

A dictionary description of the word 'genealogy' says it is an account of human family pedigrees of ancestors or relatives or the investigation of same; tracing of ancestors. (I am not a German scholar, but this is what a German-English dictionary says.) In the 1700's there was a very large German migration into Penn. Historians of the German migrations usually refer to the German immigrants as "Palatines". The Palatines were inhabitants of the principality of the Palatinate (Pfalz), but there were also immigrants who were Hessians, Saxons, Bavarians, Wurttembergers, and many others. The English clerks who registered their entrance into this country had an unfortunate habit of calling them all Palatines. These clerks, unable to speak German, also wrote the names of the German immigrants as they sounded, since many of the Germans could not speak English, nor write their names, hence the changes in spelling.

There are many sources of material for such a project: state and Federal archives, county and town courthouse records, census records, family Bibles, letters, pictures, and the inevitable bugaboo of genealogy: family tradition - "my grandfather said his grandfather..... etc." This is a very good start to your investigation, but almost never to be relied upon as fact without further proof. Most of the time, finding out about the history of your family just entails many hours of digging into records and searching.

There is much room for error, much room for theory and supposition, incorrect spelling, copying of names and dates, the mixing up of generations with the same names, etc. Every genealogist is convinced that his theory and facts are correct when a difference of opinion crops up. A proper sort of genealogist never believes anything he's told until he has seen the proof himself.

So, therefore: the 'facts' as reported in these letters is information we have found and do believe to be correct and relevant but, having reported our theories and 'facts', we invite any or all of you to prove us in error and hope you will, since there is nothing messier than a family history full of inconsistencies and errors and unproven 'facts'!

Supposition and theory will be labeled as such if we know this is what it is. All sources of material will be reported if available. We hope to make it interesting to you, whether you are particularly interested in your family history or not. We hope by starting the ball to rolling to get others interested and working on the history of our family. We are amateur historians and make no claims to perfection. We could use a lot of help!

We hope you will not expect our ancestry to be run back to the kings of Europe or the Franks who settled the Rhine Valley in the early Christian era - not right at once anyway. "One of the major problems in Pa. German genealogy is the determination of the ancestral homes of the German families who came to this country in the 18th century" (Emigrants from the Palatinate to the American Colonies in the 18th Century by Krebs and Rubicam.) We can prove nothing further back than Christopher Slusher, who was born in 1757 and died in 1845, although we have theories! It's noted that the facts are positively not available, it's just that we haven't dug them out yet if they are.

The probable background of the Slusher family, of course, is German. The name Slusher was originally spelled SCHLOSSER. In German, the word SCHLOSS means castle or lock, and Schlosser means locksmith.

The heads of the House of Wittelsbach in the Palatinate were Catholics, and from 1690-1716, the reign of Johan Wilhelm was characterized by religious oppression; Karl philipp who followed him from 1716 to 1742 "inflicted the most terrible cruelties on the Pfalz and renewed the violent religious persecution" (Emigrants... by Krebs and Rubicam.) It is reasonable to assume that this type of repression was perhaps the reason our ancestors chose to come to America. This country had been represented to them as a veritable paradise, which in comparison, it was.

We are not sure whether Christopher was born in this country or not. We aren't sure who his parents were, yet. The family tradition is that he and two or three brothers came to this country in the 1700's, but we have not been able to find proof of this and are inclined to think it may have been Christopher's father and his brothers, if the story has credence to begin with.

In a family Bible which belonged to Christopher's son-in-law, Burwell Hylton, there is written the following statement, which is as near as we can come to proving the date of birth of Christopher Slusher. It says:

"CHRISTOPHER SLUSHER
departed this life on the 11th
day of December in the year
of our Lord 1845, aged 88 years
one Month and 26 days"

This would make the date of his birth
October 15, 1757.

Someone in the family, way back has supposedly seen the graves of Christopher and his wife, Eva, and these dates are what is supposed to be carved on the stone. However, as far as is known now, the grave is lost to us, although there is a concerted search going on for it now. The age as given above would match the age given by Christopher himself in his brother John's Revolutionary War Pension application. (More about this later.)

We are reasonably sure Christopher was born in Pa., possibly in Lancaster County, Pa. The first absolute fact we have concerning a Christopher Slusher is in 1779, in Lancaster County. He paid taxes on some

land, as did a John Slusher and a Peter Slusher.

