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HOCH-
HIGH
FAMILY

IN

UNITED STATES

AND

CANADA

BY

J. HAMPTON HOCH

HOCH - HIGH FAMILY

in America

A record of some Hoch immigrants and their descendants

Arranged by

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Issued by the Hoch-High Family Reunion

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"In the year 1717 the Hochs came to this Country, namely, Rudolph and Melchior, two brothers. Rudolph settled at first this side of Pottsgrove, at that time called Swedeland. Melchior settled in Bucks County."

Thus begins a memorandum on the Hoch family, prepared in 1824 by Abraham Hoch, a grandson of Rudolph Hoch. This memorandum, a copy of which is now in the files of the family Historian, has been the basis for all subsequent accounts of the family. Abraham must be regarded as the first genealogist of the Hoch-High family. It was also through his efforts that tombstones mark the graves of Rudolph Hoch and his wife Veronica in the family graveyard on the Johannes Hoch homestead in Oley, Berks County, Pennsylvania.

Rudolph and Melchior Hoch were of the Mennonite faith. They were from northern Switzerland. * People of the Mennonite faith were harassed and persecuted in many parts of Europe including Switzerland and as a result fled to countries where they could find religious freedom. It is presumed that Rudolph and Melchior Hoch landed at Philadelphia seeking refuge in Penn's "holy experiment" as so many religiously persecuted persons had done. If they arrived in 1717 as Abraham Hoch states, their whereabouts until 1720 are unknown. But "Swedenstettel" on the Schuylkill, near the present Pottstown, was their location in 1720. Early tax records for Chester County have these entries:

"Ruedy Houch upon Schoolkill above the french Creek in 1720 paid tax of two shillings and six pence."

"Rodger Hi of Skoolkill" in 1721.

"Rode Hie of Scoolkil" in 1722 paid tax of one shilling.

Johannes or John Hoch, son of Rudolph, is said to have been married to Susanna Herbein while he was living with his father at the Schuylkill. The Herbein family, of Huguenot origin, was one of the first families to locate in the Oley valley. (See appendix A-1 on the Herbein family).

In his memorandum Abraham Hoch states that his father, John, located in Oley about 1725. It appears that when John Hoch removed to Oley his parents, Rudolph and Veronica Hoch, and his brother, Samuel Hoch, came with him. The deed to this Oley plantation is dated January 30, 1728. It probably was one of the first white settlements in the Oley Valley. An abstract of the chain of title is shown in the appendix A-ii.

When Veronica the wife of Rudolph Hoch died, in 1728, a small burial lot, 80 feet square, was set aside on the homestead and here the mother of the Hochs of Oley was buried. Twenty years later her husband Rudolph was buried by her side. In this small cemetery repose six generations of the Hoch family; Rudolph and Veronica, John and Susanna, Abraham, Sr. and Susan, Abraham, Jr. and Susan, Gideon S. and Susan, Gideon W. and Naomi. The plot is walled in and well kept. The graves of Rudolph and Veronica are marked with red stone slabs erected by their grand-children. The inscriptions which were recut some years ago read:

"Hier ruhet die verstorbene Gross Mutter Veronica Hochin, starb im Jahr 1728."

"Hier ruhen die Gebeine des Verstorbenen Gross Vaters Rudolph Hoch. Er starb d. 8 Jan. Jahr 1748."

* The town of Liestal in Basle Canton is the home of an established Swiss family Hoch (starting with Hans Hoch in 1542). Arnold Seiler's "Stammbaum der Burger-geschlechter von Liestal", 1908, gives no clue about Rudolph and Melchior Hoch. Another Hoch family in Switzerland stems from the town of Willisau in Lucerne Canton; Hans Hoch of Willisau was a mercenary soldier in the late 15th century.

A - 8

JOHANNES HOCH² (Rudolph¹)

Johannes, or John, Hoch was born abroad (1700) and accompanied his parents when they emigrated to Pennsylvania. After his marriage (1720)** and move to Oley from the French Creek area of the Schuylkill River, near the present Phoenixville., Pa., he built a log house on his land. This structure is said to have been used as a community stronghold during Indian raids. It was destroyed by fire in 1868 when it was a tool house for the farm. It stood about fifty feet northeast of the present stone house residence erected by his son Abraham in 1788. In Bertolet's "Reminiscences of Oley" there is a sketch of an old log house on the Hoch farm said to have been built by former occupants of the land, the first in Oley. An addition to the stone house was made in 1811. Again in 1889 a remodeling occurred. Modern improvements have since been made. A small stone house, once used as a school is still standing on the property. John L. Hoch⁸, son of Gideon A. D. Hoch⁷, now lives on this old homestead property. See appendix A-1 for the chain of title to this plantation.

