



The Nicholas Stoltzfus House, built in the early 1770s in Berks County, was home to the progenitor of a million Stoltzfus descendants. It also contains a museum on the early Berks County Amish.

Welcome to the Berks County, Pennsylvania, Amish-Mennonite Ancestral Tour

April 19, 2024

Reading Amish-Mennonite Settlement

1. Reading was first settled in 1733 by Samuel Finney and laid out as a town in 1748, named after Reading in Berkshire County, England. It is located on the east side of the Schuylkill River and is a Holland Dutch word meaning "Hidden Creek." The Indians called it Manijunk. In 1751, Reading consisted of about 130 dwellings with a population of 378 persons. Eighty percent of the inhabitants were Germans from Würtemberg and the Pfalz.

2. Gerber-Fix-Bitting Cemetery is a small Amish-Mennonite burial ground located on the land of **Hans Gerber** between Route 10 and the 422 bypass near Bingaman Street Bridge. Some researchers consider this to be the burial site of **Nicholas Stoltzfus** rather than at the Koenig Cemetery near Cross Keys. In the early 1960s

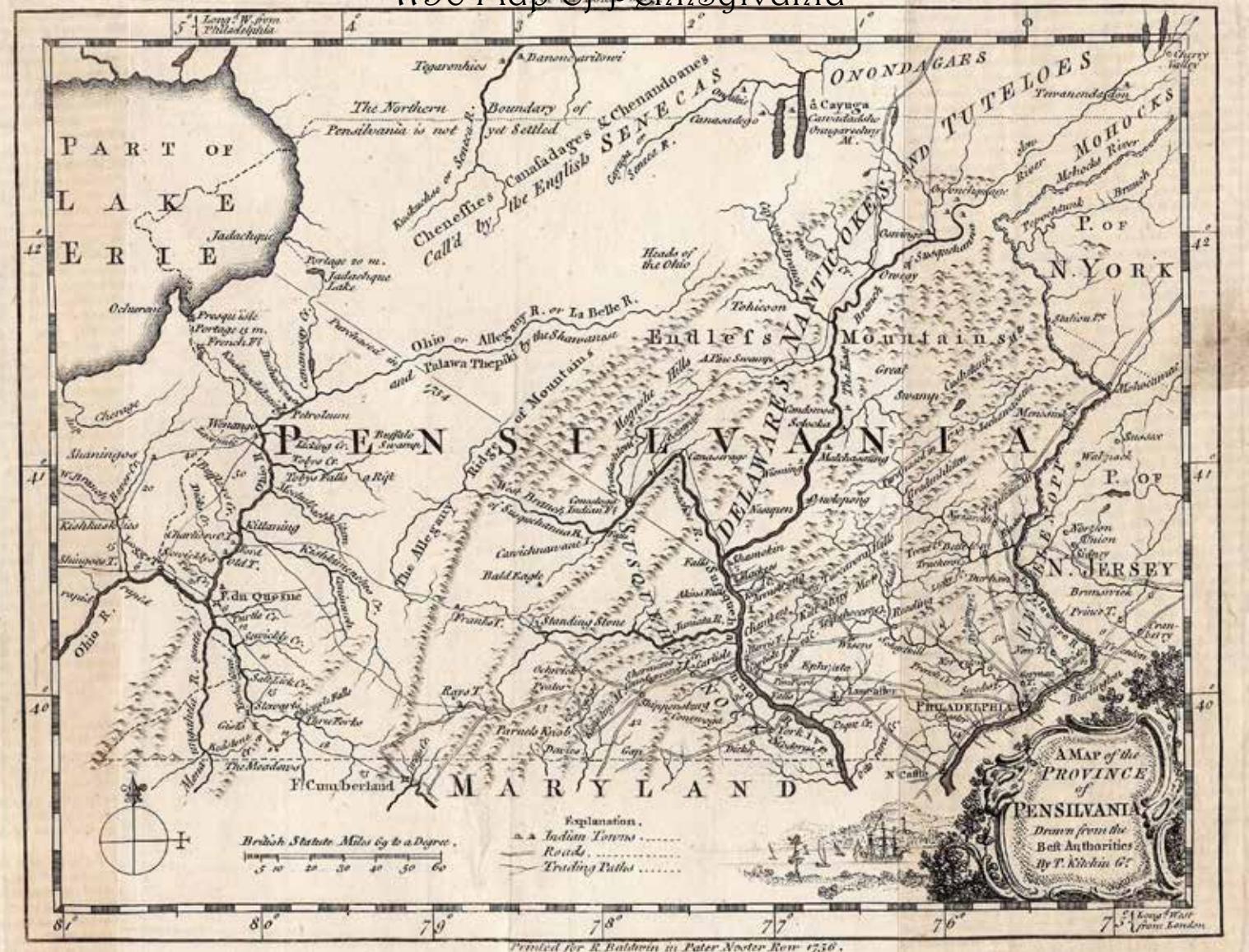
when the bypass was constructed, the plot was nearly destroyed, but through the actions of several interested persons, this was stopped but not before some stones were pushed onto a small pile at one end of the cemetery.

