

The Skippack Palatines

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Introduction

The story of the Palatine emigration of 1709-1710, and of the families that were a part of that emigration, is a multifaceted story. This Homeric tale, which need not be repeated here in detail, is told in two valuable books: Walter Allen Knittle's classic work *Early Eighteenth Century Palatine Emigration*, originally published in 1937; and Philip Otterness's more recent work *Becoming German*, released in 2004. Also of great value are the genealogical and historical studies on the families involved in this migration that have been produced over the years – in several books and in journal articles – by Henry Z Jones.

The essential points of the Palatine story are these: Thousands of individuals and families from the Palatinate and neighboring territories in and around the Rhine Valley, in what is now southwestern Germany, made their way to Rotterdam, Holland, in the spring and summer of 1709, in hopes of being transported to England and from there to someplace in America. They did not all come from the Palatinate, but most of them did, and the term “Palatine” was therefore commonly used to describe all the German-speaking people who joined themselves to this large migratory movement. Some of the “Palatines” actually hailed from places even more far afield – such as Alsace, Switzerland, and Austria.

Lewis Bunker Rohrbach explains that this unexpected migration occurred at this particular time because of the convergence of four extraordinary factors:

(a) the winter of 1708/9 was unusually, bitterly, cold. (b) the British passed a Naturalization Act 24 March 1709 granting Protestant foreigners of all Protestant religions immediate naturalization and “all the privileges of an English subject, at the expense of a shilling”. (c) Josua Kocherthal's pamphlet, widely circulated in Germany prior to 1709, implied in the 4th edition released in 1709 that the British government would provide free transportation to settlers. (d) the new Elector Palatine was Catholic, thus making some Protestants of the Palatinate area in Germany uneasy. (“The 1710 Swiss and German Settlers of New Bern, North Carolina,” in *Even More Palatine Families*, 2:807)

Rohrbach goes on to say that

The net effect of these four factors was a cascade, a virtual flood, of thousands of German-speaking emigrants, all heading for England in 1709 expecting free transportation to America plus free land and government support once they got to America. They arrived in the port of Rotterdam in numbers as high as 3,000 per month, beginning in the spring of 1709 and peaking in the summer of 1709 before the British Government advertised on the continent its determination to take no more settlers. (808)

Many of these 1709 migrants or their parents had been migrants in the past, so that an adventure like this would not have seemed as daunting to them as we might think. Indeed, a fairly large percentage of the people then living in the Palatinate belonged to families that had moved there from another territory or country within the preceding few decades. Some had come from France – especially after the 1685 revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which since 1598 had guaranteed toleration for the Reformed “Huguenots” and other Protestants in France. When it became illegal to be a Protestant in France, most Protestants left France. The Palatinate, which was not far from the French border and which was Reformed in religion, was a popular destination. Switzerland was another major source of émigrés. Many Swiss families that had been “land poor” or distressed in other ways had moved to the Palatinate.

The Palatine families that traveled to Holland in the spring and summer of 1709 were indeed – as they expected – transported across the English Channel to England. Government leaders in Britain then began debating the difficult question of what to do with them. British authorities decided early on that those Catholic Palatines who declined to convert to a Protestant confession would be sent back to the continent, and this was done. The Protestant Palatines who remained were eventually sent for resettlement in many different directions. It has been estimated that around 14,500 Palatines survived the passage from Rotterdam. According to Rohrbach’s research in the pertinent records,

The fates of the roughly 14,500 immigrants who arrived in England in 1709, plus the roughly 1,000 children born to them while they were in England, were approximately as follows. Sent to New York in 1710: 3,000. Sent to Ireland in 1710: 3,073. (Less returned from Ireland to England: –2,100.) Sent to North Carolina in 1710: 650. Settled in various parts of England (rough estimate): 1,000. Sent to Jamaica, the West Indies, etc. (rough estimate): 1,000. Returned to Rotterdam...1709-1717: 4,703. Died in England 1709-1717 (rough estimate, to balance): 4,174. Totals: 15,500. (814)

The Palatines who were “sent to Ireland” (and who stayed) were settled in several communities in County Limerick, in the western part of the island. About half a century after this settlement several Irish Palatines of the second or third generation made their way to New York, where they found new homes among the Palatines who were living there. The Palatines who were “sent to North Carolina” were those who were included among the body of settlers who established the New Bern Colony, under the patronage and leadership of the Swiss nobleman Christoph von Graffenried.

The largest contingent of Palatines were those who were “sent to New York.” Some of these were kept in New York City, but the vast majority of them were located in two “camps” north of the city, on either side of the Hudson River, called respectively “East Camp” and “West Camp.” Here the Palatines were put to work in the production of naval stores for the British government, to repay the cost of their transportation. After two years the naval stores project was abandoned and the New York Palatines dispersed.

Some of them stayed in East Camp (now the town of Germantown) and West Camp (still known by that name), but most left. Some families moved to other locations up and down the Hudson Valley. Some families moved to various locations in northern and central New Jersey. And some families moved to the Schoharie Valley in New York. The Schoharie Valley families, after a few years, separated again into three groups. The first group stayed in the Schoharie region. The

second group moved to the Tulpehocken region of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. And the third group moved to the Mohawk Valley in New York. In time a small number of Palatine families that had originally gone to New York also found their way to the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia; to Frederick County, Maryland; and to a few other places in the British colonies in North America.