When Christopher Sauer, printer in Germantown, issued the now rare edition of the Bible in 1755*, John Hoch purchased a number of copies for his older children. The only copy of these Bibles known to be in the possession of his descendants in the 20th century was owned by Mrs. Gomer Rees of North Wales, Pa., a descendant of Daniel Hoch³. Esther Hoch³, a younger daughter of John Hoch, received his Bible that was published in Nurnberg, Germany in 1765. This she willed to her younger brother Abraham. In it the names and dates of birth of the children of Johannes Hoch were entered. The inside front cover has the following entries in German script writing :

Deborah Hoch, born May 6, 1721
Samuel Hoch, born March 1, 1723
Rudolph Hoch, born September 1, 1725
Daniel Hoch, born May 4, 1728
Maria Hoch, born December 2, 1730
Magdalena Hoch, born December 2, 1730
John Hoch, born March 6, 1733
Hannah Hoch, born May 8, 1735
Jacob Hoch, born December 16, 1738
Esther Hoch, born September 4, 1742
Abraham Hoch, born September 5, 1745

Dates of death are recorded on the lower half of the inside of the front cover as follows:

The children's grandmother died in the year of our Lord, 1728.
1748, the 8th of January, the children's grandfather, Rudolph Hoch, died.
1763, the 22nd of February, the children's mother, Susanna Hoch, died, in the 65th year of her age.
1763, on the 11th day of March, the children's brother, Johannes Hoch, died, in the 30th year of his age.
1766, the 21st of November, their sister Esther Hoch died, in the 24th year of her age.
1777, the 11th of July, the children's father, Johannes died in the 77th year of his age.

* Titled "Das Neue Testament, ... Verteutscht von D. Martin Luther..." etc.

** Reputedly to Susannah Herbein.

This Nürnberg Bible (1765) is currently in possession of Mrs. Earl D. Rhoads (Laura Hoch³) of Manatawny, Pa.

Johannes Hoch was naturalized by the Provincial court in 1729. He received a land warrant for 50 acres on March 31, 1733. On November 10, 1741 he bought a tract of 266 acres in Richmond Township; * on June 18, 1742 he took a mortgage on the farm of Derick Hill to secure a loan of 160 pounds. He sold land in Oley to his son-in-law Jacob Keim on June 12, 1753 ** and sold the 266 acres in Willow Dale (Richmond Township) to his son Daniel Hoch.

In 1761 John Hoch erected a mill in Oley. A tax list of Oley Township for 1767 lists Hans Hoch as owning 150 acres, 5 horses, 4 cattle, 10 sheep.

Land in Maidencreek was purchased from John Wiley (Book 1, page 51) and land in Oley from Valentine Steckel (Book 2, page 385). In 1761 John Hoch sold land in Oley to his son John, Jr. *** and land in Maidencreek to his son Jacob (Book 2, page 328, and 334).

John Hoch's will, dated August 14, 1769, is reproduced in the appendix A-iv.

An autograph of Johannes Hoch is in the Schwenkfelder Library at Pennsburg, Pa. in a book written by deMarsay. ****

DEBORAH HOCH DETURCK

DEBORAH HOCH³ (John², Rudolph¹) was born at Swedeland near Pottsgrove on May 6, 1721, and was married to John DeTurck May 13, 1740. The latter was the only son of Isaac DeTurck and Anna Maria Weimer. ***** From this union spring all the De Turcks in America. Deborah Hoch and John DeTurck both were of the first generation of their respective families in America. They began a family and a tradition. Their marriage is spoken of as the Great Wedding. It took place at the Hoch homestead. From the signatures on the marriage certificate, it is evident that the members of both families assembled for the festivities. They married in the presence of George Boone, Esquire, father of the famous woodsman, Daniel Boone. Happily the certificate of marriage has been preserved. It is in the keeping of Miss Laura Hoch of Reading, Pa. The marriage was apparently conducted according to the manner and custom prevailing among the Quakers. The wedding was presented in a pageant in 1940 at the John Hoch homestead. John DeTurck is listed among the representatives at the Oley Conference ***** which met at his home, as a Mennonite. By this we may understand that he, like his mother, Maria, was a "New Born" Mennonite. *****

* Recorded in Patent Book A, vol. 9, page 504 (at Philadelphia).

