

File Research Report

Oettgen of Hunterdon County, New Jersey

Author: Robert Stoy

Date: 2 Nov 2008

In July 2006, while on a genealogy research trip to New Jersey, Ann found a reference to the account book of John Mehelm's and Sydney Berry's store in Hunterdon County¹. An entry for George Eytcher on 1 Aug 1772 appeared in that account book. There was no further information but this did suggest that Hunterdon County would be a useful place to search.

In a journal article by Henry Race² in 1897, the following transcription appeared:

Birth: Oct 10 1772
Baptism: 23 May 1773
Child: Johannes
Father: Joh. Peter Oettgen
Mother: Anna Maria
Witnesses: John Becher, Elis Becher

This came from the baptism register of the German Reformed Church of Alexandria in Hunterdon County and appears to fit with Peter Oatyar's family. The baptism register was also filmed 25 Aug 1965 by the Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and contained the following handwritten entry.³

May 23 [1773] (baptism date) Johannes s. John Peter & Anna Maria Oettgen Oct 10 1772 (birth date)

This microfilmed record does not show witnesses and has different spellings than the Race record; somehow Henry Race had access to either a different baptism record or he took some liberties with his transcription. Both records show the surname as Oettgen.

A significant effort was put into locating the original records by Karen Higgins (West Chester, PA; karen803@comcast.net), a researcher and member of the Association of Professional Genealogists. She examined the following repositories during August, 2008:

Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
Searched catalogs and older card catalog and found no records
Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia
Searched the society's databases and on-line catalogs and found no records
Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society, Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Archivist searched their catalog and found no records
Lutheran Archives Center, Philadelphia
Archivist referred her to ERHS
Hunterdon County Historical Society, Flemington, New Jersey
Talked with archivist and they do not have records
State Library of New Jersey, Trenton
Talked with archivist and they do not have records; suggested contacting State Archives
New Jersey State Archives, Trenton
Talked with archivist – do not have records; suggested checking Rutgers Special Collections and the German Reformed Archives
Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers, New Brunswick, New Jersey
Talked with archivist; no records
German Reformed Archives, Rutgers (Reformed Church of America)
No records – the Alexandria church was not likely part of the RCA heritage but part of the German Reformed Church

File Research Report

Oettgen of Hunterdon County, New Jersey

The journal article by Race listed the names of the ministers active in the Alexandria church at the end of the 18th Century and these names were searched in the ERHS to see if they left records – none were found.

A useful piece of information on German naming practices from an Internet article by Charles F Kerchner Jr:⁴

“At baptism, if two given names were given to the child, the first given name was a spiritual, saint's name. The second given name was the secular or call name, i.e., "rufnamen", which is the name the person was known by, both within the family and to the rest of the world. This custom was originally adopted in Germanic and other regions in Europe from Roman Catholic tradition and continued by the Protestants in their baptismal naming customs. The immigrants from these areas brought the custom with them to Pennsylvania. The spiritual name, usually to honor a favorite saint, was used repeatedly and was usually given to all the children of that family of the same gender. Thus the boys would be Johan Adam Kerchner, Johan George Kerchner, etc., or Philip Peter Kerchner, Philip Jacob Kerchner, etc. Girls would be named Anna Barbara Kerchner, Anna Margaret Kerchner, etc., or Maria Elizabeth Kerchner, Maria Catherine Kerchner, etc. But after baptism, these people would not be known as John, Philip, Anna, or Maria, respectively. They would instead be known by what we would think of now as their middle name, which was their secular name.”

So, we have Joh. Peter Oettgen who would be known as Peter Oettgen and Anna Maria Oettgen who would be known as Maria [anglicized to Mary] Oettgen. The witnesses, John and Elis Becher (according to Race), could be Anna Maria's parents or her brother and sister-in-law. This agrees with the Loudoun County record⁵ of Mary Baker being the wife of Peter Oatyar. [Note: the given name Elis in German is a short form anglicized to Elisabeth].

