

Origin of Johann Jacob Kraus?

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Most of the Crouses of Lunenburg County and many other families include Johann Jacob Kraus who arrived on the *Pearl* in 1752 as one of their ancestors. My wife, Elizabeth Crouse is one of them and this effort is dedicated to her.

Johann Jacob Kraus was recorded as a weaver and farmer and his family and movements in Lunenburg County are well documented. This effort provides the answer to what I believe is the origin of Johann Jacob.

What do we know from the documents on this side of the Atlantic?

- 1- He was noted as being 25 years old at the time of his arrival on the *Pearl* in 1752, suggesting he was born circa 1727. The passenger list recorded he was from the Palatinate region of what is now Germany but unfortunately he didn't provide the name of the village.
- 2- He was a Protestant as he joined the Lutheran church in Lunenburg and was a 'Foreign Protestant'!
- 3- He arrived married to Maria Clara, who, based on her age at the time of her death in 1802, was born circa 1730.
- 4- He had a child with him as he paid for two and a half freights. This indicates the child was between 4 and 14 years of age. The victualing lists for 1752 and 1753 do not make note of a child, suggesting the child died before arrival in Halifax.
- 5- He was able to sign his name as shown on his will.
- 6- His occupation was that of a weaver and farmer as noted above. His loom survived until the mid 1900s in the old house in Crouse's Settlement but was broken up for firewood when the house was torn down.

Examination of the list of villages in the Palatinate from which other 'Foreign Protestant' settlers to Lunenburg came showed there is a scattering all over the area. There was no real area of concentration but more settlers were from the eastern part of the Palatinate (Pfalz), the area closer to the Rhine.

The suggestion that the Kraus family came from Dackenheim has been published in J. C. Young's *Maps Associated with Lunenburg County Family History* dated 2003. The question is, is this correct? Examination of the Dackenheim Evangelical Reform Church records revealed a marriage for a Johann Jacob Kraus, son of Johann Georg Kraus (deceased of Neulussheim) and a Maria Clara Schweitzer(in), daughter of Hans Reichart Schweitzer and Anna Margaretha Schultz(in) on the 1st June 1751. A further examination of the same records found a baptism

for Maria Clara in 1730. The records do not provide a day or month of the baptism or the date of birth but Maria Clara's parents were married on the 2nd September 1729 so it would appear that she was likely born soon after that, maybe early 1730. The date fits with what we know about Maria Clara.

Examination of the Dackenheim church records do not reveal any further reference to the couple. So the assumption that Dackenheim was the origin fits and as the *Pearl* departed Rotterdam in June 1752 there was time between the marriage and departure for the couple to travel down the Rhine. However two issues surface, (1) Johann Jacob's father was not from Dackenheim but from Neulussheim so we don't have a birth date for Johann and (2) who was the child that traveled across the Atlantic with Johann and Maria Clara in 1752. The child couldn't have been theirs as any child born after their marriage would have been less than four years old. The Dackenheim records noted that Maria Clara had four siblings who would have been between 4 and 14 in 1752; Heinrich Valentine baptized 1738, Johann Theobald baptized 1742, Anna Rosina baptized 1743 and Catharine Elizabeth baptized in 1746. Was one of these siblings the half freight?

The church records for Grosskurzbach (a few kilometers north of Dackenheim) note the baptism on the 9th April 1752 of Johann Friedrich Kraus, the son of Johann Jacob Kraus and Maria Clara (no surname given). The quality of the microfilm is very poor and no further details could be extracted from the record so it is not completely clear if this is the same couple. No other Krauses were found in these church records again suggesting the family was not there long. If this is the correct couple, the child apparently did not survive and again there was time between the baptism in early April and the departure of the *Pearl* in early June so as not to rule out the couple.

The Neulussheim Evangelical Church records noted only one baptism of a Johann Jacob Kraus pre 1749. He was born on the 24th of July 1726 which again fits well with what we know about the Lunenburg Johann Jacob. The Neulussheim records record the death of Johann Georg Kraus, Johann Jacob's father, in 1731. The obituary in the church record provides significant detail on his origins and life (see the family detail below). The thing of note is that his occupation was that of a soldier and his father had been a butcher, so where did Johann get his training as a weaver?