That is the basic story with which students of the Palatine emigration of 1709-1710 have always been familiar. And that is the story with which I personally have been familiar. I descend from many of the Hudson Valley Palatines – including also an Irish Palatine family that arrived in New York in the 1760s. My wife descends from Mohawk Valley Palatines. Our son's current wife – the mother of two of my grandchildren – likewise descends from Mohawk Valley Palatines.

Our son's first wife Ruth (who died of cancer at the age of 24) is the mother of my oldest grandson. For some time now I have also known that she descended from Tulpehocken Palatines. But I have recently learned of yet another line of Palatine heritage to which she and my grandson are connected. And in learning of this new line I have learned of a whole new story within the bigger story of the Palatine emigration of 1709-1710, of which I had previously been unaware – involving a relatively small and distinct group of Palatines who came to America in a unique “off-the-grid” kind of way. It would seem that other Palatine researchers have likewise not previously been aware of this group, or of their story. Rohrbach's breakdown of the “fates” of the various divisions among the Palatines does not mention them. I would now like to introduce these special people to the world of Palatine scholarship and popular interest. I will refer to them as the “Skippack Palatines.”

Mennonites in the Palatinate and among the Palatines

Religiously, the Palatine emigrants who ended up in England in the spring and summer of 1709 were divided roughly in thirds between adherents of the mainstream Lutheran, Reformed (Calvinist), and Catholic faiths. But a very small percentage of them were Mennonites – whom the English sometimes called “Baptists” because of their similarity in some respects to English Baptists. Otterness writes that

All three of the officially sanctioned German churches were represented among the migrants. Reformed parishioners were most numerous, making up 39 percent of the group. Lutherans made up 31 percent, and Catholics 29 percent. The remaining 1 percent were Baptists or Mennonites. The migrants' religious background reflected the religious diversity of the German southwest. (21)

Otterness also describes how and why the Mennonites of the Rhine Valley had originally become residents of that region, several decades prior to the 1709 exodus:

In the mid-seventeenth century the Palatine elector, Karl Ludwig, a Calvinist, not only made concessions to members of the two other officially recognized denominations of the Holy Roman Empire – the Catholics and the Lutherans – but also offered religious toleration to Mennonites and Jews. As a result many Lutherans and Catholics and small colonies of religious dissidents moved to the Palatinate from neighboring territories. Large numbers of rural poor and persecuted Mennonites came from Switzerland. In 1656 and 1657 more than one thousand Swiss moved to the Palatinate. In 1671 over six hundred Mennonites arrived

from Bern. Portugese Jews attracted by the elector's concessions settled in Mannheim. By the early eighteenth century, the Palatinate had become one of the most religiously diverse regions of western Europe. Other principalities followed suit. ... By the beginning of the eighteenth century, people from all over central and western Europe had settled in the German southwest. Villages and towns were inundated with outsiders who spoke different dialects, practiced different religions, and observed different customs. ... Few places in the Holy Roman Empire had such a complex mixture of people as the Rhineland territories of the German southwest. (13-14)

There were several Mennonite ("Baptist") households in the first party of 852 Palatine migrants who arrived from Rotterdam and were enumerated at St. Catharine's Parish in London, England, on 6 May 1709 (Jeffrey La Favre, "List of German Immigrants in London, May 1709"; *The Book of Names*, 75-80). The names of the heads of these households – as written in this document – were Henry Kolb, Gerhard Clemens, Jacob Volweider, Arnold Kolb (single), Jacob Wismar, Andrew Hubscher, Andrew Schragger, Mark Oberholtzer, George Adam Hoherluth, John Bien (single), Anna Eschelmann, and Christina Bauer (single). Also on the list, tacked on at the end, was Jacob Graeff, with the notation: "whose parents live in Pennsylvania, a boy 10 years of age." Jacob's religion was not indicated, but his father Hans Graff was a Mennonite who had come to Pennsylvania in 1704 and who was then living in Germantown, Pennsylvania, with his second wife (Jacob's stepmother).

Before this first party of Palatines had sailed for London, the Mennonites among them had sought out the Mennonite community in Rotterdam to ask for monetary assistance. Based on his research in Dutch Mennonite records, John L. Ruth writes that

Amidst this anxious crowd of emigrants were found "9 or 10 families from around Worms and Frankenthal" who identified themselves as Mennonites. ... Presenting themselves to the Rotterdam Mennonite leaders, they showed letters of membership in Palatine congregations.

These travelers, who were likely aware of "the long tradition of Dutch aid to Swiss and Palatine sufferers," now asked for financial help for themselves. But in their case this help was not forthcoming. This particular group of Palatine Mennonites

impressed the Rotterdam leaders as "altogether very poor," and an inquiry was immediately sent up to Amsterdam, some forty-five miles distant, as to whether any funds might be left in the treasury of the Mennonite "Committee for Foreign Needs." The Amsterdamers replied that there were, but that encouraging Palatines who had no money for fares themselves to go to Pennsylvania was "useless and entirely unadvisable." (*Maintaining the Right Fellowship*, 85)

Undaunted, they continued on to England with the rest of their Palatine compatriots. And over the next few weeks they were joined by many more shiploads of Palatines seeking a way to America. There were Mennonite families also on those later ships. Ulrich Hatteman was enumerated as a "Baptist" in the second party of Palatine arrivals on 27 May 1709; and on the list made at St. Catharine's on 11 June we find the names John Wingart, John Christman, and John Nussbaum, all said to be "Baptists" (*The Book of Names*, 81-87, 102-10). The religious affiliations of the Palatines who came into England after 11 June were not recorded on any lists – or at least not on any lists that are known to exist. This is unfortunate, since the majority of Palatine refugees arrived after that date.

