

Hans Martin Kitzmiller

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No Picture Available

Born: 1705 Rhine, Germany

Married: Julianna Benckner

Died: 1786 Manheim, PA

Parents: Johannes Kitzmiller & Christina Dyerhin

5. JOHN MARTIN² KITZMILLER (John¹) 5-496 see pp 11-14

Born around 1705 in Waldorf, Germany. Died 1787 or 1788 in Mannheim Twp., York County, Pa. Married about 1730 JULIANA BENCKER (BENDERS), the daughter of Christophel Bencker. She died in 1788 or 1789. Martin landed in Philadelphia 23 August 1728 with his father and brothers; the Benckers family was on the same ship.

Martin first appears in the York County records in 1736, when he bought a partly improved farm not far from Hanover, on the headwaters of Conewago Creek. There is also another creek of the same name which enters the Susquehanna from the east side, and since the Rev. J. C. Stoever recorded the baptisms of three of Martin's children merely at "Conewago", it may be that Martin first lived near the present southern border of Dauphin County for a few years, near others of his family.

He bought property in Manheim Twp., York County, in 1754; sold lands to his children in 1760 and 1765; was township supervisor in 1756; was on the tax list for 1762, but not for 1783; his will was dated 10 April 1786. and was probated 27 May 1788.

On 26 February 1752 Martin and his sons fought off a party of Marylanders who were trying to oust him from his land, and during the fight Dudley Digges was killed. The account of the Kitzmiller trial and acquittal is written up fully in the Pennsylvania Archives, 1st series, Vols. I and II, the testimony giving data as to Martin's wife, children, his residence in Mannheim Twp., and his mill. The latter is mentioned in an old Adams County history, as having a door stone on which was carved "Hanson Martin Kitzmiller, August 1738". His family attended Christ Reformed Church a few miles to the west; a 1792 map shows the location as "Kitzmillers".

Children:

- see pp 11-14*
- 3-3 John Jacob, born 28 February 1731, sponsor John Jacob Kitzmiller; died 1808, married Anna Elizabeth Sell.
 - 3-4 John Leonard, born ca 1733. Testimony in Digges case says that he was 19 years old in February 1752.
 - 3-5 John, born 15 October 1734, sponsors John Jacob Kitzmiller Sr., and wife; died 1804. (Gravestone at Christ Lutheran Church gives date of birth as 24 September 1736).
 - ~~3-6 John George, born 29 October 1738; died 1824.~~
 - 3-7 Julian, born 22 March 1747. Nothing known beyond this birth date in records of Christ Reformed Church, which lists the father as "of Waldorf".
Catherine, died before 1787; married Adam Strum. Six of their children were living and named in Martin's will of April 1786.

Information found online at Ancestry.com

Although Martin Kitzmiller claimed to be a resident of PA, there must have been enough uncertainty to cause him to become, for a time at least, a naturalized citizen under MD law. On Oct 2, 1743 he participated in a communion service by Rev. Candler at St Mathew's Lutheran Ch in Hanover (a requirement of naturalization being that one take a Protestant communion previously to prove one was not a Roman Catholic), and it is recorded in Colonial MD Naturalizations that he was naturalized on Oct 18 1743.

Throughout the 1740's and early 1750's the settlers of Digges' Choice were harassed about property lines and the payment for land and taxes by MD authorities. For Martin Kitzmiller this culminated on Feb 26, 1752 when Digges and a group of men tried to arrest him and take him to jail in Baltimore for non-payment of land and taxes. Kitzmiller (keep in mind that he was our great uncle) had steadfastly maintained that his land was PA property for the time of purchase. In the general struggle that took place between the Kitzmillers and Digges' men, Jacob, the son of Martin Kitzmiller, contested with Duddy Digges, son of John Digges, for a rifle which accidentally fired killing young Digges. The Marylanders left the scene very soon afterwards, and our young cousin, Jacob, turned himself in to the authorities in York where he was jailed. After a legal battle as to whether PA or MD had jurisdiction, PA determined that the scene of the fight was on PA land. In a court trial in York on Oct 30 of that same year 1752, both the judge and jury believed the explanation of accidental death, and Jacob came home a free man. Duddy Digges, the victim of this tragic incident, was buried near McSherrystown at the Catholic mission known as Conewago Chapel. Today it is Sacred Hear Basilica.

This tragedy cooled thing off considerably, and in a few years the Mason-Dixon Line was established to end such troubles. Our Kitzmiller relatives now expanded their grist mill operations. This included not only a large brick addition to the original mill in 1755, but also having a sawmill, oil mill, and hominy mill. There were even some slaves kept to assist in the operation.

Martin and Julianna's three sons served in the York militia during the American Revolution. Their names, along with other of the York Militia who are buried at Christ Church near Littlestown are commemorated on a large bronze marker there.

Martin Kitzmiller made his will on April 10, 1786 (and which he signed by making his mark-x), and it was probated on May 27, 1788 and recorded in York in Will Book G page 285. In it he provided for his wife (who survived him by several years), and also stated that he sold his mills and plantation to his son George for 800 pounds, that Jacob and John were given small plantations of their own as marriage portions, and that the portion due his deceased daughter, Catharine was to be shared by her six children, which he then named.

The troubles of the Kitzmillers and the other settlers of Digges' Choice can be read in great detail in Vol. 5 of the "Colonial Records of PA" pages 582-597 and also in Vol. One, "First Series, PA Archives", pages 680 to 730.