

Getman News From The Past
The Getman Family

The history of this family is interwoven with the history of Montgomery county, from Revolutionary times till now and the family is spread over a goodly section of the western end of the county, in St. Johnsville, Canajoharie, Fort Plain, Fonda, Tribes Hill, Johnstown. N. Y. and other towns and villages. A genealogy of the family would show them to have entered in most every walk of life, farmers, merchants, lawyers and businessmen of all professions, thereby giving a good cross section of the history of the Mohawk valley.

(Saint Johnsville, New York, ENTERPRISE AND NEWS, Wednesday, February 19, 1936)

On to the Schoharie Valley

By Wayne Getman, Association Historian

On September 6, 1712, Governor Hunter made the decision that the pine pitch project would not succeed and the Palatines were informed that they would no longer be supported by him. He still wanted to continue the project for its potential production of wealth, but could not afford to continue feeding and supplying the indentured population.

The German's had never forgotten the promise of free land that had inspired many of them to leave their homes in Europe. Mohawk Indians were the dominant influence in the region at the time. In October of 1712 representatives of the Palatines met with tribal leaders to seek their permission to settle along the Schoharie Creek. In essence the Palatines had once again become refugees and were pleading their case for help. This time it was the Iroquois nation and Mohawk tribe that were asked to help. The Mohawks were surprised by the request because they had previously ceded the land to the English. They did however grant permission for the once again refugees to settle there. Meanwhile Governor Hunter did not want them to settle in Schoharie. He wanted them to remain where they would be available to resume the pine pitch project.

Some accounts seem to indicate that the Palatines traveled to Albany then Schenectady to get to the Schoharie Valley. I maintain that they were experienced hunters and were well aware of the trail along the Catskill and Little Schoharie Creeks. A trail that is essentially followed today by NY route 145 from Catskill to Middleburgh. This was an essentially direct route and was dramatically shorter than Albany version. This would also account for the largest settlement being at what is now Middleburgh.

Through the winter of 1712 and well into 1713 the Palatine refugees required support in the form of food, clothing etc. This was met by a combination of efforts by the Mohawk Indians and the Dutch Reformed Church in New York City. By the winter of 1713 the refugees were able to harvest their own crops and supply themselves.

When they arrived in the Schoharie Valley the refugees established seven villages (dorfs). Each of these was located at or near the juncture of a stream that was supplying fresh water to the Schoharie River. (Currently know at the Schoharie Creek.) Listed from north to south these settlements were; Kneskerndorf, Gerlachsdorf, Fuchsendorf, Schmidtsdorf, Weiserdorf (or Brunnendorf), Hartmannsdorf and Weiserdorf. By the spring of 1713 there were between 450 and 500 Palatine settlers in these seven areas.

A listing of the refugees and their villages known as the Simmendinger Register reads that in Schmidsdorf were Biermann, Johann, w & 3 ch. This record indicates Frederick Getman's step-father, step-mother, his future wife, her sister and himself. In 1713 Frederick would have been about 20 years of age, Maria and her sister would have been about 13 and 11 respectively.

The Schmidsdorf area would later become the village Schoharie and is a very pleasant area. The Biermans and Frederick would remain there until 1723 when land in the Mohawk Valley known as Burnetsfield would be designated for some of these Palatine settlers.

Getman Family Search Reveals Many in West

Evening Telegram, Herkimer, NY
Saturday, March 10, 1962

Franklin J. Bowman, Scarsdale, N.Y., historian for the Getman Family of America, reports in several instances he has made contact with colonies of Getmans who are descended from relatives in this area who went west in the early days.

During the process of contacting Getmans in all parts of the United States, it was found that there were many Getmans listed in the telephone books in the western part of the country. As a result, a questionnaire was prepared and circulated to all persons who were listed under the name of Getman, he said.

The response from areas far removed from the Mohawk Valley, was surprising," Bowman said. "People were located who had heard that their Getman ancestors had migrated from New York State in the early days and that is about all they knew of their ancestry prior to the time of their forefathers' migration. When they were advised that there was a possibility of

connecting their line with the early eastern pioneers, they cooperated and furnished records.

Bowman added: "It was very fortunate that a previous Getman historian, Byron Getman, who lived in Gloversville, had inserted notes alongside of certain names. Went West. When the names and birth dates of these people were compared and it was found that they were one and the same, it was established without any possibility of doubt that these western relatives were related to the group which remained in the east."