There may very well have been more Mennonites among the Palatines who crossed over from Rotterdam during the height of the emigration that summer.

The Palatines were situated by the government in improvised lodgings and makeshift camps in and around London, to await a government decision about their ultimate destination. But many if not most of the Palatine Mennonites, and their friends in England, did not want to wait for a government decision. Jacob Telner, who was living in London in 1709, had been one of the founders of Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1683. Originally a Dutch Mennonite, he had joined the Religious Society of Friends, or Quakers, after his establishment of residency in England. "Visiting the camps, Telner was as amazed as anyone by this influx, and discovered amidst the crowds some fourteen families of Mennonites, whom he considered as his 'own flesh'" (Ruth, 88). He resolved to help them if he could, especially as they now sought assistance from the Quaker community in London.

Henry Gouldney, another sympathetic Quaker, applied to the London Friends "Meeting for Sufferings" for assistance, "on behalfe of about Sixty Persons that have been lately obliged to Leave their Native County the Palatinate on Account of General Poverty and Missery (and are now here) being by Religion them called Minists" (Meeting for Sufferings minutes; quoted in William Isaac Hull, *William Penn and the Dutch Quaker Migration to Pennsylvania*, 387). These "Minists" or Mennonites were basically the same families that had appealed for help to the Mennonite leaders in Rotterdam as they passed through that city a few weeks earlier. Now they are trying again with the Quakers in London.

The Mennonite Palatines intended to break away from the main Palatine crowd, and from the government plans that were then in the works for large-scale Palatine resettlement. They likely did not feel a close affinity to the Lutherans and Calvinists with whom they were mingling in the camps. The Mennonites were different, and they were going to take a different approach. They wanted to go to Pennsylvania, and they were going to try to figure out how to get there on their own, and how to come up with the money they needed to pay the costs of getting there. London Quaker records go on to indicate that

Since "some Charitable persons" had already given them "a dayly allowance," the Quakers at first left it up to "particular friends" to help them, but arranged for "a quantity of friends Books in high Dutch...to hand to the Minists and others." ... Eight of the families were "about to transport themselves" to Pennsylvania on June 24... When the Quakers learned that the eight families were on the verge of departure, they asked "what sum" would be appropriate to help with "the passage to Pennsylvania." They then made a donation of fifty pounds, which impressed Jacob Telner as a generous amount. (Ruth, 88)

Regarding the financing of Mennonite emigration from Europe to America in this general time period, J. S. Hartzler and Daniel Kauffman note that

Some of the Mennonites in Holland had by this time become rich and powerful; and these now lent a helping hand to their more unfortunate brethren in Switzerland and other countries. The English Quakers also did much to provide means by which these poor brethren were enabled to cross the ocean and gain the land of freedom. The Mennonites of Holland, through their "committee on foreign needs," and the Friends, through their "Yearly Meeting,"

of London, made contributions from time to time which enabled many unfortunate brethren to come to America... (*Mennonite Church History*, 130)

The Mennonites in Holland were indeed willing to offer such help to coreligionists whom they judged to be bonafide “refugees.” They were, however, reluctant to offer financial assistance to families that were leaving Europe only for the purpose of finding greater economic opportunity in the New World, and not because they had suffered from religious persecution in their homelands. In general, the Palatine Mennonites who were passing through Holland in 1709 were judged to be leaving Europe in pursuit of economic improvement, and for that reason money was not provided to them.

The Quakers in England were apparently not as conservative or restrained with respect to the disbursement of their funds. As Hartzler and Kauffman explain it, the reason why the Friends were willing to provide special help and encouragement to Mennonites in need was because

In faith they were practically the same. ... [George] Fox, [William] Penn, and other Quaker preachers who went from England on preaching tours through Germany and the Netherlands, found their warmest friends among the Mennonites and frequently preached in their churches. Because of their oneness in faith, Mennonites became Quakers, and Quakers became Mennonites, as circumstances warranted. The name “English Mennonites,” sometimes given to the Quakers of that day, was quite appropriate, as they preached the same doctrines as the stricter set of Mennonites, save in outward forms. (130)

Transportation from England to Pennsylvania

In a letter that Pennsylvania founder and proprietor William Penn wrote from London on 26 June 1709 to James Logan, his agent in Philadelphia, we read:

Herewith come the Palatines, whom use with tenderness and love, and fix them so that they may send over an agreeable character; for they are a sober people, divers Mennonites – and will neither swear nor fight. See that Guy has used them well.” (quoted in H. Frank Eshleman, A. K. Hostetter, and Charles Steigerwalt, “Report on the True Character, Time and Place of the First Regular Settlement in Lancaster County,” in *Historical Papers and Addresses of the Lancaster County Historical Society*, 14:45)

These are the eight families whose transport to America had been partially financed by the Quaker community in London. Mr. Guy, to whom Penn refers, was the master of the ship on which these Palatine Mennonites were transported to Pennsylvania. Penn’s letter accompanied these settlers, and was to be delivered to Logan upon the arrival of the ship in Philadelphia. When the passengers disembarked they did not remain in Philadelphia, however, but “located at Skippack” (45), which is thirty miles northwest of Philadelphia. Penn’s wish that these travelers be treated well and be settled in a good location, “so that they may send over an agreeable character,” would seem to mean that he hoped “that they would send back to Europe an ‘agreeable’ description of Pennsylvania. Penn hoped for more settlers like them” (Ruth, 88).