3. Abraham Kurtz Jr. (KZA13) and **Barbara Ritter** immigrated here in 1740, but when his first wife died, tradition says he returned to Europe to marry her sister and lead other colonists to America. Children married into the following families: Kurtz, Mast, and Yoder.

Hans/John Gerber (GB1) and **Hans Gerber Jr.** (GB11) were Amish Mennonite immigrants in 1750 who first settled in upper Berks County's Windsor Township, but

*Numbers throughout this booklet in parenthesis refer to Hugh Gingerich and Rachel Kreider's amazing encyclopedia of genealogy titled *Amish and Amish Mennonite Genealogies* (955pp. index. hardcover, Pequea Bruderschaft Library, 2007). Detailed information on these families can be found in this volume. Available for \$90 plus \$6 shipping from Masthof Press, 219 Mill Road, Morgantown, PA 19543.

1756 Map of Pennsylvania



in 1762, relocated to this area. Many of their descendants moved to Stark Co., Ohio, and Ind., and married into the following families: Adam, Kauffman, Kline, Laub, Schmucker, Stoltzfus, Yoder, and Zug.

4. Immigrant **Christian Zug** (ZK1) lived here as well before moving to East Whiteland Twp., Chester Co., Pa. Christian and **Anna Kanabel** had eight children married into the following families: Blank, Buechle, Kauffman, Long, Miller, Olinger, and Schrock.

Immigrant **Johannes Zug** (ZK3) owned property here before he moved to Honey Brook Twp., Chester Co., Pa. Children married into the Fisher, King, Mast, and Yoder families.

5. John Schmucker (SM1) married **Barbara Stoltzfus** (SF6) and purchased a house in Wyomissing from

his brother-in-law Christian Stoltzfus. Their children married into the following families: Fisher, King, Lapp, Livengood, Stutzman, Swartzentruber, and Zook.

***6. Nicholas Stoltzfus (SF) and Christian Stoltzfus (SF5)** **Home**, 1700 Tulpehocken Road, Wyomissing, PA, 19610, is located along the Tulpehocken Creek. Nicholas (1719-1774) was born of Lutheran parents, but while working as a hired man on an Amish-Mennonite farm near Zweibrücken, Germany, he fell in love and married their daughter. His son, Christian (SF5) m. Catherine Gerber (GB12) and his daughter Barbara m. John Schmucker. About 1801, he moved to near Bareville, Lancaster Co., Pa. In Dec. 2000, this

* This large asterisk appears where the bus will be stopping and everyone can stretch their legs!

property was acquired by Country Meadows Retirement Community and the house was restored and a barn constructed thanks to The Nicholas Stoltzfus House Preservation Committee, The Pequea Bruderschaft Library, and many others. Five of the nine children of Nicholas Stoltzfus died young. Children married into the following families: Fohrer, Gerber, King, and Schmucker.

