

*Hertzler  
Family*

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# European History of the Hertzler Family

by J. Virgil Miller\*

The Amish-Mennonite Hertzler family probably originated in Switzerland, although subsequent migrations placed it largely in Germany and America. The earliest Mennonite or Anabaptist Hertzler was Rudolf, shown in the records of Königsschaffhausen in Baden, Germany in 1694. He was born in 1636 in Hinterweil in Canton Bern, Switzerland.

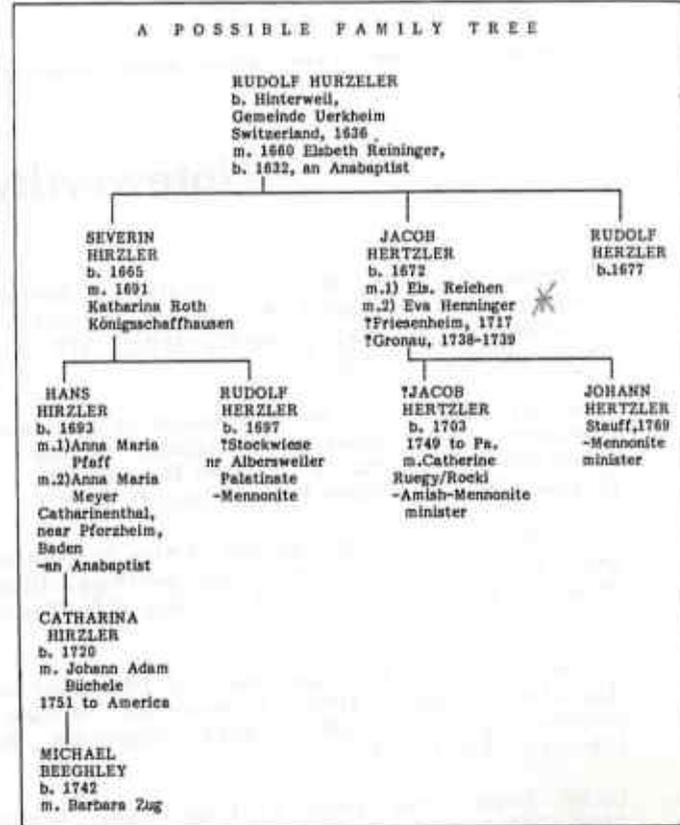
It took some searching to find a place by that name since such a village does not exist in the present-day canton. However, Canton Aargau was once a part of Bern, and investigation by the archivist of the cantonal archives in Bern in 1976 revealed a Hutzler family from Uerkheim in present-day Canton Aargau. Near Uerkheim was an even smaller hamlet called Hinterweil. This is an area where a few other families of the Anabaptist migrations originated, for example, the Guths and Detweilers.

The Swiss records of birth for the state church are very early. There the name of Rudolf Hutzler was found by Dr. Siegrist of the cantonal archives of Aargau. The following was found in the church register of Uerkheim:

Hans Hurtzell in Hinterweil (Uerkheim)  
1531-1542, a well-to-do farmer.

Andres Hurtzell, mentioned in 1566, died before 1620.

Then Andres Hurtzeler changed the spelling (common to add -er to Germanic family names), baptized at Uerkheim, June 14, 1590. He was married 1) Anna Hochuli on April 29, 1611 (5 children; and m. 2) Marie Hupscher on May 31, 1630. Rudolf was a child of the second marriage and was baptized as an infant on May 24, 1635 at Uerkheim.



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...y the same person as the  
Rudolf who came to Königsschaffhausen. Rudolf was  
married on Feb. 6, 1660 to Elsbeth Reininger (b.  
1632). The parish record shows Rudolf's birth at  
Hinderweyl, Canton Bern as 1636. The parish record  
also lists nine children including Johannes (b.  
1661), Franciscus (1663), Severin (1665), Jakob  
(1672), and Rudolf (b. at Laufen near Basel in  
1677). The other children were born at  
Königsschaffhausen.

Were these the ancestors of the Mennonite  
Hertzlers? The connection is tenuous, although  
there is some reason for thinking they were. Two  
sons of Severin Hirzler of Königsschaffhausen, who  
was married to Katharina Roth, were Johannes (b.  
1693) and Rudolf (b. 1697). Severin was a tailor  
who lived and died in Baden, but his son Hans was a  
farmer at Catharinenthal in the district of  
Pforzheim, further north in Baden, belonging to the  
same jurisdiction of Baden-Durlach.

What is significant is that Hans was called a  
Wiedertäufer or Anabaptist. His fellow-Anabaptist  
was Jacob Kurz at Karlshausen, and they signed a  
petition together about a burying ground, recorded  
in the Generallandesarchiv at Karlsruhe.

Hans Hirzler's daughter, Catharina (b. 1720),  
married Johann Adam Büchele of Eutingen, district  
Pforzheim. He was an immigrant to Pennsylvania in  
1751. His son, Michael (b. 1742) later married  
Barbara Zukin/Zug, daughter of Christian Zug, an  
Amish-Mennonite immigrant of 1742.

Thus there were connections with Anabaptists or  
Mennonites from Switzerland. The ones who stayed  
in Königsschaffhausen joined the State Church. But  
just as in Switzerland, those who moved on often  
were the dissenters or Anabaptists.

There was a Rudolf Herzler who was a Mennonite  
living in 1748 at Stockwieserhof in the southern  
Palatinate in Germany, along with Abraham Rees,  
renters for the past twelve years. This farm was  
also called Vogelstockerhof, and was long the home  
of a Mennonite Joder family.

At Rothenhof near Albersweiler, not far away was  
the Christian Rocki family. This surname was  
spelled Rocki, Rogy, Roggi. If Jacob Hertzler, the  
immigrant of 1749, was married to Catherine Ruegy  
as his second wife, could he not at least have been  
a relative of Rudolf Herzler of Stockwieserhof?

The Hertzlers who live in Germany today largely  
come from the community of Eppstein, where they  
located around 1720. Most of them were Mennonite  
rather than Amish. Christian Rocki was Amish.

Another Palatinate minister, Johannes Hertzler,  
was at Stauff west of Eppstein in 1745. There was  
an Amish minister Christian Joder at Ripperterhof  
near Ramsen not far away. Possibly the Immigrant  
Jacob Hertzler grew up as a Mennonite and became  
acquainted with the Amish, especially if Rudolf,  
his relative, lived with them or was one himself.

The Rudolf Herzler who lived at Stockwiese could  
be Rudolf, the brother of Hans (b. 1697), or the  
Rudolf born at Laufen, Switzerland, brother of  
Severin (b. 1677).

Since these people moved around a lot, Rudolf  
could have gone to the Palatinate and Hans to  
northern Baden. The Hertzlers who settled at  
Friesenheim, Gronau, and Eppstein (in the same  
area) might also be descended from the same family,  
since it is the only Hertzler family with both  
Anabaptist and Swiss connections. The Eppstein  
Hertzler records do not go before 1720. It will  
remain for later researchers to establish these  
connections.



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