Jacob Telner, besides his connection to Germantown, Pennsylvania, was also someone who would have had an interest in the settlement and development of Skippack (originally known as “Bebber’s Township”) and the surrounding area. He had been granted a 5,000-acre tract of land along Skippack Creek, at a place that came to be called “Telner’s Township” (now a part of Upper Providence, Pennsylvania), adjacent to Skippack. The advice and counsel that Telner had no doubt offered to the Mennonites in London regarding life in the New World may therefore help to explain why, when they arrived in Pennsylvania, they settled in Skippack.

On 6 August 1709 Telner wrote from London to Mennonite leaders in Holland that “eight families had gone to Pennsylvania and that six other Mennonite families were waiting in London to go too” (quoted in Eshleman et al., 46). These six additional families, “who in Telner’s opinion ‘ought’ also to go there, simply lacked the means to pay the fare. ... Struck with pity for the six families left behind, ...Telner wrote to Amsterdam and Haarlem, admonishing wealthy Mennonites there to ‘let some crumbs fall’ to those ‘poor sheep’” (Ruth, 88). The first party of eight families – about whom Penn had written on 26 June – had been given financial aid by Quakers in England. Now, in his 6 August letter, Telner is appealing to his old associates in the Mennonite community in the Netherlands for financial aid, to help pay the transportation costs of the second party of six more families – presumably so that they too could settle in or near Skippack.

Telner tried to stimulate some generosity among the Dutch Mennonites by pointing out to them, with respect to the party of Palatine Mennonites that had already left for Pennsylvania, that “the English Friends, who are called Quakers, helped them liberally” (quoted in Hull, 388). The Dutch Mennonites seem not to have offered this help for the second group, however, since there is no record of a second ship transporting Palatines to Pennsylvania at this time. As has already been noted, they thought that their funds should be used chiefly to assist Mennonites fleeing persecution, and the Palatine Mennonites were not fleeing persecution, only poverty.

The six families in whom Telner had demonstrated such a solicitous interest (of whose identity we are not certain) were instead probably folded into the plans for the settlement in North Carolina that was being promoted by von Graffenried, and that was going to include a number of Mennonites from Switzerland. We know that two and likely three of the Palatine families that ended up in Graffenried’s New Bern settlement were Mennonite families that had been a part of the emigration out of Germany in 1709, the heads of which were Jacob Wyssmer, Andreas Hubscher, and probably Johannes Nussbaum. In all likelihood these men represented three of the six families about whom Telner had written to the Netherlands. The identities of all the Palatine families that started out for New Bern are not known, and during the rough passage from England to North Carolina “some 350 passengers died out of 650 aboard the two ships” (Rohrbach, 819). This may account for our not being able to identify more Palatine Mennonites among the known New Bern families.

Mennonite Palatines in or near Skippack

Returning now to the story of the “Skippack Palatines” who left for Pennsylvania in June of 1709, we take note of Ruth’s attempt to identify who they were. He writes:

We may name five of the “eight families” whom we suspect to be on Guy’s ship: John Christman (a Hans Chrisman turns up in the area of Telner’s Township), Gerhardt Clemens,

Henry Kolb, Marcus Oberholtzer and Andrew Schraeger, with Arnold Kolb, Michael Ziegler and John Bien almost certainly included. (88-89)

Ruth includes John Christman on his list. The full entry for the John Christman household on the 11 June 1709 St. Catharine's list is as follows: "Christman, John, husbandman & vinedresser, age 41, with wife, sons age 7 and 5, and daughters age 9 and 2, Baptist." But a Palatine family headed by "Johannes Christmann" was subsisted by the British government from 1710 to 1712 in *New York*. The first entry for this New York family, on the subsistence list for 1 July 1710, indicated a household with three persons over 10 years of age and three persons under 10 years of age. This is a perfect match with the Mennonite John Christman family as enumerated at St. Catharine's the previous year. For this reason Jones has concluded that the Mennonite John Christman went to New York, and is the person with that same name who was naturalized at Albany, New York, on 17 January 1715/16 and later lived in the Mohawk Valley (*The Palatine Families of New York*, 1:123-24). It would seem that the "Hans Chrisman" who "turns up in the area of Telner's Township" must have been someone else. To make this even more interesting, it can be noted that the 1709er John Christman has also been claimed for the Tulpehocken settlement (*1723-1973: Two Hundred Fifty Years Tulpehocken*, 49), but I think Jones's conclusion about where this man actually lived is still the correct conclusion.

Ruth also includes Arnold Kolb as someone who was "almost certainly included" among the passengers on Guy's ship. This person's entry in the 6 May 1709 St. Catharine's list was "Kolb, Arnold, husbandman & vinedresser, age 22, single, Baptist." This is, however, the last time Arnold Kolb's name appears in any record in Europe or America, which suggests that he may have died either in England or during the trans-Atlantic crossing. As far as the other names on Ruth's list are concerned, I concur with their inclusion.