7. Daniel Zug (ZK33) married **Catherine King** (KG8) (b. 1763). Living here on 160 acres along the Tulpehocken River at 1764 Broadcasting Road, Wyomissing in Cumru Township (now Spring Township), Daniel (1760-1813) was an Amish minister and lived here with his family. The 1806 tax records state that he had three horses, six cows, and a stone house [built in 1802]. Their children married into the following families: Evans, Lapp, Miller, Smucker, Stuckey, and Yoder.

Other Amish-Mennonite families who lived in the Reading area included **Jacob Lapp** (LP12) married to **Margaret Rickenbach** (RB36). Many of their children moved to Clarence Twp., Erie Co., N.Y. **Jacob Schwartzenruber** (SZ2) married to **Catherine Schmucker** (SM13) also lived here before moving to Lancaster Co., Pa., and later to Waterloo Co., Ont. Their children married into the following families: Birkey, Erb, Jacobs, Roth, Schmidt, and Schultz.

8. Red Covered Bridge or Wertz's Bridge. Burr truss construction built in 1867, 204 feet long, this is the longest single-span covered bridge in Pennsylvania. One of five in Berks County, Pennsylvania.

Maiden Creek Amish-Mennonite Settlement

9. Home of John Stoltzfus (SF51) married 1) **Veronica King** (KGd) and married 2) **Catherine Unsechar**. John was known as "Fetter Hannes/Dick Hans," son of Christian Stoltzfus and grandson of Immigrant Nicholas Stoltzfus. John and his brother-in-law, Michael Koenig, each purchased 152-acre tracts in 1797 from William Coleman. Their children married into the Beiler, Mast, Speicher, Summers, Petersheim, and Yoder families.

10. Michael Koenig (KGc) married **Veronica** _____. In 1797, Michael and his brother-in-law, John Stoltzfus

(SF51), purchased 152 acres in this area. The Koenig children married into the following families: Kurtz, Miller, and Yoder.

11. Abraham King (KGa) married to **Catherine Sieber** (SV21) lived here about one-half mile off Cross Keys Road. Abraham was a son of Samuel and Anna (Yoder) Koenig. Their children married into the following families: Ahrens, Forney, Kurtz, and Rickenbach.

12. Koenig-Stoltzfus Cemetery is the burial site of the Koenigs and possibly the Stoltzfuses who lived in this area. The earliest tombstone, actually a field stone, is dated 1761. A concrete wall erected in the late 1920s surrounds the tombstones which includes a memorial stone for: *Nicholas Stoltzfus, who came to America in 1766; died November 10, 1774.* Some historians question whether Nicholas is buried here because of Catherine Steinman's story regarding the Nicholas Stoltzfus funeral that better fits the Gerber-Fix-Bitting Cemetery and the recent discovery regarding the Nicholas Stoltzfus residence.

13. Jacob Rickenbach (RB32) **Homestead** is located on the north side of the Cross Keys Road leading west from Route 61. The original deed for the farm is from Thomas and Richard Penn. Jacob (1757-1831) married **Barbara Hertzler**, a granddaughter of Bishop Jacob Hertzler. This old house bears a datestone: *J.B. Rickenbach 1817.* Their children married into the following families: Hertzler, Kurtz, Miller, Moyer, Plank, Renno, Siever, Ulrich, and Yoder.

14. Stephen Kurtz (KZB7) married **Veronica** and owned three tracts of land in Berks County: Mohrsville; Irish Creek Valley; and near Myerstown (today Lebanon Co.). We are not sure if Stephen ever lived here on this property.

Northkill Amish-Mennonite Settlement

This was the first organized Amish-Mennonite congregation in America. It included the area around Hamburg, Shartlesville, Bernville, and Irish Creek.

15. Viewpoint Cemetery was originally known as the Yoder Cemetery. This site was started as a family cem-

etary and later donated to the Maiden Creek Church of the Brethren by Emanuel Yoder, a grandson of John Yoder (YR17) and Anna Burki. Emanuel's mother, Veronica Reichenbach Yoder is buried here. His father may be buried in the original Yoder Cemetery about one mile north of this location.