It's unfortunate that the original records can't be located to confirm the spelling and other details but what we have seems to be enough for now to confirm that Peter Oatyar was in Hunterdon County, New Jersey in the 1770s and appeared in the records as Joh. Peter Oettgen, and that he was married to Anna Marie Becher. His son, John, was born 10 Oct 1773, probably in Hunterdon County. It's possible that Peter was, in fact, born in New Jersey as his obituary claimed. More research on the German migrations to Hunterdon County is needed.

To support the birth date of John Oatyar, it's necessary to examine my research on the Atcher family of Loudoun County, which has a section on Peter Oatyar and his son John – reproduced below. This material established that John was born between Jul 1772 and Jul 1773 in Pennsylvania (if the census record of his son in 1880 is correct), which agrees with the baptism dates.

File Research Report

Oettgen of Hunterdon County, New Jersey

1. Peter Oatyer and Son John Oatyer

Item	Date	Event (comments in italics)
1.1	--	<p>Peter's will⁶ and earlier research into his family shows the following children and birth dates:</p> <p>John Oatyer Jul 1772 – Jul 1773^{7,8,9} Susannah/Ann Oatyer 1774-75¹⁰ Elizabeth Etcher Jan 1779¹¹ Sophia Etcher 1781-1782¹² Catherine Etcher 6 Apr 1781¹³ Mary Etcher Jan 1788¹⁴</p> <p>John and his wife were born in Pennsylvania according to his son's census entry in 1880.¹⁵ There is no other supporting evidence for this birth location but it may indicate a migration path for Peter and family from New Jersey to Pennsylvania to Virginia.</p> <p>Peter's will mentions a large number of people, 38, in various capacities. He lists all his children and their spouses. His estate settlement documents are lengthy and were not complete until 1858 – in none of them are mentioned Christopher and Cornelius. This is a strong indication that Christopher and Cornelius were not Peter's sons but children of another.</p>
1.2	--	<p>Peter's surname was variously spelled Oatyer, Oatyar, Etcher and Atcher and his will used both Oatyar and Oatyer.¹⁶ The land tax records list his name as Atcher from 1782 until 1804 and then as Oatyear or Oatyer beginning in 1805.^{17,18}</p>
1.3	1 Aug 1751	<p>Obituary states Peter was born 1 Aug 1751 in New Jersey.</p> <p>Written 80 years after the event and needs supporting evidence. None of his children lived to the 1880 census where indirect evidence of his birthplace could be found. Deeds for his earliest land purchases in Loudoun, which might reveal his prior home, have not been located. Say he married by age 20-25, which implies marriage by 1771-1776. This is consistent with son John's birth date if Peter was married in 1771. If son John's birthplace was, in fact, Pennsylvania then</p>

File Research Report

Oettgen of Hunterdon County, New Jersey

		<p>By 1801 two of Peter's daughters had married Caylor and Christopher Atcher was to marry Rachel Brashears in another six years.²¹ In 1801, Peter was willing to help Ann Morgan support her son by placing him in his daughter's household (Catherine, who married Jacob Caylor²²). Ann Wright is likely her maiden name (there were many Wrights in Loudoun at the time) and she had a child out of wedlock in August 1796. She must have since married a Morgan (of which there were several in Loudoun). The father of the child was of the Brashears family of Loudoun. There were clearly connections between the Oatyers and Brashears starting at least in 1801. Recall that Susannah Oatyer's daughter married a Jacob Wright of Virginia.²³</p>
1.6	c.1820	<p>George Grimes (born 14 Jan 1790) lived in Loudoun County and was buried at the Goose Creek Friends burying grounds in 1840. In a family history his son stated "My father, George Grimes, being pretty well grown, did not accompany the family to Ohio. After leaving his mother's home, he found a friend in the person of one Peter Atcher, a wealthy German farmer and stock raiser, who was noted particularly as a breeder of fine horses. He remained with him during his minority after which he found his way up into Loudoun County, and lived among the Friends or Quakers. This was called the Goose Creek Settlement of Friends, and the meeting house is about six miles west of Leesburg, the county seat of Loudoun County."²⁴</p> <p>This isn't proof that Peter Oatyer was German but does provide some context of his life.</p>