On 2 June 1713, thirty men who described themselves as "the inhabitants of the Township of Skippack and several adjacent plantations" submitted a petition to colonial authorities, asking for the construction of a road between Skippack and Whitemarsh, Pennsylvania (*History of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania*, 2:1173). Such a road would give Skippack residents an accessible route to Philadelphia. The name "Heinrich Kolb" on this 1713 petition corresponds to this entry in the 6 May 1709 St. Catharine's list: "Kolb, Henry, husbandman & vinedresser, age 30, with wife and daughters age 6, 3, and ½, Baptist." (This was Arnold Kolb's brother.) The name "Gerhard Clemens" on the 1713 petition corresponds to this entry on the 1709 list: "Clemens, Gerhard, husbandman & vine-dresser and linen cloth weaver, age 28, with wife and sons age 5 and 1½, Baptist." The name "Andrew Schraeger" on the 1713 petition corresponds to this entry on the 1709 list: "Schraeger, Andrew, husbandman, age 53, with wife and daughters age 23 and 20, Baptist."

Heinrich Kolb, wife Barbara, and daughters Maria, Dorothea, and Anna, were from Wolfsheim, Hesse. Heinrich's brother Arnold was also from there. Their parents were Dielman and Agnes (Schumacher) Kolb. The Kolb family appears on a census that was taken in Wolfsheim in 1685. Three of Heinrich and Arnold's older brothers – Martin, Johannes, and Jacob – had emigrated to Pennsylvania already in 1707, as part of a small group of Mennonites that also included Wynant Bowman and his family. Their destination was the Mennonite community in Germantown, Pennsylvania (approximately 20 miles southeast of Skippack). Regarding these 1707 adventurers, "Apparently the Kolbs had means to pay their own way, whereas the Bowman family needed a loan" – which they were given by the Mennonite community in Amsterdam on their way through Holland.

Already at this time – in 1707 – “More Palatines wanted to come, but the Amsterdam Mennonites refused further donations, saying that these were not true refugees – they merely wanted to better their living conditions” (Ruth, 81). Thielman, the youngest brother in the Kolb family, finally arrived in Pennsylvania in 1717.

Gerhard Clemens and his wife Anneli (or Anna) Reiff, with sons Jacob and Abraham, were from Dittelsheim, in the Palatinate, where they had been enumerated in a census taken soon before their departure. According to Fred J. Riffe,

In 1709, the Clemens family were part of the Ibersheim [Mennonite] Congregation that lived on Farm 2 at Dittelsheim. The family is listed as Gerhart Clemens, age 29; Anna Clemens, age 27; Jacob Clemens, age 5; and Abraham Clemens, age 2. His parents lived on Farm 1 and were listed as Jacob Clemens, age 59, and wife. (*Reiff to Riffe Families in America*, 26)

For many years Gerhard Clemens kept a notebook or diary, in German, which still exists. It indicates that he was born in 1680 and came to America in 1709. There are two very informative entries in this book, apparently made by Gerhard’s brother Johannes and his father Jacob, which document the settling of a debt to the brother and a monetary gift from the father before Gerhard left Germany. These entries are poignant, in that Johannes and Jacob likely expected that they would not see their brother and son again on this side of eternity. As translated these entries read as follows:

Anno 1709, March 3. I, John Clemens, have settled with my brother Gerhart Clemens, and made everything balance regarding his purchased goods.

Anno 1709, March 8. I, Jacob Clemens, gave my son, Gerhart, by my own hand on account 126 guilders.

The earliest evidence of Gerhard’s presence in Pennsylvania comes from the fact that “in early October” of 1709 “we already find Gerhardt Clemens buying a horse from deacon Henry Kassel of the Germantown [Mennonite] congregation” (Ruth, 89).

The name “James Been” on the 1713 petition probably refers to “Bien, John, cloth & linen weaver, age 24, single, Baptist,” on the 2 June 1709 St. Catharine’s list. During this period it was a very common naming convention in Germany for a man to have a first given name of “Johann” or “Hans,” followed by a second given name. In ordinary usage such a man would usually go just by the second given name. So, the name “John Bien” on the 1709 list probably represents – in an abbreviated way – a person whose full name (in German) was actually “Johann Jacob Bien”; and who, after some Anglicizing influences, came to be known as “James Been” in Pennsylvania.

Marcus Oberholtzer’s complete entry in the 6 May 1709 St. Catharine’s list reads as follows: “Oberholtzer, Mark, husbandman, age 45, with wife, sons age 10, 8, and 3, and daughters age 6 and 1, Baptist.” Marcus Oberholtzer, his wife Elisabeth (Eby) Oberholtzer, and their children Jacob, Samuel, Marcus, Anna, and Elisabeth, had come from Ruchheim, now a part of the city of Ludwigs-hafen on the Rhine. His parents were Marx and Margaretha (Dobler) Oberholtzer of Immelhäuser Hof, just south of the city of Sinsheim, where Marcus had been born. Marcus and his household

probably came to Pennsylvania with the Skippack settlers in 1709, although he himself did not settle in Skippack.