"The Muster Roll of Capt. Baltzer Orth's Company of the 2nd Battalion of Lancaster County Militia, Commanded by Major Shouffler, on service in Northampton County was entered on 23 Oct. 1780 and lists:

Private Christopher Slusser

And he is listed as First Class in the return of Capt. Stone's Co. of the 2nd Batt. Lancaster County Militia in Dec. of the same year:

First Class Christopher Slusser
Marched 1st day of December 1780

And in 1782, "A return of the names of each and every male white person inhabiting or residing within my district in the 2nd Co. of the Second Battalion of Lancaster militia between the ages of 18 and 53 years:

First Class Christopher Slusser"

--: Pa. Archives, 5th Ser. Vol. 7)

In 1780, a "Christ" Slusher bought land in Washington County, Md. A Peter Slusher made the down payment. His father perhaps? a brother?

Sometime in 1780, Christopher may have married. His wife's name was Eva, or Eve, but we do not know what her last name was, or where they were married. (some say her last name was Hancock - no proof.)

The descendants of Chris, Jr. say that Chris, Jr. was born in Bucks Co., Pa. on June 14, 1781. He is presumed to be Christopher's oldest child, but George may be the older.

Christopher Sr. would have been 24-years old in 1781. Chris, Jr. may have been born while his father was in service in Northampton County, since Bucks Co. is next to Northampton. Chris, Sr. may have met his wife and married in that area while he was serving in the Militia there.

In 1788, a Christ Slusher sold land in Washington County, Maryland, with the approval of his wife Eva, and the next year, 1789, "Jacob Sperry of Frederick County, Va. deeded land to Christopher Slusher of Washington County, Maryland". He would have been 32 years old at this time. Apparently he did not immediately move to Frederick Co. since he is listed in the Washington Co. Md. census of 1790.

His son David was born in 1790, (in Washington Co. Md?). We believe that in 1791 Chris probably moved his family to Frederick Co. Va. His son Solomon was born in 1796 (In Frederick Co?) and Jacob was born in 1797 (?).

In 1801, the Frederick County, Va. Marriage records show that: "Slusher, Stuffler Jr." took out a marriage bond to marry Anna Myers.

(Our Christopher's name is supposed to have been Christopher Huffstuffle Slusher. In an article on German genealogy in the National Genealogical Society Quarterly (July 1970) the author states that the name "Stuffle" was a nickname for Christopher, not a separate name, which makes a question

as to what our Christopher's middle name really was. Perhaps only Huff? Note: This name, Huffstuffle, has not been too popular with the descendants of Chris, Jr. or Sr!

In 1802, '03, and '04, taxes were paid on the Frederick County land through someone else.

There is a family tradition that a wagon train of German people from the valley of Va. were on their way to the Moravian Colony in N.C. and ran out of rations in Floyd County and had to stay there instead of continuing their journey. (I prefer to think they saw how beautiful it was and stayed on purpose). No date is given for this migration.

In 1803, Christopher bought, or was granted land in Montgomery County, Va. (600 acres). (Floyd County was formed from Montgomery County in 1832.)

So now, we have seen that Christopher came from Pennsylvania to Maryland to Northern Virginia and into Floyd County. If you look at a map you can see the reason for the migration of so many of the German immigrants to Virginia - a valley runs almost straight from Pa. through Va.

Now, we know that Christopher had a brother named John, and that John apparently came to Montgomery County about the same time that Christopher did. John was born in 1754, as indicated by his statement in the pension application. There are indications that John lived in Lancaster Co., Pa. and deeds from John Slusher in Frederick Co. Va. and he was surety for the marriage of some of his children in Montgomery Co. in the early 1800's. From his Pension Application we believe he lived nearer Blacksburg than Floyd where Christopher lived.

We think just maybe Christopher had a sister named Catherine too. A Catherine Slusher married Casper Smith on March 24, 1788 in Frederick County, Va. They came to Floyd County too, and Christopher Schlosser and wife Eva were sponsors for their daughter Elizabeth, born Feb. 1, 1805. We have no proof that Catherine was a sister to Christopher though.

The following, all listed in one place, are the names of the children of Christopher Slusher, insofar as we are aware, with a short biographical sketch. They are not necessarily in order, because we are not sure when some of them were born:

GEORGE evidently did not come to Floyd Co. with his father from Frederick Co. His wife's name was Mary, he died before his father did, and his children filed powers of attorney for their share in his estate (Christopher's estate!)