File Research Report

Oettgen of Hunterdon County, New Jersey

Arch,	Alexandria Township, Hunterdon County, N. J.		19.
DATE OF BIRTH	DATE OF BAPTISM	BAPTISMS	DATE OF BIRTH
18	April 11	Wilhelm, s. Heinrich u. Elizabeth Went.	Dec 1772
1771		Anna Catharina, dr Hans Peter u. Maria E. Bizer	Jan 2
18	April 12	Johannes, s. Theis u. Maria Brand	July 7 1768
23	"	Elsa Maria, dr	June 3 1771
7	May 2	Paulus, s. Paul u. Gertrud Catharina Enders	April 7
10	May 23	Anna, dr Paul u. Anne Föhm	March 4
	"	Johannes, s. John Peter u. Anna Maria Oettgen	Oct 10 1772
14 6.	July 25	Maria Barbara, dr. Friedrich u. Elizabeth Alcher	July 8
	Aug 15	Maria, dr Gerhard u. Elizabeth Lein	March
	Sept 26	Conrad, s. Wilhelm u. Maria Bizer	Aug 4.
1772	"	Peter, s. Gerlach u. Elizabeth Horn	July 8.

File Research Report

Oettgen of Hunterdon County, New Jersey

BIRTH.	BAPTISM.	CHILD.	FATHER.	MOTHER.	WITNESSES.
Oct. 4.	" "	Joh. Heinrich.	Jacob Bonn.	Maria Elisab.	Heinrich Behl, Elisabeth Ohlbach.
Sep. 10.	" "	Daniel.	Jacob Roder.	Maria Elisab.	
1773. Feb. 6.	Mch. 21.	Abraham.	Welhelm Heinrich Otto.	Maria Veronica.	Abraham Jung, Ana Veronica.
Jan. 1.	Apr. 11.	Johannes:	Christopher Schriys.	Cath. Henrica.	
1772. Oct. 7.	" "	Joh. Adam.	Jacob Humerich.	Eva Gertraud.	
1772. Dec. "	" "	Willhelm.	Henrich Hen.	Elisabeth.	
1773. Jan. 2.	" "	A. Catharina.	Hannes Peter Bizer.	M. Elisabeth.	Richard Bohm, Anna Julia (?), his w., Anna Cath. Bohm.
1768. July 7.	April 12.	Johanas.	Theis Brand.	Maria.	
1771. June 3.	" "	Elsa Maria.	" "	" "	
1773. April 7.	May 2.	Paulus.	Paul Enders.	Gertr. Catharina.	Paul Bihm, Anna Ohlbach.
Mar. 4.	May 23.	Anna.	Paul Bohm.	Anna.	
1773. Oct. 10.	May 23.	Johannes.	Joh. Peter Oettgen.	Anna Maria.	John Becher, Elis Becher.
June 8.	July 25.	Maria Barbara.	Friderich Ebcher.	Elisabeth.	Peter Hohenburger, Anna Maria Filhauer, A. Barbara Brechley.
Mar. 2.	Aug. 15.	Maria.	Gerhard Lehr.	Elisabeth.	
Aug. 4.	Sep. 26.	Conrad.	Wilhelm Bitzer.	Maria.	Conrad Casper, A. Margarith, his w.
July 8.	" "	Peter.	Gerlach Horn.	Elisabeth.	
Sep. 6.	Sep. 27.	Paulus.	Hermeth Schmid.	Gertraud.	Paul Enders, Veronica Jungin.
1770. Nov. 27.	Oct. 17.	Joh. Heinrich.	Christian Mann.	Anna.	Joh. Theis Brand, A. Maria, his w.
1773. Feb. 11.	" "	Johannes.	" "	" "	Joh. Bihmer, A. Maria, his w.
Feb. 11.	" "	A. Elisabeth.	" "	" "	Ferdinand Shrofe, A. Elisab. Brand.
1773. Dec. 21.	Jan. 30.	Barbara.	Balthes Christ.	Catharina.	Matheis Brechley, Anna Barbara, his w.
1774. Jan. 20.	Mch. 13.	Wilhelm.	Christ. Huner.	A. Margarith.	
Feb. 8.	" "	Abraham.	Peter Schmid.	Eva.	Abraham Jung, Gertraud Schmid.
Jan. 4.	Mch. 14.	A. Margrith.	Antony Hofman.	Gertraud.	Hermeth Weingarten, A. Margarith, his w.
1773. Nov. 5.	Apr. 1.	A. Catharina.	Ludwig Wildanger.	A. Maria.	Adam Reifner, Cath. Bitzerin.
Oct. 18.	" "	Catharina.	Hannes Lienerd.	Elisabeth.	
Mch. 9.	" "	A. Gertraud.	Hannes Peter Huner.	M. Catharina.	Paul Enders, A. Gertr. Schmidin.
Dec. 21.	April 24.	Elisabeth.	Peter Wagner.	Eva.	
1774. April 17.	May 15.	Catharina.	Heinrich Weingarten.	Eva.	George Clas, Cath. Jordan.
April 3.	" "	A. Catharina.	Johannes Geig.	A. Maria.	Cath. Hen, Margrit Eberith.
Feb. 21.	Aug. 28.	Jacob.	Jacob Schrey.	A. Catharina.	Jacob Bon, Jacob Rider.
Aug. 1.	" "	Hannes Peter.	Peter Hohlenburger.	Maria Grith.	Hermeth Weingarten, Gertraud Hofman.
June 21.	" "	Abraham.	Conrad Weingarten.	Maria Grith.	Abraham Jung, Magdalena Firshbach.
June 14.	" "	Hannes Peter.	Ernst Sterker.	Gertraud.	Peter Casper, Anna Maria, his w.
June 9.	" "	Maria Rosina.	Jacob Bonn.	Mar. Elisab.	