It is also possible that Marcus and his family lingered in England until the following year, and came on the ship “Mary Hope.” This ship transported to Pennsylvania several Mennonite families that had come to England in 1710, after the huge wave of “Palatine” migration the previous year. It made port in Philadelphia on 23 September 1710. We know that one of the passengers on that ship was Marcus’s brother Martin Oberholtzer (Ruth, 90). At any rate, Marcus was in Pennsylvania by 1711, and after a few years became a resident of that part of Coventry Township that is now East Coventry Township.

Another interesting entry on the 6 May 1709 St. Catharine’s list is for “Ziegler, Michael, cloth & linen weaver, age 25, single, Lutheran.” Michael Ziegler’s family origins in Germany were in the village of Eschelbach, southeast of the city of Heidelberg. At some point he converted from Lutheranism to the Mennonite faith, and in 1722 became a Mennonite minister, preaching in Mennonite congregations in and near Skippack. Ziegler’s wife Catharine (whom he married before 1711) was a daughter of Andrew Schrauger (“Schrager” on the 1709 list; “Schraeger” on the 1713 petition). They may have been married in England, and Ziegler’s conversion may also have happened in England, before the sailing of Guy’s ship. If that were the case, then the newlywed Ziegler couple may very well have been counted as one of the eight Mennonite families that were transported to Pennsylvania on that ship.

Michael Ziegler’s name does not appear on the 1713 petition for the construction of a road, but we know that he was living in Skippack from an early date. Andrew Schrauger (Ziegler’s father-in-law) had first purchased land in Skippack in 1709 (*History of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania*, 2:liii). If perchance Ziegler and his wife were still living with her father in 1713 (so that Ziegler was not yet the head of his own independent household), this might explain why he did not sign the petition. Ziegler was one of seven trustees for the Mennonite congregation of Skippack to whom Matthias van Bebber gave 100 acres for a meetinghouse and cemetery in 1717. On 14 February 1718 Ziegler purchased for himself a 100-acre tract of land in Skippack. “Michael Ziegler, Sen: of the Township of Perkiomen & Schiback” made his will on 7 February 1763 (Philadelphia County Wills, Book N:454). The will was proved on 29 October 1765. (Andrew Schrauger’s other children were a son Gerhardt and a daughter Elisabeth who married Christopher Dock.)

Although Ruth does not include him, I believe that young Jacob Graff was also onboard Guy’s ship. Happily, we know that Jacob did somehow get to America to be reunited with his family, since he does later appear in Pennsylvania records. Jacob’s father Hans moved from Germantown to Earl Township in Lancaster County in 1715. In his will, dated 8 November 1738 and proved 7 May 1746, Hans calls Jacob “my beloved son.” As a resident of Martic Township in Lancaster County, Jacob signed his own will on 15 March 1760. It was proved on 16 October 1766.

Another person not included by Ruth in his list is Georg Adam Hochemuth, whose complete entry on the 6 May 1709 St. Catharine’s list reads as follows: “Hoherluth, George Adam, cloth & linen weaver, age 45, with wife, sons age 12 and 9, and daughters age 17 and 14, Baptist.” Hochemuth was from the town of Lamsheim. In a well-researched article on “Emigration Materials from Lamsheim in the Palatinate,” Heinrich Rembe informs us that

Georg Adam Hochermuth, Mennonite [*Mennist*], linen weaver, was received into citizenship at Lambsheim February 15, 1709. He was born at Hasselbach in the Helmstadt dominions [*Helmstattische Herrschaft*]. He is mentioned in the town records, 1702-1708. His wife's name was Barbara. They both emigrated to America in 1709. (*Pennsylvania Folklife*, 23:2:45)

One "Mathias Adam Hogermöd," living in what is now Berks County, Pennsylvania, was naturalized between January 9, 1729, and 1730. This may have been one of Georg Adam's sons. Did Georg Adam himself make it to America? Was he a passenger on Guy's ship in 1709? His name has not been found in any Pennsylvania documents, so if he did go there he likely did not long survive.

Non-Mennonite Palatines in or near Skippack

Two more interesting names in the 1713 petition for the construction of a road are "Abraham LeFevre" and "Peter Wentz." There are entries for these men, too, on the 6 May 1709 St. Catharine's list: "le Fevre, Abram, husbandman, age 50, with wife, son age 7, and daughter age 20, Reformed"; "Wentzen, Peter, husbandman, age 25, single, Reformed." About a month following this enumeration, on 5 June at the Savoy in London, "Peter Wenz" married "Elizabeth Ruperti." Elisabeth was the daughter of Abraham Le Fevre's wife Mary by a previous marriage. In 1713 Le Fevre and Wentz were not living in Skippack, but they lived nearby in New Bristol Township (now Worcester Township). Abraham had purchased 500 acres of land there on 5 October 1710. At the time of the writing of his will on 10 March 1729/30 (Philadelphia County Wills, No. 332), he was, however, described as "Abraham Lefever of Skepack." (The will was proved on 2 July 1733.)

Also on the 6 May 1709 St. Catharine's list is an entry for "Trumph, John Michael, husbandman, age 48, no wife, with a son age 18, Reformed." He was known in Pennsylvania as Hans Michael Trump. As an older widower he married Abraham Le Fevre's daughter Mary Elisabeth (reportedly in Abington, Pennsylvania, in 1710), and lived in Upper Dublin Township, Pennsylvania. Upper Dublin was about ten miles from New Bristol and about fifteen miles from Skippack, and was not along the route of the proposed road, so Trump's name would not be expected to be on the petition. The name "Mikel Trump" does, however, appear on another Pennsylvania petition, in 1712, which opposed the proposed construction of a different road, from Gwynedd to Pemapeck Mills (in Howard Malcolm Jenkins, *Historical Collections relating to Gwynedd*, 285).

