

## The Family of Johann Jotter of Eppstein and Sembach

The Jotters of Eppstein are descended from Christian Joder and his wife Margarete Gerber. Christian, a Mennonite, was born in Steffisburg, Switzerland, on 20 March 1687 and immigrated to Eppstein as a young man.

Christian's great-great-grandson Johann, the son of Heinrich and Maria (Krehbiel) Jotter, was born in Eppstein on 21 June 1803. Johann's mother died when he was four years old and he was probably raised by her parents, Christian and Anna Magdalena (Eichelberger) Krehbiel, who lived in the village of Sembach.

On 13 March 1829, Johann married Agnes (Goebels) Eichelberger, a widow, at Sembach. Agnes, the daughter of Christian and Magdalena (Krehbiel) Goebels, was born 23 March 1802 at Hertlingshausen. Her father was a miller, a Mennonite preacher, and mayor of the village. By her first marriage to Heinrich Eichelberger, Agnes was the mother of three daughters: Barbara, Magdalena, and Anna Maria.

Four children were born to Johann and Agnes Jotter at Sembach: Elizabeth, Christian, Heinrich, and Susanna. On 21 June 1837, just a year after Susanna's birth, Johann died of typhoid fever at Eppstein, leaving Agnes with seven children ranging in age from 16 to one. On 15 November 1839 she remarried at Sembach to Ludwig Karl Nunz, a widower. They had three children together: Ludwig Philipp, Wilhelm Kasimir, and Agnes Louise. Of these children, only Wilhelm lived past childhood.

Karl and Agnes immigrated to America. They would not be the first of the family to leave. Agnes's mother had died in 1816 and her father, Christian Goebels, remarried to Barbara Engel. After Christian's death in 1821 Barbara remarried to Johannes Risser, and in 1833 they sailed on the French ship *La Fortune* accompanied by their sons Jakob, Johannes, and Heinrich Risser and her daughters by her first marriage, Magdalena and Elisabeth Goebels. They settled in Richland County, Ohio. Agnes's uncle, Friedrich Krehbiel (Krebill) and his wife Anna Risser also went to Richland County. About the same time Johannes Würtz, widower of Agnes's aunt Susanna Goebels, settled in Erie County, New York with his second wife, Susanna Flory, and their children.

In the spring of 1846 Karl and Agnes and children Anna Maria Eichelberger, Elizabeth Jotter, and Wilhelm Nunz traveled from Sembach to Le Havre, France, where they, along with 312 other passengers, set sail for America on the ship *Duchesse d'Orleans*. They arrived in New York on 27 April. From there they probably journeyed up the Hudson River to Albany, and then via the Erie Canal to Buffalo. They settled east of Buffalo in Lancaster Township, where they bought a farm and Americanized their names to Charles and Anna.

Four years later, Anna's sons Christian and Heinrich Jotter, ages 18 and 16, came to join them. According to family lore, they left to avoid being drafted in the army. In September of 1850 they traveled to Worms where a group of 70 emigrating Mennonites had assembled. From Worms the group made its way to Rotterdam, then by ship to Le Havre, France. There they booked passage on the *William Tell*. The ship measured 175 feet long by about 38 feet wide with a hold about 29 feet deep. On this voyage she carried 616 passengers, with 574 in steerage. There were two births, ten deaths, and one marriage during the voyage. From the diary of Jacob Galle, who was on the same voyage, we know that the ship left Le Havre on 20 September and arrived in New York on 31 October.

Anna's daughter Anna Maria Eichelberger, who accompanied the family to America, married Johann P. Barth in Erie County about 1849. They lived in Lancaster and had nine children. Anna Maria died in 1877 and Johann in 1878, both killed in railroad accidents. They are buried at Lancaster. Anna's other children—Barbara and Magdalena Eichelberger and Susanna Jotter—remained in Sembach and she probably never saw them again. Barbara (1821-1894) married Peter Beutler and had 11 children. Magdalena (1823-?) married Jakob Neff. Susanna (1836-1887) married Johann Diehl.

In 1853 the Nunzes moved from Lancaster to Alden Township. The state census of 1855 shows them residing next to Anna's daughter and son-in-law, Elizabeth and Matthias Heist. They lived in a log house on a farm of 15 acres that was worth \$600. They had two cows, one horse, three swine, and had produced 200 pounds of butter in the previous year. Anna died sometime between 1860 and 1870 and Charles between 1870 and 1880.