16. John (YR17) and Anna (Berkey) Yoder lived here at this site. Their oldest daughter, Barbara, married Jacob Gnaegi (KY7). Their other children married into the following families: Gerber, Hertzler, Kauffman, Kurtz, Reed, Rickenbach, Riehl, and Steeley.

17. Benedict and Veronica Lehman (LM) were 1737 immigrants and owned this tract of land titled "Hamburg." The town of Hamburg may have been named after this plantation. Benedict was from "Ober Homberg," a small farm village in the Swiss mountains just east of Steffisburg, near Thun, Switzerland.

18. Johannes (HLJ4) and Veronica (Miller) Hooley farm land. Their children married into the Gindlesperger, Johns, Mast, and Yoder families. Johannes was the son of Anabaptist minister Christian Holly who lived at Bärbelstein, Germany.



Jacob Hertzler settled in the midst of the first Amish-Mennonite settlement in America and served as their bishop. Their children married into the Hochstetler, Kauffman, and Yoder families.

20. "Strong Jacob" Yoder (YR14) (1726-1790) married **Anna Beiler (BY2)** (b. 1726) purchased 158 acres here in 1747. They relocated to the Conestoga Valley near Morgantown in 1767 within view of the current Conestoga Mennonite Church. It is also believed that Widow Barbara Yoder, 1742 immigrant, whose husband died at sea (Jacob's mother), lived here and died here in northern Berks County. The Yoder children married into the Arnold, Blank, Gerber, Hertzler, Hooley, Kauffman, Morrow, and Summers families.

21. Stephen Kauffman (KF4) married **Barbara (Yoder) (YR21)**. Stephen (1725-1800) was the son of Isaac and Anna (Streit) Kauffman. Stephen's family lived in the small stone house next to the large house. Their children married into the following families: Good, Gundy, Kaup, Miller, and Yoder.

22. Isaac Kauffman (KF3) (1718-1802) married 1) **Catherine Yoder (YR11)** (b. 1720) was the son of Isaac and Anna (Streit) Kauffman. He married 2) **Anna**. Isaac was imprisoned during the American Revolution for misprision of treason on July 10, 1779. Their children married into the following known families: Gerber, Renno, and Stahly.

***19. Jacob and Catherine (Ruegy) Hertzler (HZ) and Cemetery.** Jacob was a 1749 immigrant and lived on this farm named "Contentment." The family cemetery is in the field behind the house and barn. The datestone in the west gable of the house reads: *Built in 1768 by Jacob and Catherine Hertzler for Christian and Elizabeth Hertzler.* It came from the original house when it was torn down in 1850.



Hans Gnaegi Mill

23. Hans Gnaegi (KY) married 1) **Mary Holden** and married 2) **Magdalena Yoder** (YR22), granddaughter of Widow Barbara Yoder. Hans was born in Switzerland in 1720, and may have immigrated to the Amish Mennonite community at Montbéliard, France, and also spent time in England before coming to America. It was in England that he married an English woman, Mary Holden, and began a family. His family boarded the ship *Frances and Elizabeth* arriving in Pennsylvania on September 21, 1742. Sadly, Mary died on the voyage and was buried at sea. Hans was granted a warrant to 122 acres of land, and in 1763, Hans sold it and moved 20 miles west into Lebanon County. He operated a grist mill on this site and farmed until his death in 1772. Magdalena and the family remained on the land until the end of the century. It is unknown if the buildings today are the original mill. Children married into the following families: Landis, Nafzger, Ream, Schnebeli, Seiler, Sharrick, Vandersaal, Zook, and Zug. Two daughters married two Zug brothers, both sons of Immigrant Moritz Zug: Magdalena m. John Zook (ZK21) who died in Mifflin Co., Pa., and Gertrude m. Jacob Zug (ZK24) who died in Chester Co., Pa.

