Nancy* on November 9, 1738 these names occur in sequence in the different passenger lists: <sup>1</sup>

<i>List A</i>	<i>List B</i>	<i>List C</i>
Jacob Hostedler	Jacob (X) Howstetter	Jacob (X) Hochstadler
Abraham Kunzigh	Hunter (X) Zincie	Abraham (X) Kuntzy
Christian Miller	Christian (X) Miller	Christian (X) Miller

However, one year before, in 1737, there was one of the largest Amish immigrant groups on the same ship, the *Charming Nancy*. Did Jacob and his family just miss the boat in 1737 and were forced to wait for it for the following year? Were perhaps some documents missing and they were not able to travel with the others? In a previous article, I raised the question of whether Jacob's wife may have been a Burki [See NL, Dec. 2000]. One of the reasons I gave was that Christian Burki was a passenger on the *Charming Nancy* in 1737, and that he asked for land near Jacob Hochstetler as they were selecting plots of land in Berks County. Other passengers on that ship in 1737 had names like Miller, Lehman, Beiler, Mast, and others, all of whom settled in the Northkill community. The next ship with a number of Amish immigrants was the ship Francis and Elizabeth, in 1742 with immigrants named Zug, Joder, Gnaegi, Kurtz and Stahly, also all later settlers in the Northkill settlement. The thought came to me, if we can find where these families lived before immigration, will it also tell where our Hochstetler family lived?

One other clue-though I discovered no name besides Hochstetler on the ship list in 1738 which later settled in the Berks County settlement, the next name on the list is Abraham Kuntzy, age 24. Consulting the Palatinate Mennonite Census Lists, I found this entry under NEUKIRCHEN: "Only one householder lives here, an Anabaptist named Christian Kentsinger, a hauler and farmer. However, Christian does

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<sup>1</sup> Miller, J. Virgil, [Both Sides of the Ocean](#), Masthof Press, 2002, p. 216. An (X) means someone else signed for the person, usually because the person was unable to sign his own name.

have two married sons living with him. Abraham is a linen weaver and Johannes is a wool spinner."<sup>2</sup> The date of the list was 1724.

Whether Abraham Mimi or Kentsinger was the same as our ancestor's fellow-passenger is not yet known, but it is a clue. In 1724 he was a person living at Neukirchen near Mehlingerhof, where Amish-Mennonites named Maurer, Kinzinger and Guth lived in the 1700's. Isaak Hochstetler (DJH 9000), the nephew of the ancestor Jacob, lived at Lauterbacherhof in Alsace, and Bärbelsteinerhof in the Palatinate in Germany just to the north across the border. Isaac's son, Jacob Hochstetler, became Amish-Mennonite minister at Münsterhof in the northern Palatinate. I have adapted a map from my book "Both Sides of the Ocean" to show where Amish-Mennonite families lived in the Palatinate in 1700's and noted the families who lived there.<sup>3</sup> Among those that I can match their residence in the Palatinate with immigrants to America, I have listed a few.

Christian Zug, Willensteinerhof 1742

Johannes Zug, Willensteinerhof, 1742

Moritz Zug , Willensteinerhof, 1742

Hans Guth, Mehlingerhof - 1742

Christian Joder, Lachen, Mussbach, 1742

Jacob Joder, Lachen, Mussbach, 1742

Hans Knegi, Mutterstadt, 1742

Christian Burki, Bärbelsteinerhof, 1737

Jacob Hochstetler, 1738. ? Can we solve the problem?

Perhaps we may never solve this problem? Birth, marriage and death records were kept very irregularly. It was up to the Catholic priest or the Protestant minister of the State Church whether to record the vital statistics of Anabaptist or Amish-Mennonite community. Minister Christian Holly of Bärbelsteinerhof saw to it that the priest of nearby Niederschlettenbach recorded some records in the back of the Catholic Parish book. But with wars and intolerance and much moving from place to place, many records were unrecorded.

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<sup>2</sup> Guth and Mast, [Palatinate Mennonite Census Lists](#), Masthof Press, 1987, p. 24

<sup>3</sup> See pages 110 and 146 in Miller's [Both Sides of the Ocean](#) for the broader context.

## AMISH-MENNONITES IN THE NORTHERN PALATINATE



### Northern Palatinate

- Mehlingerhof—  
Mauer, Guth
- Neukirchen—  
Kunzi, Kentsinger
- Willensteinerhof—  
Zoug, Imhof
- Lachen—  
Joder
- Mussbach—  
Joder
- Diemerstein—  
Kunzi, Kinsinger
- Hilsbacherhof—  
Müller
- Mühlhofen—  
Holly, Kurtz, Müller
- Bärbelsteinerhof—  
Holly, Bürcki
- Essingen—  
Nafziger

### Northern Alsace

- Lauterbacherhof—  
Hochstettler
- Fleckenstein—  
Oesch
- Frönschburgerhof—  
Schantz, Güngerich
- Nehwiller—  
Holly
- Windstein—  
Christner
- Elsasshausen—  
Hirschberger
- Birlenbach—  
Nafziger

### BORDER AREA BETWEEN ALSACE AND THE SOUTHERN PALATINATE