Another son of Johann Georg was Andres Paul. In his obituary in the same church records in 1762, it noted that he was a linen weaver and that

he was a linen weaver and that he had been trained by his mother's brother in Hambrücken (a nearby village). If one son was trained as a weaver it is logical to assume another one could have been as well or that Andres Paul trained his younger brother Johann Jacob. Johann Jacob did not reappear in the Neulussheim church records after his baptism so he must have left the village.

Neulussheim is located on the east side of the Rhine opposite the city of Speyer and this area was part of the Palatinate when Johann left. Since he was born in one village and his wife was from another, is this the reason he did not give his home town on the passenger list?

Based on the evidence noted above, the couple married in Dackenheim in 1751 fits with all the known facts of the couple that settled in Lunenburg. It is possible that there is another who could fit but I suggest the odds are very slight.

The following is the family of Johann Jacob Kraus based on the Neulussheim and Dackenheim church records

Family of Johann Georg Krauss

1. Johann Georg¹ Krauss was born the 24th of August 1684 at Schliez, Vogtland, Reuss-Juengere-Linie, Thuringia, son of Paulus Krauss and Rosina (surname Beer based on the IGD). He married Anna Maria Brunzer (probably Brunner), daughter of Hans Georg Brunzer, circa 1705. He died in early January 1731 in Neulussheim, at the age of 47. The date of his death was not recorded but it occurred after the beginning of the year but before January 12th.

Note: we have to thank the minister of the church, M. Georg Julius Nordlingen for making such detailed records. During the 30+ years he served the church (1731 to 1765) the death/obituary entries in the records are extremely informative.

Johann Georg's obituary noted that he had lived in Neulussheim for 16 years. He had been married about 26 years and had 10 children, three daughters who had not survived to 1731 and seven sons who did.

He had married Anna Maria during his war service. He was selected among other recruits to serve the Empire and he eventually advanced to the rank of lance corporal and according to his discharge, his service had lasted thirteen years. This fits well with the War of Spanish Succession which lasted from 1701 to 1714.

Known children of Johann Georg¹ Krauss and Anna Maria Brunzer were as follows:

+ 21. Andres Paul² Krauss (Johan²) was born 12th January 1717 at

Neulussheim. At his baptism his sponsors were noted as Andrus Krenzel, Corporal in 'our merciful (or gracious) fifth troop' and Paul Hirtmann and his wife. He married Anna Magdalena Rosslund, daughter of Johann Georg Rosslund on the 4th August 1739 at Neulussheim. He died the 9th of January 1762 at Neulussheim, at age 44. Andrus was noted as having been a citizen and weaver (*weber*). His obituary noted that he had received his training in linen weaving at his mother's brother's in Hambrucken. His obituary noted that he had three children, one son and one daughter surviving him. He was buried on the 10th January and the funeral psalm was Ex. 38,12.

+ 3 ii. Johann Georg Pancratius¹ Krauss (Johan¹) was born the 10th October 1718 at Neulussheim. He married Maria Agnes Grubin or Grumt on the 25th January 1752 at Neulussheim and had five children. He died before the 13th of February 1787.

4 iii. Georg Heinrich Krauss, born 30th July 1722 at Neulussheim.

5 iv. Johann Christian Krauss, born 15th March 1724 at Neulussheim.

+ 6 v. Johann Jacob¹ Krauss (Johan¹) was born the 24th July 1726 at Neulussheim. The church record noted that he had a twin and that the sibling was still born. (According to two obstetricians, the birth of twins with one dead is by no means unusual.) He married Maria Clara Schweitzer, daughter of Hans Reichart Schweitzer and Anna Margaretha Schultzin on the 1st June 1751 at Dackenheim, Germany. He died the 17th December 1793 in Lunenburg Co., Nova Scotia.

7 vi. Gottlieb Thomas Krauss, born 17th September 1728 at Neulussheim.

Not all of Johann Georg's children have been found nor has his marriage record. I suggest the other baptisms and his marriage occurred before he arrived in Neulussheim. His brother Johann Heinrich Krauss (1682-1757) also settled in Neulussheim and had at least four children.

References

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