Soon after his arrival in Pennsylvania Trump had "purchased two tracts of land in Horsham Township, Pa., Tenth mo. 22d, 1709, and [was] described in the deeds as from Worms on the River Rhine, Germany..." (Benjamin H. Shoemaker, "Nanny-Trump," *The Literary Era*, 3:8:243). According to the Julian calendar that was in use in Britain and in British domains in 1709, the tenth month would have been December. Horsham Township is directly adjacent to Upper Dublin Township. Trump's will (Philadelphia County Wills, No. 280) was signed on 25 November 1719 and was proved on 20 July 1723.

In Abraham Le Fevre's 1730 will he describes his heir Catharine Schwisser (wife of Lorentz) as his "oldest daughter in law," and his heir Elisabeth Wentz (wife of Peter) as his "youngest daughter in law." According to the usage of the time "daughter in law" would have meant "step-daughter." Abraham had only one son, Johannes Le Fevre, whose wife was Christina Hallman. Abraham's daughter Mary Elisabeth (who married Hans Michael Trump) had died in 1726 or 1727, and is not mentioned in the will.

The members of the extended Le Fevre–Wentz–Trump family were not Mennonites, but they were Palatines who had left Germany in 1709. And they were living near Skippack at the same early date when the Mennonite Palatines were living there.

Another cluster of relatives or future relatives on the 6 May 1709 St. Catharine’s list involves the following persons: “le Dee, John, husbandman, age 47, no wife, with daughters age 20 and 16, Reformed”; “Kuhlwein, Philip, husbandman, age 26, single, Reformed”; and “Fodder, John, husbandman, age 38, with wife, sons age 9 and 4, and daughter age 1, Reformed.” (“Fodder” is almost definitely a transcriptional misreading of “Yodder” or “Jodder.”) These entries refer to Jean Le Dee; to Le Dee’s future son-in-law Philip Kühlewein, who married Maria Le Dee; and to Le Dee’s future son-in-law Johannes Joder (Jotter, Yoder), who after the death of his first wife Veronika married Anna Rosina Le Dee.

Philip E. Pendleton reports, on the basis of his research in Pennsylvania land records, that already “Before the end of 1709” Le Dee and Kühlewein “had selected land in Oley” (*Oley Valley Heritage: The Colonial Years*, 106). In 1714 Joder also became a resident of Oley, Pennsylvania – which is about 30 miles northwest of Skippack. Before then Joder was apparently living in Bucks County. The record of his marriage to Le Dee’s daughter, on 29 April 1711, is found as follows in the register of the Reformed Church of Neshaminy and Bensalem in Bucks County: “Johannis Jodder, widower of Franicae Iselmyn, & Anna Rosina Leeke.” (“Franicae” is a phonetic spelling of “Veronika.” “Leeke” is almost definitely a transcriptional misreading of “Ledee.”)

Le Dee, Kühlewein, and Joder were identified as members of the Reformed Church in 1709, but in Oley they all became members of the “New Born” religious sect when that sect was organized there in 1714, upon the arrival from Germany of its founder Matthäus Baumann. Joder was actually the leader of the sect from the death of Baumann in 1727 to his own death in 1741.

Before they joined the Palatine exodus from Germany, Le Dee had lived in Eppstein, just west of the city of Mannheim in the Palatinate; and Joder had lived in Schwetzingen, just west of the city of Heidelberg in the Palatinate. Kühlewein was from Lamsheim. He was the son of Hans Theobald Kühlewein and his wife Dorothea, and was a brother-in-law of Matthäus Baumann. Kühlewein, though still formally a member of the Reformed Church, had become associated with Baumann’s religious movement already before his 1709 departure from Germany. Rembe offers an interesting account of Baumann and his influence:

Baumann was a radical pietist and separatist who got caught in the meshes of the state church machinery in Germany and migrated to Pennsylvania where he was free to propagate his message. In the court case of 1702 in which Baumann was accused of pietism, he testified that he recognized no written confession, but belief in God alone, with whom he had spoken, and who had sent him to call the people to repentance. Furthermore, Baumann declared that the clergy of the state churches preach false doctrine. By 1706 he had converted Jakob Berg, Jakob Bossert, Philipp Burkhard, Georg Hort, Valentin Kilian, Philipp Kühlewein and other members of the Kühlewein family, Adam Pfarr, Hans Georg Ritter, and Johann Traut. The men were in 1706 imprisoned and sentenced, on bread and water, to clean out the town ditches, on which most of them took the oath. Andreas Bossert, who refused to take the oath to the elector, was banished on April 29, 1719, from town and province. Philipp Kühlewein

left with the Palatine migration of 1709, and Matthäus Baumann followed in 1714. In 1719 his brother-in-law Abraham Zimmermann and mother-in-law Dorothea Kühlewein joined Baumann in Pennsylvania. (41)

The Palatine emigrants to Pennsylvania referred to by Penn in his 1709 letter were described as “Mennonites.” It would seem, though, that Abraham Le Fevre and his two future sons-in-law, and Jean Le Dee and his two future sons-in-law – who were all Reformed – may also have been able to arrange passage for themselves on Guy’s Pennsylvania-bound ship. Unlike the vast majority of Palatine refugees, it appears that Abraham Le Fevre and Jean Le Dee were men of means, so that they could pay their own way to America.