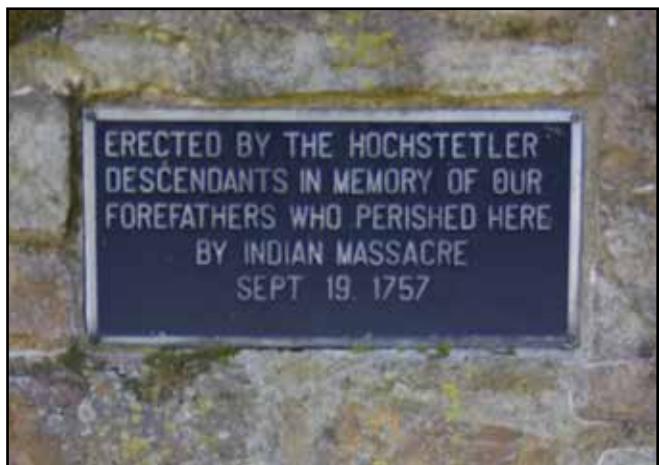
24. Immigrant Johannes “Hans” Zug (ZK3) first owned this land adjoining Jacob Hochstetler and Christian Miller before selling this land to his brother, Christian Zug in the spring of 1744. He then moved to the land three miles west of Hamburg, Pa. His residence in Berks Co. is sketchy because he was purchasing so much property—we are not sure where all he actually lived and for how long. He also appears on the 1754 tax list in Maidencreek Township, on the 1757 tax list in Oley Township, and on the 1758 through 1764 tax lists

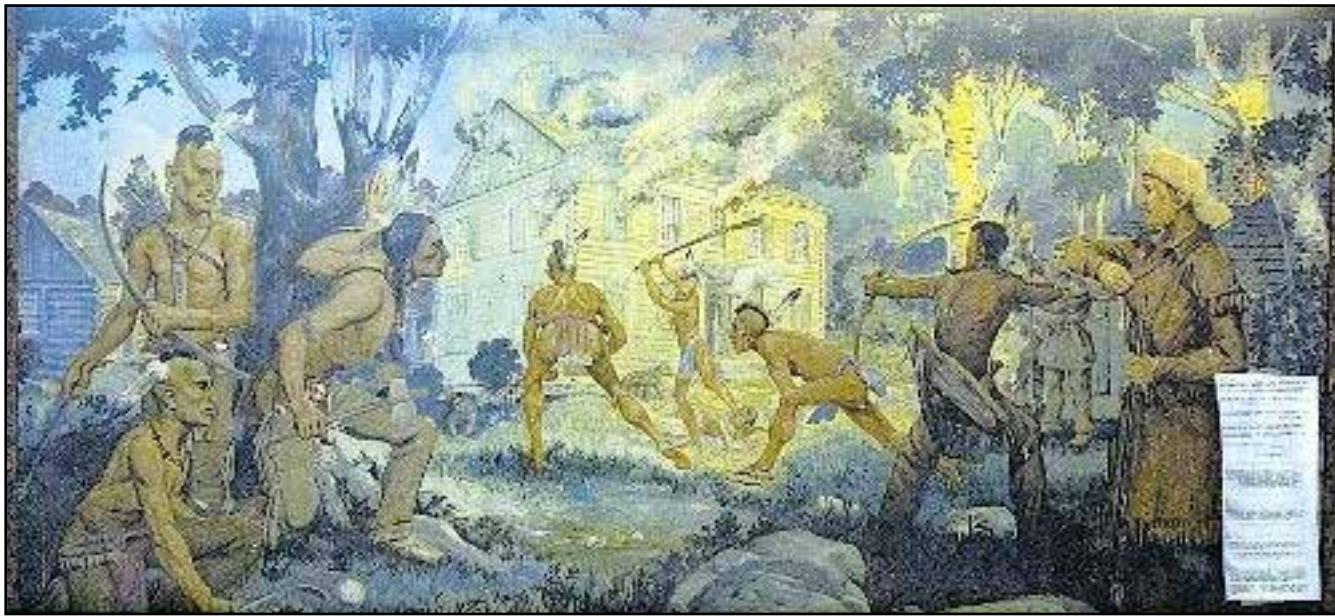
in Exeter Township—all in Berks Co., Pa.