One relative, Dr. Ernest Getman of Rock Rapids, Iowa, prepared his own questionnaire and circulated it to all of his relatives who were descended from Aaron Getman, 1799-1853. Dr. Getman had information to the effect that Aaron had migrated from New York State and that is all the western family knew of their ancestors. As a result of this information received from this questionnaire, over 1,500 names were forwarded to the Getman historian in Scarsdale.

Byron Getman's records showed that Aaron Getman was the grandson of Captain Frederick Getman who was a veteran of the 2nd Tryon County Militia (Col. Jacob Klock's Regiment) and the records show that he was engaged at Oriskany. The record also shows that Capt. Fred Getman served as a New York State assemblyman and later as a New York State senator. He is buried in Manheim and his grave was marked in 1910 by the D.A.R.

Another group of Getmans was located near Elmira, N.Y. They knew that their forefather's name was Zelora Getman, but had no records to connect his ancestry with the Getman family in the Mohawk Valley area. After months of correspondence, a relative was located in Kansas City, Mo., who stated that he had an old letter which referred to Zelora Getman as being a son of

Mary Getman of Manheim He also stated that he now has Zelora Getman's boot Jack with his name carved on it Zelora Getman apparently first settled in the Elmira area and later left part of his family there and went to Missouri.

Visiting the East

The Leader-Republican
Gloversville and Johnstown, NY
Monday, July 3, 1944

Clarence Theodore Walker of Saline, Kansas, who has been visiting his son, Donald W. Walker and family of Albany, is spending two weeks with his cousins, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Bennett and other relatives in this vicinity. He is the nephew of the late Edward N. Walker and also the late Charles and Stephen LaRowe. Mr. Walker's father was Francis Walker, who left Union Springs, Cayuga Co. 71 years ago, and was a pioneer settler from New York state to Shenendoah, Iowa, thence to Kansas, in a covered wagon. He is the father of 11 children. His son, whom he visited in Albany has just been transferred from the west to Albany where he is the Executive Secretary of the New York State Telephone Association.

Clarence T Walker (GFG - I) 1869-1948 is a fourth great-Grandson of Anna Maria Getman (GFG - I) and Johann Meyers.

Getman Association 1967

Courier - Standard,
Canajoharie, NY,
Thursday, August 17, 1967

The 39th annual reunion of the Getman Family of America was held Aug. 12 at the church grove of the Salem Evangelical United Brethren Church, East Stone Arabia. at 12 noon. There were 55 present from Canajoharie. Palatine Bridge, Fort Plain. Fonda, Herkimer. Cobleskill. Greene, Sidney, Grand Gorge. Danbury, Conn., and Fayetteville. Pa.

The business meeting was held following the luncheon with reports given by the secretary, treasurer, necrology and cemetery committees. The family history will be completed in the immediate future.

Ralph Parent, Herkimer, who has been president for the past 14 years, presided.

Presented gifts were the Rev. Robert Zanker, Fayetteville, Pa., who traveled 350 miles, coming the longest distance; Mrs. Elizabeth Hopkinson, Danbury, Conn., the oldest member present; Laura Winters, the youngest, and the Borden Getman family, Sidney, the largest family group attending.

Officers for 1967-68 are as follows; President, Charles Getman, Greene; first vice-president, Miss Florence Getman. Fort Plain; second vice-president, Mrs. Donald Saltsman. Fort Plain RD 2; secretary. Mrs. Beverly Buddle, Grand Gorge; treasurer. Donald Saltsman, Fort Plain RD 2; historian, Franklin J. Bowman, Scarsdale; chaplain, the Rev. Robert Zaker; directors, 1966-68. Howard Smith, Cobleskill; Mrs. Grace Hillabrandt Miller, Fort Plain; Miss Eleanor Getman, Fort Plain RD 2; Mrs. Gertrude Getman, Ilion; and Mrs. Edna Leneker, Palatine Bridge; directors, 1967-69 Ralph Parent, Herkimer; Jeremiah Saltsman, Fort Plain; Carl Getman,. Nelliston; Mrs. Madgalene Kimball, Fonda; and Miss Gwendolyn Getman, Nelliston.

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**Share your Getman histories
and traditions with
your cousins, near and far.**

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