Children of Johann and Agnes (Goebels) Jotter, born in Sembach:



1. **Elizabeth Jotter** was born 11 December 1829 and came to America in 1846 with her mother and stepfather. About 1847 she married **Matthias Heist**, who was born 24 July 1828 in Wittenburg, Sachsen-Anhalt. They resided in Lancaster and Alden townships in Erie County, New York. According to the 1855 state census they lived in a frame house on a farm of 45 acres worth \$1800. They owned three head of cattle, three horses, and four swine. In the previous year they had harvested hay, wheat, oats, rye, corn, potatoes, and cabbages and produced 200 pounds of butter.

**Matthias** died 12 April 1865. About 1874 Elizabeth remarried to **George Seib** or **Seyb**, a widower. In 1880 they were residing in Newstead, New York, where **George** died in 1884. Elizabeth passed away 25 August 1920 in Alden and is buried next to her first husband in Crittenden Protestant Cemetery, Erie County, New York.

**Children of Matthias and Elizabeth (Yotter) Heist, all born in Erie County:**

- i. **Mary Heist, 1848-1926, married Martin Martin. They had four children: George, Henry, Sarah, and Bertha**
- ii. **Sarah Heist, 1850-1905, married Zadock Johnson. They had ten children: Matthias/Matthew, Cora, Mary, Bertha, Charles, Laura, Earl, Alton, Gertrude, and Harry**
- iii. **John Heist, 1852-1892, married Ann Hines. They had three children: Cora, Michael, and Jacob**
- iv. **Edwin Heist, 1854?-?; died young**
- v. **William Heist, 1855-1925, married Rose Tinkham. They had six children: Elizabeth, Howard, Myrta, Charles, Floyd, and Willard**
- vi. **Charles Heist, 1857-1941, married Emma Dickinson. They had three children: Jesse, Ernest, and Mabel**
- vii. **George Heist, 1860-1860**
- viii. **George Heist, 1861-1906, married Fannie Dickinson. They had one son, Arthur. George's second wife was Tillie Dickinson. They had two children: Wesley and a baby who died young**
- ix. **Albert Heist, 1862-1862**



2. **Christian Yotter was born 12 December 1831. After arriving in America he changed the spelling of his last name to Yotter. He married Katherine Boyer in Erie County, New York on 27 March 1854. She was born about 1837 in New York and was only about 17 years old at the time of the wedding. The couple owned a small farm of 15 acres near Christian's mother and stepfather in Alden. They sold this land to Christian's brother Henry in 1858 and moved to Franklin, Lee County, Iowa, where there was a large Mennonite congregation, including relatives from Richland County, Ohio and several families who had sailed with Christian on the *William Tell* in 1850. After being in America for 10 years, Christian became a naturalized citizen, taking the oath in the Lee County court on 21 August 1860.**

**Katherine died in January 1862, perhaps in childbirth, leaving her husband with two small children. Christian married Sarah Schmitt on 16 March 1862 in Lee County, just two months after Katherine's death. John Carl Krehbiel, a cousin of Christian's father, was the Mennonite minister who married them. Sarah was born on 27 November 1842 in Friesenheim, Rheinland-Pfalz and was christened as Sara Baumgartner on 4 December 1842. The name of her father is not given in the records. Sarah's mother, Katherine Baumgartner, married Heinrich Schmitt in 1844 and until her marriage Sarah used the surname Schmitt. In 1847 the Schmitts came to America on the ship *John Holland*. They landed in New Orleans and probably traveled by steamboat up the Mississippi River to Lee County, Iowa.**

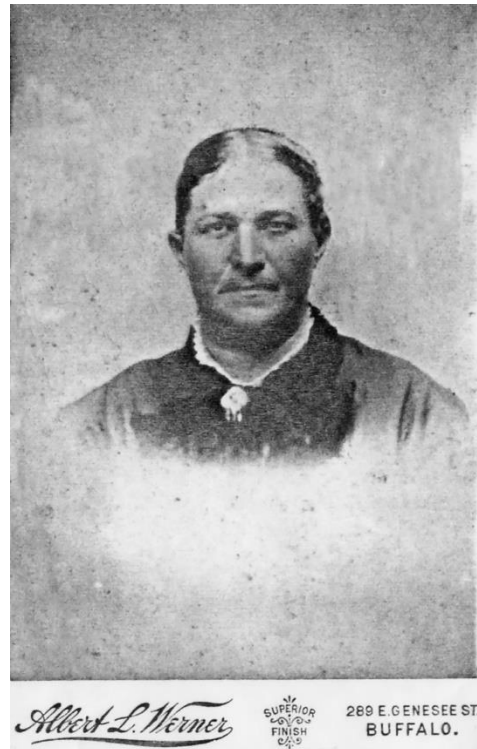
**Christian and Sarah farmed in West Point Township in Lee County for several years before moving to Oakville in Louisa County. After a few years there they went back to West Point, where they farmed until 1902. In that year they moved to a house in the village of West Point, where Christian died on 14 July 1914. After his death Sarah and two of her daughters, Emma and Sarah, moved to Mount Pleasant in Henry County, Iowa. Sarah died there on 15 August 1924. She was buried next to Christian in the West Point City Cemetery.**