In 1744, Immigrant Johannes Zug’s brother, **Immigrant Christian Zug (ZK1)** married 1) **Anna Kanabel**, and married 2) **Dorothea Mishler**, and married 3) **Anna** ____ purchased this land totaling 167 acres. In 1746, Christian purchased 30 additional acres. He appears on the Bern Township, Lancaster County, tax list in 1752 and 1754. In September 1757, their next-door neighbors, the Jacob Hochstetler family, were attacked by Indians. John Miller, a next-door neighbor to the north was also attacked by the Indians and wounded on the hand at the same time. The Christian Zug family was left unharmed. Their children married into the following families: Blank, Buechle, Kauffman, Miller, Olinger, and Schrock.

*25. L U N C H S T O P

***26. Jacob Hochstetler (HS)** married 1) **Anna Burki (BK4)** and married 2) **Anna** _____. Jacob (1704-1775) immigrated in 1738 and lived here at the site of the





This mural of the Hochstetler massacre (8 feet long by 4 feet high) is on the south wall of the Pennsylvania Dutch Campsite recreation room, Shartlesville, Pa. In the center is the scene where Indians are about to kill Christian Hochstetler, but they spare him because of his blue eyes. Mother Hochstetler can be seen "stuck in the window." Commissioned by Laurence Gieringer, ca1960.

Hochstetler Indian Massacre when on September 19-20, 1757, Jacob's first wife and two children were killed and three were taken captive. Remaining children married into the following families: Blank, Christner, Hertzler, Kauffman, Rupp, and Stutzman.

27. John (HS1) and Catherine (Hertzler) Hochstetler (HZ2) residence at the time of the Hochstetler Indian Massacre. John witnessed the Hochstetler massacre by the Indians from this tract warranted by his father Jacob in 1747. At the time, he was living on a farm south of here. Their children married into the Follmer, Eash, Mast, Miller, Schrock, Sever, and Yoder families.

28. Melchior Detweiler (DT) and Rudolph Detweiler (DT4) were 1737 immigrants who lived here with their families. Rudolph is listed as a grist mill operator on the 1767 and 1779 tax lists. The mill on this property was built in 1857. Little information is available on Melchior Detweiler's children, but Rudolph's children (wife unknown) married into the Beiler, Fisher, Lehman, Wenger, and Yoder families.

29. Christian (ST) and Barbara (Hochstetler) Stutzman (HS2) lived on this property. She was a daughter of Jacob Hochstetler (HS). Their children

married into the Beiler, Gnaegi, Miller, Speicher, Steiner, and Yoder families. Their daughter, Elizabeth, married John Gnaegi (KY11) who moved to Somerset Co., Pa., and their children married into the Beachy, Blocher, Hersheberger, Hochstetler, Miller, Schlabach, and Walter families.

Irish Creek Valley Amish-Mennonite Settlement

30. Hans, Jacob, and Magdalena Stutzman. Magdalena's husband died at sea. She is believed to be the mother of Christian (ST), Hans, and Jacob Stutzman. Magdalena is the only known Amish woman to be issued a land grant.

31. Jacob Beiler (BY) married 1) **Christina Werli**; married 2) **Veronica** ____; and married 3) **Elizabeth Kallen**. Jacob (1698-1771) was a 1737 immigrant from Guggisberg, Switzerland. His first two wives died in Switzerland. Jacob bought this tract of land in 1737. Children married into the following families: Esterloe, Fisher, Jungi, Kauffman, Kisch, Marti, Steiner, and Yoder. Jacob Beiler Jr. (BY6) married Catherine Kisch and purchased land in 1773 to the east of his father's land, but then later moved to N.C.

32. Christian Beiler (BY3) lived next to his father to the west. He is thought to have been married to **Elizabeth Yoder** (YR24). Their children married into the Detweiler, King, Koenig, Lantz, Lapp, Stutzman, and Wagler families.