** Book 1, page 45 and Book 2, page 337. For patent to this tract see Patent Book A, vol. 7, page 138.

*** Book 2, page 176 and 328

**** Charles Hector de St. Georges, Count de Marsay (1688-1753) was a French religious "irregular" who lived in the Palatinate of Germany.

***** See Appendix v on DeTurck family.

***** See appendix A- 111 on Oley Conference of 1742.

***** See appendix A - xiv on Newborns

SAMUEL HOCH² (Rudolph¹)

Samuel Hoch, the younger son of Rudolph¹, was born abroad in 1702 and accompanied his parents and brother when they emigrated to America. He married Sarah Bauman, the only child and heir at law of Mathias Bauman who was the leader of the religious sect called the New-Borns. Concerning Samuel Hoch, his nephew Abraham Hoch wrote in his memorandum on the family, "Rudolph had also two sons, named John and Samuel. About the year 1725 Rudolph moved into Oley Township, Berks County, on the farm on which I still live. After this his son Samuel married and moved on the farm in Oley near the so-called Moravian Schoolhouse." ** Here is the definite statement that Samuel Hoch lived for a time with his father in Oley.

The will of Mathias Bauman, dated February 17, 1727, bequeathed half his land to his daughter Sarah and half to his wife Caterina. Since he died in 1727 the marriage of Samuel Hoch was after this date but before 1730 when the widow, who had married John Peter Anders, sold her half of the plantation in Oley to Samuel Hoch. Thus all the lands of Mathias Bauman came into the possession of Samuel Hoch and his wife Sarah Bauman. Mathias Bauman was buried on his farm, the first one in this cemetery plot. 17. 1739. She married her

Samuel secured a land warrant for 100 acres on February 26, 1733 and the Proprietors gave him a patent for it March 22, 1734 (Patent Book A, vol. 7, p. 136). Another patent to Samuel Hoy is dated September 21, 1747 (Patent Book A, vol. 8, p. 1). These lands were in Oley, then Philadelphia County.

In 1749 Samuel Hoch attached a stone building to the original log house. In 1880 this old log and stone residence was torn down when the present brick house was built. The barn, built in 1755, was replaced by a brick barn in 1862.

Samuel Hoch deeded land for a schoolhouse (July 17, 1756) and also deeded land to John Okely of Bethlehem for the use of the Moravian congregation for additional cemetery purposes. The building erected on the land was used for religious services and as a school, but later services were discontinued. In the 20th century it was owned by Oley Township but occupied by Daniel Moyer.

The Oley Moravian Church Record contains entries of the baptism of Samuel Hoch and his daughter Maria: "Samuel Hoch was baptized on April 24, 1757, by Mathias Hehl, and was received into the congregation...He communed for the first time May 23, 1759."

"Maria Peter, daughter of Samuel Hoch, and wife of Abraham Peter, was baptized in the Gemein Haus on April 24, 1757, by Augustus Spangenberg, and received into the congregation at the same time. She communed for the first time May 23, 1759."

Accounts of the daughters of Samuel Hoch will be presented before taking up the descendants of his son, Daniel Hoch, whose family has continued the name of Hoch.

MARIA HOCH PETER

MARIA HOCH³ (Samuel², Rudolph¹) was born February 14, 1726 and married on September 24, 1742 to Abraham Peter of Oley. She and her father were received into the fellowship of the Moravian congregation by baptism on April 24, 1757. She wrote her name as Mary High in 1740 when she signed the marriage certificate of her cousin Deborah Hoch. Her husband Abraham Peter was the son of Engel Peter and Catharine Hartkopf. See appendix A-xvii, Peter family.

* See appendix A-xiv, Mathias Bauman and the "New-Borns".
 ** This was a mile south of Friedensburg. See appendix A-iii the Oley Conference.