44

THE JERSEYMAN.

by document

File Research Report

Oettgen of Hunterdon County, New Jersey

Endnotes

- ¹ "Account Book 1772-1774", John Mehelm and Sidney Berry, 1772, Manuscript Group 847; New Jersey Historical Society, Newark, 210.
- ² Henry Race, "Parish Register of The German Reformed Church of Alexandria, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, 1763-1802," *The Jerseyman* 3 (June 1897): 37-53, specifically page 44.
- ³ Hunterdon County, New Jersey, Church Records of the German Reformed Church, of Alexandria Township, Hunterdon County, New Jersey: 19; Film No. 441,466, item 2, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah. The baptism register was abstracted by John Woolf Jordan (1840-1921) and was filmed 25 Aug 1965 by the Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania; the manuscript was not located at HSP during a search Nov 2008.
- ⁴ Charles F Kerchner Jr, *18th Century PA German Naming Customs* (<http://www.kerchner.com/germname.htm> : accessed 4 Jul 2008).
- ⁵ Goldie Maffett, "Birth, Marriage, Death Dates for Descendents of Oatyer-Maffett Marriage," received by Ann Arnold Hennings from Joyce Rash Nov 2000; photocopy in possession of Robert Stoy (Aliso Viejo, CA 92656) Jun 2005; notation on document is "from Miss Goldie Maffett." Joyce Rash confirmed in Jan 2008 that record is from Mt Hope Church.
- ⁶ Peter Oatyar will (23 Feb 1829), Will Book V: 204-9, Loudoun County Courthouse, Leesburg, Virginia. Hereinafter cited as Will of Peter Oatyar.
- ⁷ Estimated, based on John's son's birth date of 18 Aug 1798, an assumed age at marriage of 20-25, a militia service listing for John in Sep 1794, and a first appearance in the Loudoun personal property tax lists with father Peter in Jul 1789 (age 16 at this time).
- ⁸ Don Blincoe Sr., compiler, *Loudoun County, Virginia Militia Journals 1793-1829* (Athens, Georgia: Iberian Publishing Company, 1993), 33. Hereinafter cited as Blincoe, *Loudoun County, Virginia Militia Journals 1793-1829*.
- ⁹ "Personal Property Tax Books, Loudoun County, Virginia 1787-1797," microfilm reel 208; Library of Virginia, Richmond. Hereinafter cited as "Loudoun County Personal Property Tax Books, reel 208."
- ¹⁰ Jacob Wright household, 1850 U.S. census, Fayette County, Ohio, population schedule, page 133A, dwelling 1009, family 1009; National Archives micropublication M432, roll 678. Viewed on-line at www.ancestry.com, image 3 of 20. Hereinafter cited as Jacob Wright household, 1850 census. Susan Caylor lived with her daughter Anne and son-in-law Jacob Wright.
