

A GENEALOGICAL HISTORY
OF THE
KOLB, KULP OR CULP FAMILY

AND ITS BRANCHES IN AMERICA

WITH

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THEIR DESCENDANTS FROM
THE EARLIEST AVAILABLE RECORDS FROM 1707
TO THE PRESENT TIME, INCLUDING

DIELMAN KOLB IN GERMANY

WITH PORTRAITS AND OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

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DIELMAN KOLB^r, ANCESTOR.

The following is taken from an old book in my possession, and was brought over at the time the Kolbs came, and has been in the Kolb family ever since. It was printed in Germany in 1581. On the fly-leaf is written, by his own hand, in the German language, thus :

“Anno, 1691, den 10 November, bin ich Dielman Kolb, in diese welt Gebohren des nachmittags um Ein uhr.”

“Anno, 1714, aufs Jacobsdag bin ich mit meiner Hausfrau Elizabeth Getraut Im 23ten Jahr meines Alters.”

"Anno, 1717, den 21ten Mertz Seindt wihr zu Ibersheim in der Pfaltz abgefahren. Auf die Reiss Nach Pennsylvanien. Und den 10ten August, 1717, Alhier zu Philadelphia Glücklich Angekommen."

"Dieses buch gehört mir Dielman Kolb zu, und habe es bekommen, von Jacob Schnebli von Manheim in der Pfaltz, Anno Dom., 1722, zu dieser zeit wohnhaft, in Solforth township, in dem county Philadelphia, in Pennsylvania."

I also found the name Andreas Ziegler in the book as owner at one time. He married the only daughter of Dielman Kolb, whose wife's name was Elizabeth Schnebli.

Translation of the above :

Dielman Kolb was born November 10, 1691, in the afternoon, at one o'clock. He married Elizabeth Schnebli, Anno, 1714, on St. Jacob's day, in the 23d year of his age.

Anno, 1717, on the 21st of March, they left Ibersheim, in the Palatinate, for Pennsylvania, where they safely arrived on the 10th of August, 1717, at Philadelphia. He came about ten years later than his brothers Martin, Jacob, Henry and Johannes. He lived at Manheim, where he attended as a preacher of the Mennonite congregation, and making himself most valuable and useful by receiving and lodging his fellow believers, who fled from Switzerland on account of their religious belief, as appears from a letter dated August 27, 1710. He subsequently emigrated to Pennsylvania, where he, in connection with Heinrich Funk, supervised the translation of Van Braght's "Martyrs' Mirror" from the Dutch into the German language, and certified to its correctness. The great difficulty was to find a trustworthy translator and a printer in the forests of Pennsylvania who could undertake the expense of a publication of such magnitude. Naturally they had concluded to apply to the older and wealthier churches in Europe, and on the 19th of October, 1745, Jacob Godshall, of Germantown, Dillman Kolb, of Salford, Michael Ziegler, Yelles Kassel and Martin Kolb, of Skippack, and Heinrich Funk, of Indian Creek, sent a letter to Amsterdam on the subject, applying for aid. Finally the book was printed

at Ephrata, Lancaster county, Pa., without any aid from the old country. The first part was completed in 1748, and the second part in 1749, the whole containing about 1500 pages, and took fifteen men three years to finish it.

Dielman Kolb was a Mennonite minister, and was instrumental in organizing the Mennonite congregation in Salford, Montgomery county, Pa., in the year 1738. He was one of a committee to arrange and supervise the translation of the "Martyrs' Mirror" from the Dutch to the German language. Through his influence Christopher Dock was induced to write his "Theory and Practice of Teaching," the first ever written in America as far as known, which was afterwards printed by Christopher Saur, at Germantown. His will is dated July 8, 1748, and probated April 30, 1757, and is recorded at Norristown, Montgomery county, Pa.

The ancestors of the Kolb family in America were among the leaders of the Mennonite church, and in many instances the founders of said organizations. They refused belief in infant baptism, and in the realism of baptism without faith and repentance. All the Kolbs of earlier times lent their efforts to good works; and from the earliest settlement by the Germans in Pennsylvania to the present time there has been a large number of Mennonite preachers of the name of Kolb, particularly in the counties of Montgomery and Bucks in this state. As regards the date of their birth, death, and their children, see the following records:

The following is from Hon. S. W. Pennypacker, of Philadelphia:

"Dielman or Thielman (as the name is sometimes spelled) Kolb, another brother of Henry, came to Pennsylvania somewhat later than his other brothers. He was at Manheim, where he attended as a preacher to the Mennonite congregation, 'making himself most valuable by receiving and lodging his fellow-believers fled from Switzerland,' as appears from a letter dated August 27, 1710. He subsequently emigrated to Pennsylvania, where he, in connection with Henry Funk, supervised the translation of Van Braght's 'Martyrs' Mirror'

from the Dutch to the German, and certified to its correctness.