PETER: married Celia White, daughter of Richard White, on Nov. 12, 1812. We do not know when he was born, but assume he died around March 12th, 1870, since there is a receipt, "Received of Jacob S. Harmon four dollars for making Peter Slusher's coffin March the 12th 1870. s/ P. H. Slusher"

CHRISTOPHER, JR., b: June 14, 1871, married (1) Anna Myers, (2) Susan Houx and (3) Christina Nevins; moved to Lafayette County, Missouri by wagon train in 1827 when he was

47 years old. He had 11 children

MARY ANN was the youngest we think, born in 1805 in Floyd County. Mary Ann married Burwell Hylton, and they had 15 children. 11 boys and 4 girls, one boy died an infant, 10 fought in the Civil War, 9 were either wounded, captured or killed or all three.

SUSAN CATHERINE (CATY) Caty married Cary Simmons on Apr. 9, 1815. We don't know when she was born or died. Christopher & wife were sponsors for their child Eva, born Apr. 9, 1816.

SOLOMON HARMON was born April 27, 1796, d: June 2, 1878, married Permelia (Milly) Reed Jan. 2, 1816. He and wife, among others are buried in a small cemetery on the Troy Woolums farm near Mira Fork grocery in Floyd County.

JACOB was born possibly in Frederick Co. Va. on Sept. 2, 1797 and died Oct. 3, 1871, was married to Telihe Hylton in 1818 and had seven children. One of the old letters recently found said he and his wife had moved in with Christopher & wife to take care of them.

SUSANNAH we don't know much about. In fact some of the family think she may have been a daughter of John instead of Chris. She married Henry Bayne, on Sept. 15, 1804 in Montgomery County, John Bayne Security, and that is the last record we have of her.

ELIZABETH was born Jan. 14, 1787, probably in Washington Co. Md. She married Solomon Harmon on March 6, 1810. She and her husband seem to be much involved in the settlement (or non-settlement) of Christopher's estate. We have not found the final disposition as yet.

DAVID was born Sept. 6, 1790, died Apr. 6, 1840. He and his wife, Nancy Cox Slusher, are buried in the old Goodykoontz Cemetery in Floyd County. Nancy was the daughter of Carter Cox.

BARBARA married Elijah Turman on August 20, 1812. He was son of Charles Turman. They moved to Carroll County and lived there and that's about all we know about their family yet.

STEPHEN married Charlotte Hylton in 1824 and he moved to Indiana with his family where he died in 1840 or '41. His widow remarried and moved back to Floyd Co.

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REVOLUTIONARY WAR PENSION APPLICATION
OF
JOHN SLUSHER

Photostatic copy of this document may be had by writing the National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D. C. and requesting copy of Revolutionary War Pension Application No. 9666. Cost used to be \$1.00 and it will take a couple of months to get it.

DECLARATION

On this 8th day of June 1835

John Slusher, a resident of the County of Montgomery, State of Virginia Personally appeared before Charles Black

a Justice of the Peace for the County & State aforesaid, aged 81 years, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the Act of Congress, passed the 7 June 1832. That he enlisted in March 1775 and was then 21 years of age, in a company under the Command of Capt. John Nelson. At that time He was a citizen near Hagerstown Maryland. We marched from thence to New York to Canaday by way of Ticonderoga. At Staunton Island we had a small engagement and took thirty two prisoners and several water crafts who came to shore to get water. From Canaday we went to Fort Ann. At that place we released five hundred prisoners who had been taken by the British and Indians. When we left Fort Ann we were attached to the first Regiment of Pennsylvania under the Command of Colonel John Dehors. We remained at Ticonderoga until March 1776. We then marched to Philadelphia at which place he was discharged.

(Second page of application papers.)

He was a volunteer after he left Philadelphia and was wounded at the Battle of Brandywine. He hereby relinquishes every claim whatsoever to a pension or annuity except the present, and he declares that his name is not on any pension roll of any agency in any state. Sworn and subscribed to this day and year aforesaid.

His
John (J) Slusher
Mark

I Charles Black a Justice of the peace for the County and State aforesaid do certify that from the facts detailed in the above declaration that I believe the applicant John Slusher to be of the age he avers & that he was a soldier in the revolution. I also certify that the cause of the application being made out of Court is owing to the inability of the witness in this cause to attend court. I do further certify that there is no regularly ordained clergyman in the neighborhood as is required, to certify to the credibility of the parties. I do also certify the above named applicant is a respectable citizen of this commonwealth & his oath is intitled to credit.

s/ Charles Black.

(Page three of application papers.)

