Orndoff of Lancaster County

Posted: 16 Oct 2006 04:16AM

I was born in Centre County, PA. Have tracked the clan from there back to a Johann Christian Orndorff who moved there (at the time haines twsp was part of northumberland as centre co. was not formed yet) in 1790 with a wife, daughter and son. I believe he may hve been older and may have had other wives/children as he died only a short time later in 1796. His will is on file in Northumberland county (in German). His grave location is unknown, as is his age at death. I have not been able to find any info connecting him to any of the earlier orndorf lines. Note he must have been well established when moving to haines twsp, now in centre co. as he was able to purchase some 1000 acres from Reuben Haines, who was granted the land by William Penn. If you can make any earlier connections PLEASE let me know. I now reside in Alabama at

Dale Orndorf, Jr.

1315 County Roud 115, Cedar Bluff, AL 35959. Phone: (2560 422-3667.

Posted: 17 Oct 2006 02:22AM

Hi Dale,

Thank you for the response to my message.

We have been in touch before. At the time we could not make a connection.

The person I have listed as "my" Johannes Christian Orendorff
was born 15 AUG 1693 in Hof Eichen, Freudenberg, Nassau-Siegen, Germany, and died 16 APR 1772 in Fredericksburg, Heidelberg Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. His parents were Johann Heinrich Orendorff and Agnes Giesler.

Johannes Christian, better known as Christian, was married to Agnes Waschenbach who died in 1751, documented by an obscure entry in Moravian records stumbled upon a couple of summers ago. Christian and Agnes had a son, Johann Heinrich Orndorff (1733 - documented).

As an aside, a number of Orendorff researchers have Christian married to royalty, an Elizabeth Von Mueller. That bit of information has never been substantiated by documentation. Julia A. Drake pushed this idea in her book "From Mill Wheel to Plowshare", but I believe it was a bit of wishful thinking.

My line begins with a Johann Heinrich Orndorff who married Margaret Clark (substantiated by documentation), and he was a doctor. (The rub is that I cannot document if this Johann Heinrich is the one who was born in 1733. A complication: There appears to be three Johann Heinrich O's. running around at about the same time in central PA. Do I really know if "my" Johann Heinrich is the same as the one born in 1733? The short answer is "no".) And they had a son, John (b. abt. 1765), another doctor, who married Ann Elizabeth Ochsenreiter.

John and Ann Elizabeth had a son, John Peter (documented).

John Peter and Unknown are "thought to be" (from the researchers in Gratz, PA) the parents of John Henry O.

John Henry O. and Rebecca Welker had a daughter, Bertha Sevilla Harriet O., who was my great grandmother. I knew her; she died in 1961.

That's my supposed line. My Pennsylvania Ohrendorf ancestors have been very difficult to nail through documents. Most were involved in coal mining and were, seemingly, too poor to do anything but be born, reproduce, and die.

Does any of this seem to ring true with your research?

If you would like further details on my line, please ask.

Loking forward to your reply,

Joe Nihen
Lansford, PA

Posted: 20 Aug 2006 10:11PM

I am seeking researchers of the surname OHRENDORF (variety of spellings) in Centre County. I'll be happy to share my findings from other counties, Dauphin and Northumberland.

Thanks,

Joe Nihen
Lansford, PA