Their surnames indicate that they were of French Huguenot origin. In France, before 1685, the Huguenots “were skilled artisans and professional men of the middle class,” and played a very important role in the French economy – so much so that “the loss of the Huguenots was a serious economic blow to France” (Earl E. Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries: A History of the Christian Church*, 310). If the Le Fevre and Le Dee families had previously prospered as a part of the French middle class, and if these families had been able to preserve at least some of their wealth while living in the Palatinate, this could explain why Abraham and Jean may indeed have been able to get themselves and their close associates to America without needing to rely on the charity of others and without needing to become a part of the government-sponsored redemptioner project in New York.

Conclusion

More research on the “Skippack Palatines,” and on this fascinating and heretofore almost unnoticed aspect of the larger Palatine story, can and should be done. One avenue for possible future research would be an exploration of the connections and possible connections in Europe between Abraham Le Fevre and Jean Le Dee, and the families from southwest Germany that settled in New Paltz, New York, in 1708, under the leadership of Pastor Josua Harrsch von Kocherthal. This small migration was a preparatory prelude to the much larger Palatine emigration of 1709-1710, in which Kocherthal also played a major role.

A few intriguing “teasers” are these facts: One of the New Paltz settlers was Isaac Le Fevre, who named a son Abraham, and who later moved to Strasburg, Pennsylvania. Another of the New Paltz settlers was Lorentz Schwisser (Schweitzer), who was married to Abraham Le Fevre’s step-daughter Anna Catharina Ruperti, and who also moved to Pennsylvania – where his name appears on the 1713 petition for a new road between Skippack and Whitemarsh. Yet another of the New Paltz settlers was Isaac De Turck, whose wife’s maiden name was Le Fevre, and who later moved to Oley, Pennsylvania, where Jean Le Dee was living (Patricia Law Hatcher and Terri Bradshaw O’Neill, “The 1708 Palatines of Ulster County,” *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*, 139:3:179, 182, 184-85).

Before the 1709 arrival in Pennsylvania of the Skippack Palatines, Mennonites and other German-speaking pioneers had already begun settling in that colony. And after their arrival many more settled there. Historical writers who have discussed the Skippack Palatines over the years – but who seem to have been unfamiliar with the 1709 Palatine exodus from Germany in general, and with the St. Catharine’s list of 6 May 1709 in particular – have sometimes asserted or guessed that certain of these families or individuals left Europe and arrived in Pennsylvania either before they actually

did, or after they actually did. The unique story of the Mennonite contingent among the Skippack Palatines has also largely been absorbed into the larger story of the Pennsylvania Mennonites. John L. Ruth's focus and approach in his book *Maintaining the Right Fellowship*, which is helpful and informative as far as it goes, is a clear example of this. For those among the Skippack Palatines who *were* Mennonites this is not wrong, of course. But the unique story of the Skippack Palatines – both those who were Mennonites and those who were not – is also a part of *another* larger story: the story of the Palatine emigration of 1709-1710.

My late daughter-in-law's ancestors among the Skippack Palatines were Michael Ziegler, his wife Catharine, and Catharine's parents Andrew Schrauger and his wife (identified in secondary sources as Barbara Hendricks). As already noted, Michael Ziegler converted from Lutheranism to the Mennonite faith, and became a Mennonite minister. After several generations, the line of his descendants from which my daughter-in-law sprang reverted to Lutheranism. In fact, Michael Ziegler's direct descendant John Raymond Wilde (my daughter-in-law's father) was a Lutheran minister.

Phoenix, Arizona
29 April 2017

Appendix:

*The 1713 Petition from “the inhabitants of the
 Township of Skippack and several adjacent plantations”*

To the Court of Quarter Sessions, held in Philadelphia, June 2, 1713:

The petition of the inhabitants of the Township of Skippack and several adjacent plantations in said county, humbly showeth, that whereas, in the aforesaid Township and neighbourhood thereof, pretty many families are already settled, and probably not a few more to settle in and about the same, And yet no road being laid out and established to accommodate your petitioners; but what paths have hitherto used are only upon sufferance, and liable to be fenced up. Therefore, your petitioners, both for the public good and their own convenience, humbly desire an order for the laying out and establishing a road or cartway from the upper end of said Township down to the wide-marsh, or Farmer's mill, which will greatly tend to the satisfaction of your petitioners, who shall thankfully acknowledge the favor, etc.

Dirk Renberg	Jacob Kolb	Daniel Desmond
Heinrich Frey	William Renberg	Peter Bunn
Gerhard In den Hoffen	Hermann Kuster	Thomas Kentworthy
Claus Janson	Martin Kolb	Peter Bellar
Gerhard Clemens	Johannes Scholl	Peter Wentz
Heinrich Pannepacker	Heinrich Kolb	Abraham Lefevre
Johannes Umstat	Jacob Op den Graeff	Jan Krey
Johannes Kolb	Peter Sellen	Andrew Schraeger
Jacob Gaetshalck	Hermans In den Hoffen	Lorentz Schweitzer
Mathias Tyson	John Newberry	James Been

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