“This book is the great historical work of the Mennonites, and the most durable monument of that denomination. It traces the history of those Christians who, from the time of the Apostles, were opposed to the baptism of infants and to warfare, including the Lyonists, Petrobusians and Waldenses; details the persecution of the Mennonites by the Spaniards in the Netherlands and the Calvinists in Switzerland, together with the individual sufferings of many hundreds who were burned, drowned, beheaded, or otherwise maltreated; and contains the confessions of faith adopted by the different communities.

“Many copies of the book were brought to America, but they were in Dutch. No German translation existed, and much the larger proportion of those here who were interested in it could read only that language. It was not long before a desire for a German edition was manifested, and the declaration of a war between England and France in 1744, which, in the nature of things, must involve, sooner or later, their colonies in America, made the Mennonites fearful that their principles of non-resistance would be again put to the test, and anxious that all of the members, especially the young, should be braced for the struggle by reading of the steadfastness of their forefathers amid sufferings abroad. Their unsalaried preachers were, however, like the members of the flock—farmers who earned their bread by tilling the soil—and were ill-fitted, both by circumstances and education, for so great a literary labor. Where could a trustworthy translator be found? Where was the printer in the forests of Pennsylvania who could undertake the expense of a publication of such magnitude? Naturally, they had recourse to the older and wealthier churches in Europe, and on the 19th of October, 1745, Jacob Godshalk, of Germantown, Dielman Kolb, of Salford, Michael Ziegler, Yilles Kassel, and Martin Kolb, of Skippack, and Heinrich Funk, of Indian Creek, author of two religious works published in Pennsylvania, wrote, under instruction from the various communities, a letter

to Amsterdam on the subject. They say: 'Since according to appearances the flames of war are mounting higher, and it cannot be known whether the cross and persecution may not come upon the defenceless Christians, it becomes us to strengthen ourselves for such circumstances with patience and endurance, and to make every preparation for steadfast constancy in our faith. It was, therefore, unanimously considered good in this community, if it could be done, to have the *Bloedig Toncel* of Dielman Jans Van Braght translated into the German language, especially since, in our communities in this country, there has been a great increase of young men who have grown up. In this book posterity can see the traces of those faithful witnesses who have walked in the way of truth and given up their lives for it.'

"At Ephrata, in Lancaster county, had been established some years before, and still exists, a community of mystical Dunkers, who practiced celibacy, and held their lands and goods in common. About 1745 they secured a hand printing press, now in possession of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, on which they printed over fifty books, which are among the scarcest and most sought after of American imprints. The chronicle of the cloister says: 'Shortly before the time that the mill was burned down, the Mennonites in Pennsylvania united together to have their great martyr book, which was in the Dutch language, translated and printed in German. For this work there was nobody in the whole country considered better fitted than the brotherhood in Ephrata, since they had a new printing office and paper mill, and moreover, could place hands enough upon the work. After the building of the mill was completed, the printing of the martyr book was taken in hand, for which important work fifteen brethren were selected, of whom nine had their task in the printing office, viz.: a corrector, who was also translator, four compositors and four pressmen; the others worked in the paper mill. Three years were spent upon this book, but the work was not continuous, because often the supply of paper was deficient. And since in the meantime there was

very little other business on hand, the brethren got deeply into debt, but through the great demand for the book this was soon liquidated. It was printed in large folio, using sixteen quires of paper, and making an edition of thirteen hundred copies. In a council held with the Mennonites, the price for a single copy was fixed at twenty shillings, from which it can be seen that the reasons for printing it were very different from a hope of profit. That this martyr book was a cause of many trials to the recluses, and added not a little to their spiritual martyrdom, is still in fresh remembrance.' "

In this rather remarkable way have been fortunately preserved the particulars concerning the publication of the Ephrata martyr book.

The publication of the first part was completed in 1748, and the second in 1749. It is a massive folio of fifteen hundred and twelve pages.

The before-mentioned Heinrich Funk and Dielman Kolb were appointed a committee by the Mennonites to make the arrangement with the community at Ephrata, and to supervise the translation. Their certificate is appended, saying: "It was desired by very many in Pennsylvania that there should be a German translation and edition of the martyr book of the defenceless Christians or *Tauffs-gesinnten*, before printed in the Dutch language.

Heinrich Funk and Dielman Kolb had such a great love for this book that they both, with common consent, gave their time and labor to it; and as the sheets came from the press and were sent to them in their order, went over them one at a time, comparing them with the Dutch; and in this work have not omitted a single verse.

The Kolbs or Kulps were among the leaders of the Mennonite church, and the founders of many Baptist or Mennonite organizations. They refused belief in infant baptism, and in the realism of baptism without faith and repentance. Dielman Kolb, the brother of Henry, Martin and Jacob, gave his big brain and bigger endeavor to the translation of "*Der Blutige Schauplatz oder Martyrer Spiegel.*" All the Kolbs or

Kulps of the older time lent their efforts to good works, and from the earliest settlement of the Germans in Pennsylvania to the present time, there has been a large number of Mennonite preachers of the name of Kolb or Kulp, particularly in the counties of Bucks and Montgomery, Pa.; also in the West.