I Christopher Slusher, a citizen of Floyd County, Virginia, aged 78 years, am a brother of the Applicant John Slusher, do certify that I was a soldier of the revolution, and from the best of my recollection, believe that my Brother John enlisted at the time stated in his declaration, but cannot say for what length of time, as we at the time I heard he had enlisted resided a considerable distance apart, say one hundred miles, nor were we near each other to my knowledge during the time of our servitude.

His
Christopher (C) Slusher
Mark

Floyd County to wit:

This day Christopher Slusher came before me Thomas McCabe a Justice of the

Peace for the county above and made oath to the above certification.
Given under my hand this 18th day of June 1835.

McCabe

(At this point in the papers the seal and a tape are across the writing, blocking out the part of the below certification and the first of the name above.)

Virginia Floyd County to wit:

I William G The County Court of Floyd do certify that Thomas McCabe is the first of the peace in and for the county above and that above purporting to be his is genuine.
My hand and the seal of the County at Office the of June 1835.

s/ W. Goodson clk.

(Page four of the application papers.)

This day of June 1835

Philip Keister personally appeared before me a Justice of the Peace for the County of Montgomery and State of Virginia

(This is marked as above)

I Susan Henderlite, Daughter of Philip Keister who is now laboring under a paralytic and not able to detach the facts do Certify that I have heard my Father say that the above applicant was in the Revolution that he was absent from home twelve months. I also heard my mother, now deceased, who was well acquainted with the applicant John Slusher say that he was a Revolutionary Soldier.

June 8th 1835

Her
Susan X Henderlite
Mark

I do certify that the above deponent is a respectable Citizen and her oath is intitled to credit. June 8th 1835.

s/ Charles Black

Virginia, Montgomery County SCT.

I Rice DeMontague, clerk of the county court of Montgomery do hereby certify that Charles Black is a Justice of the Peace in and for said county and duly commissioned and qualified, and that I believe that the signature above purporting to be his is genuine.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal of my office the 20th day of June 1835.

s/ R. D. Montague, Cl.

(Page five of the application papers)

Blacksburg June 23^d 1835

Sir:

I remit to you the declaration of Mr. John Slusher who makes application for a pension. He is an old man I am of the opinion honestly deserves a Pension. Your Excellency will examine the document and should you consider the old gentleman intitled to a pension you will transmit his warrant to me at this place as the agent of John Slusher. If the declaration is informal on any way you will write me directly.

(cont'd)

I am yours most respectfully

Hiram Amiss agent
for John Slusher

(Page six (last) of application papers.)

WAR DEPARTMENT
Pension Office
July 9, 1835

SIR:

I have rec^d the declaration of Jn Slusher and have placed it on file.

The claim internal evidence of its not being well founded.

The claimant alleges to have enlisted in Maryland in March 1775 & to have marched from New York to Canada and was subsequently discharged at Philadelphia in March 1776.

The Battle of Lexington did not take place until April 1775, and I have never heard of troops being raised in Maryland before that time; neither have I any knowledge of any troops from the South having engaged in the expedition to Ticonderoga. The most positive proof will be required to establish a claim so doubtful which he has so long delayed.

s/ J.A.M.

W. Hiram Amiss
Blacksburg, Virginia.

(Transmittal paper from the National Archives states these are all the papers in the file of John Slusher.)

John & Christopher signed their affidavits with their first initials (J & C) instead of X's - perhaps they could write German, but not English.

Note that Christopher's affidavit gives reasonable proof that he had a brother John; his age; that he was a soldier of the Revolution; that he probably lived in or around Lancaster Co. Pa. at the time involved. It would be about 100 miles from Hagerstown. Most of us who have seen this document feel that poor old John should have had his pension! He probably just got his dates mixed up. John's will is dated June 1840, and mentions children John, Peter, Jacob, Sally McConley and Polly Brookman. Marriage records of Montgomery County show David Brookman and Polly Slusher married Oct. 31, 1809, John Slusher, Surety; John Slusher and Polly Oderwalt married Oct. 11, 1815, George Oderwalt, father; John Slusher and Elizabeth Smith married Oct. 24, 1818 and Jacob Slusher and Mary Covey m: on Oct. 27, 1829, John Slusher, Surety.

Has anyone living around Blacksburg any knowledge of the whereabouts of John's grave? There is a possibility that his wife's name was Christine. It is believed that John's descendants spelled their name Slusser.

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Next time, some of the data we have on the children of Christopher; inventory of Christopher's estate; perhaps one of the letters we have; and perhaps some of the conjecture about the parentage of Christopher and John. What would you like?