**Children of Christian and Katherine (Boyer) Yotter:**

- i. **Johann Wilhelm (John William), 1855-1923, married Margaret Viola Bowers. They had four children: William Henry, Edward Louis, Sarah Ann, and Lena Mae.**
- ii. **Maria E. (Mary), 1859-1950, married Christian Ellenberger. They had no children.**
- iii. **Child who died young**

**Children of Christian and Sarah (Schmitt) Yotter;**

- i. Heinrich (Henry), 1862-1923, married Olive Van Hyning. They had two children: Glenn Amos and Essel Estella.
- ii. Anna Katharina, 1864-1948, married George Kentch. They had ten children: Elizabeth D., Ella Cleveland, Edward Leonard, Elmer Ezra, Eva Sarah, Emmet Chester, Emory Arthur, Edna E., Ernest Floyd, and Emma Adelia.
- iii. Elizabetha Dorothea, 1866-1913, married Samuel Morton Kitchen. They had one daughter, Ethel Cora.
- iv. Emma V. , 1868-1962, never married.
- v. Hannah, 1869-before 1880
- vi. Klara Margaretha (Clara), 1871-1942, married Charles Bubb. They had five children: Philip, Cora Alma, George Edward, Dora Ethel, and Carl.
- vii. Sarah Louisa, twin of Clara, 1871-1925, married Albert E. Van Ness. They had no children.
- viii. Henrietta , 1873-1876
- ix. Christian, 1875-1921, married Sarah L. Malcom. They had seven children: Claude Leroy, Muriel Murine, Maurice Emmett, Ellis Roe, Wallace Vernon, Lilva Opal, and Harold Chester.
- x. Edward, 1876-1955, never married.
- xi. Carl (Charles), 1879-1961, married Nellie Grace Pearce They had five children: Ronald Charles, a twin of Ronald who died as an infant, Elsie Olive, Florence Ruth, and Edna Marie.
- xii. Child who died in infancy
- xiii. Child who died in infancy
- xiv. Oolie (probably their spelling of Ulli, a nickname for Ulrich), 1885-1960, never married.



3. Heinrich Jotter was born on 27 November 1833. Like his brother he changed the spelling of his last name in America and was known as Henry Yotter. He married Eva Salome Asmus about 1856 in Erie County, New York. She was born 27 April 1834 in Baden. Henry farmed in Alden. He was naturalized on 9 October 1860 at Buffalo, ten years after arriving in America. His grandson, John L. Yotter, said of him, “he was Uncle Henry to the whole neighborhood. A serious, quiet man, read a lot and was often asked to advise others.” Salome died 14

March 1892 and Henry on 16 January 1925. They are buried at Trinity Lutheran Church Cemetery in South Newstead, New York.

Children of Henry and Eva Salome (Asmus) Yotter, all born in Erie County:

- i. Henry Philip, ca 1858-1898, married Catherine Schneider. They had three children: Edward Henry, Louisa Katherine, and Ernest Phillip
  - ii. Barbara M., 1861-1938, married Charles Momberger. They had a son, Harry Charles
  - iii. Eva Salome, 1862-1937, never married
  - iv. John Philip, 1864-1920, married Adelaide Von Ackerman. They had five children: Carl Henry, Ruth Salome, Edna Caroline, John Leonard, and Adelaide Louisa
  - v. Susan E., 1867-1953, married Fred John Buchele. They had no children.
  - vi. Christian, 1869-1874
  - vii. Anna Louise, 1871-1947, never married
  - viii. Caroline, 1875-1942, never married
4. Susanna Jotter was born 4 May 1836. She married Johann Diehl on 31 October 1859 at Weidenthal, Rheinland-Pfalz. She died in 1887 at Weidenthal.