- ¹¹ Miss Goldie Maffett, handwritten listing of some descendants of Peter Oatyar and Mary Baker, purported to be from files of Mt. Hope Baptist Church, original in possession of Joyce Rash, photocopy obtained from Ann Arnold Hennings (cousin of R Stoy), Bethesda, Maryland, 2002 and currently in possession of R Stoy.
- ¹² James Bridwell household, 1850 U.S. census, Ross County, Ohio, population schedule, page 179A, dwelling 2605, family 2605; National Archives micropublication M432, roll 725. Viewed on-line at www.ancestry.com, image 53 of 64.
- ¹³ *Early Vital Records of Ohio: Cemeteries of Fayette County, Ohio* in *Ohio Daughters of the American Revolution [DAR], Genealogical Records Committee Report*, compiled by Maude Post Rankin, 236. Viewed as micropublication 901,218, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah. Hereinafter cited as Rankin, *Cemeteries of Fayette County, Ohio*. Birth date calculated from tombstone information.
- ¹⁴ Thomas H Balch Library Staff, *Cemetery Records: Broad Run Church / Hillside, Loudoun Co Virginia* (Leesburg, Virginia: Thomas H Balch Library, no date). Hereinafter cited as *Thomas H Balch Cemetery Records: Broad Run Church / Hillside*.
- ¹⁵ Jefferson Spring household, 1880 U.S. census, Loudoun County, Virginia, population schedule, Leesburg Township, enumeration district 51, page 373B, dwelling 118, family 119; National Archives micropublication T9, roll 1375. Viewed on-line at www.ancestry.com, image 20 of 30. Peter and wife Nancy lived with daughter Sophia and son-in-law Jefferson Spring.
- ¹⁶ Will of Peter Oatyar.
- ¹⁷ "Land Tax Records, Loudoun County, Virginia 1782-1799," microfilm reel 169; Library of Virginia, Richmond. Hereinafter cited as "Loudoun County Land Tax Records, reel 169."
- ¹⁸ "Land Tax Records, Loudoun County, Virginia 1800-1815," microfilm reel 170; Library of Virginia, Richmond. Hereinafter cited as "Loudoun County Land Tax Records, reel 170."
- ¹⁹ Marty Hiatt and Craig Roberts Scott, compilers. Loudoun County Virginia Tithables 1758-1786 (Athens, Georgia: Iberian Publishing Company, 1995), 2:826.
- ²⁰ "Letter by Peter Oatyar to Loudoun Court for Binding of Ann Morgan's Son to Jacob Caylor", Peter Oatyar, manuscript, 12 Oct 1801, Loudoun County Courthouse, Leesburg, Virginia. Photocopy of record in Stoy files for Oatyar.

File Research Report

Oettgen of Hunterdon County, New Jersey

²¹ John Vogt and T William Kethley, *Loudoun County Marriages, 1760-1850* (Athens, Georgia: Iberian Publishing Co, 1985) 59. Hereinafter cited as Vogt and Kethley, *Loudoun County Marriages, 1760-1850*.

²² Will of Peter Oatyar.

²³ Jacob Wright household, 1850 census.

²⁴ Mary A Grimes, *The Grimes Family* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Lund Press, 1946), 3-4. Text of book viewed on-line at Ancestry.com web site.

Robert Stoy document