33. Hans Sieber, wife unknown, received this tract of land in 1737 at the same time as Jacob Beiler (BY).

34. A View of the Irish Valley. Here in this Valley is where a cluster of 24 different Amish-Mennonite families lived:

Jacob Beiler	Hans Kurtz	Johannes Kurtz
Jacob Beiler, Jr.	Stephen Kurtz	Jacob Mast, 1737
Christian Miller	Nicholas Miller	Jacob Kauffman
Joseph Renno	Moritz Zug	Hans Zimmerman
Christian Yoder	John Zug	Christian Burki
Christian Yoder Jr.	Christian Stehley	Jacob Burki
Christian Burki	Henry Stehley	John Burki
Hans Sieber	Ulrich Speicher	Christian Hershberger

35. Christian Hershberger (HB) married **Barbara** _____ and came to America in 1737. He was warranted land here in 1745. Many of their descendants migrated to Somerset Co., Pa., and on to Ohio.

36. Jacob Mast (MS3) married 1) **Barbara** _____ and married 2) _____. Jacob also came in 1737 and was warranted three tracts of land in 1737, 1750, and 1754. Jacob's son John remained in Berks Co., but the others (Jacob, Christian, Verona, and Joseph) moved to Somerset Co., Pa., and married into the following families: Berkey, Fike, Hochstetler, Kauffman, Schrock, and Staehle. The Old Order Amish with the surname Mast are his descendants as are those with the surname Maust in Somerset Co., and Ohio. Three Jacob Masts immigrated to Pa.

37. Jacob Kauffman (KFB) married **Anna Mast**, daughter of Jacob and Barbara Mast. Jacob warranted land here in 1750; in 1760 moved to Cocalico Twp., Lancaster Co.; and in 1769 relocated to Chester Valley, Chester Co., Pa. He died in 1778. Their children married into the following families: Coblenz, Hochstetler/Hostetler, Mast, Souder, Steel, Yoder, and Zug.

Tulpehocken Amish-Mennonite Settlement

38. Dr. Hans Blank (PKB) married **Magdalena** _____ (d. 1796) purchased two tracts of land totaling 210 acres in present-day North Heidelberg Twp. in 1743 and 1755. They lived here until 1769 or 1770 when they moved to near Cains in Salisbury Twp., Lancaster Co., Pa. At that time, their son-in-law, Joseph Hochstetler (HS5), took over this farm. Dr. Blank's children married into the following families: Gerber, Hochstetler, Holly, Schmucker, Umble, Yoder, and Zug.

Hans Kurtz (KZB6) married to **Elizabeth Rickenbach** was the first known Amish-Mennonite deacon in America. This homestead was in the Kurtz family for 235 years from 1764 until it was sold over public auction in 1999. Hans arrived in America in 1744. Children married into the following families: Forney, Hertzler, Hochstetler, Kurtz, Lantz, and Mast. The small farm cemetery contains only Kurtz tombstones, but according to the *Hertzler/Hartzler Family History*, John Hertzler (HZ1) is also buried there.

Stephen Kurtz (KZB7) and **Veronica** _____ **Homestead** and **Cemetery**. Stephen (1724-1773) came to America with his brother Hans in 1744. Many Amish and Mennonites throughout the U.S. descend from Stephen and Veronica Kurtz. Their children married into the following families: Benetum, King, Lantz, Mast, Weidman, Yoder, and Zug.

***39. Muddy Creek Farm Library.** The Muddy Creek Farm Library was founded 50 years ago to serve as an organized library and archives among the Old Order and Conservative Mennonite Churches. Old books, letters and documents, and artifacts from the past are preserved by keeping them in a safe, environmentally controlled place.

***40. Shady Maple Buffet Dinner** will be at Shady Maple Smorgasbord, famous for their delicious authentic Pennsylvania Dutch cooking. Following dinner, we will hear Edsel Burdge share on "The Swiss Who Migrated to the Palatinate, Germany." by Edsel Burdge.

Thank you for joining us today!

