

The Mathiot Family of Lancaster County

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One may wonder why a family named Mathiot is significant enough to merit research beyond the private confines of genealogy. Although the Mathiot family is observing its two hundredth anniversary in America and Lancaster County this year (1954), fewer persons in Lancaster County bear that surname at present than at the time of the American revolution.

Social historians recognize among the more prominent families a more or less distinctive connection caused by intermarriage. Usually these families are joined directly to each other. In Lancaster the families of Atlee, Barber, Carpenter, Hager, Bolenius, Eberman, Wisler, Wike, Weaver and others are not joined with obvious directness; nevertheless, they are related through the medium of one family — the Mathiot family.

Huguenot Background

When the Edict of Nantes was revoked in 1685, French Protestants, called Huguenots, began fleeing France, and together with the German Palatines, came to America after a short stay in the Palatinate. Among these Huguenots were Jean Mathiot, his wife, Margaret Catherine, and his young brother, Georges Mathiot.¹ Jean and Georges were sons of Marcus and Jane Bautonet-Piraulomb Mathiot. Their ancestor, Jean Mathiot, according to family tradition, was an officer in the French army during the massacre of St. Bartholomew. Another ancestor, a Charles Mathiot, was supposed to have been an officer at the court of the Bourbons. Margaret Catharine Mathiot was the daughter of the Honorable Jean Jacques Bernard, mayor of Dampierre-of-the-forest, in Doubs, and his wife, Annie Marie Cuenot, both French patricians.

Margaret Catherine Bernard was born November 26, 1730, and on May 13, 1753, she was married to Jean Mathiot at Montbeliard, France. The following year they left France and arrived in Philadelphia via Rotterdam on the ship *Nancy*, Captain John Ewing master, on September 14, 1754.²

Coming to Lancaster County immediately, the Mathiots settled in Lampeter Township, and at once became identified with Trinity Lutheran Church in Lancaster. On March 29, 1763, Georges Mathiot married Lucia Holder.³

¹ Stapleton, *Memorials of the Huguenots in America*, p. 91.

² *Pa. Archives, 2nd Series*, p. 428.

³ Records of Trinity Lutheran Church.

To Jean and Georges Mathiot the entire family and its descendants owe their origin in the middle Atlantic region.

Descendants of Georges and Lucia Holder Mathiot

I. John, born 1764

II. John Jacob, born September 28, 1765

III. Margaret {
IV. Susan { twins, born 1770

II. John Jacob married Catherine Fleck, March 28, 1797. Their children:

A. John, born October 5, 1804, married Catherine Shultz

B. Anna, born December 12, 1807, married George Andes

C. Catherine, born May 25, 1811

D. Jacob, born February 12, 1813; died 1849; married Catherine Pontius, 1841

1. Anna, born 1842, died 1918, unmarried

2. David, born 1844, died 1850

3. Jacob, born 1845, died 1935, married Elizabeth Smith, 1869

a. Henry Jacob, born 1870, died 1948, married Alice Ehler Zimmerman, 1895

1) Jacob E., born 1895

2) Ralph R., born 1898

3) Grace Louisa, born 1901

4) Clarence H., born 1903

5) Martin Luther, born 1908

b. Anna Martha, born 1874, died 1944, married William Eckman

c. John Edwin, born . . . , married Lillie Shaffner

d. Elizabeth Catherine, born 1884

4. John (died in childhood)

5. Mary, born 1847, died 1848

(Data Courtesy of Clarence Mathiot)

Georges Mathiot was a tailor.⁴ Two centuries later, descendants of Georges Mathiot remain close to the original settlement along Mill Creek, where East and West Lampeter townships meet, and some are members of their progenitor's church — Trinity Lutheran.

Jean and Margaret Catherine Mathiot had six children:

I. *Christian*, born October 12, 1757, died about 1816.

II. *George*, born October 13, 1759, died 1840.

III. *John*, born June 19, 1761, died November 11, 1802.

IV. Anna Barbara, born 1763, died 1768.

V. Catherine, born 1769, married Elias Lefever, September 23, 1794.

VI. Martin, born 1771, died 1772.

⁴ *Pa. Archives, 3rd Series, XVII, 760.*

I. Christian Mathiot married Mary Buck and they had a large family whose descendants are to be found in the Baltimore-Washington area. In 1781 and 1782 Christian was listed in the 2nd Company, 8th Battalion of the Lancaster County Militia.⁵

II. George Mathiot was listed as a sergeant in the muster roll of the 2nd Class, 6th Battalion, Lancaster County Militia in 1781.⁶ Later he became a lieutenant. While a young officer, he met Ruth Davies, daughter of the Quaker, Joshua Davies of Ellicott Mills, Maryland. To obtain permission to marry Ruth, George became a Quaker. They were married on October 31, 1787, at Elkridge Meeting House. She was born in 1771 and died in 1860. Prior to 1800, George and his family moved to Fayette County, Pa. Their children were:⁷

- A. Colonel Jacob Davies Mathiot, 1789-1865, ironmaster.⁸
- B. Eliza, 1791-1874, married Col. Robert Davidson, who refused to take part in the infamous surrender of General Hull in the War of 1812.
- C. Catherine, 1793-1839, married General Lucius Smith, Newark, Ohio. He was a canal contractor, and mayor of Newark.
- D. Mary, 1796, married Joshua Davies, cousin of her mother.
- E. Joshua, 1800-1849, Whig congressman from Ohio.
- F. Cassandra,^{9a} 1803-1834, married Henry Detweiler.
- G. John, 1805-1856, ironmaster of California Furnace, Pa.
- H. Susan, 1807-1843, married General Samuel Marshall, who was born in Columbia, Pa.
- I. Anne Mariah, 1810-1902, "The Original Daughter of the American Revolution", married (1) Robert Wood, (2) George Washington Dorsey, of Virginia.
- J. George Frederick, 1812-1856.
- K. Dr. Henry Bernard, 1815-1894.

III. John Mathiot married Susanna Weaver on September 24, 1783.⁹ She was born in 1765 and died December 31, 1844. John

⁵ Pa. Archives, 5th Series, VII, pp. 829, 848.

⁶ Pa. Archives, 5th Series, VII, pp. 35, 578, 825.

⁷ *The Mathiots in France and America*, Regal Press, Chicago.

⁸ J. J. Stevenson, *Report of Second Geological Survey of Pennsylvania*, Part II, *The Ligonier Valley*, pp. 206, 209.

^{9a} Cassandra Ellicott, wife of Andrew Ellicott's uncle, John, was honored by the name. She gave her namesake a dozen silver spoons.

⁹ Records of Trinity Lutheran Church.

learned the trade of tailoring, and in 1785 he established his home and shop on lot #595, on the southeast corner of East King and Jefferson Streets in Lancaster. In 1792 he sold the eastern half of the lot to Christopher Hager, and in 1796 he sold the remainder to Philip A. Peticolas, a miniature painter.¹⁰ Removing

To all people, Know ye that Jacob Mathiot, of the 49th regiment, under the command of Capt James Clyde of the Columbia (Penn) Volunteers has obtained leave of absence for one day.
Sept 12th 1864
James Clyde Capt

JACOB MATHIOT'S ONE-DAY PASS

to Columbia, he erected a brick house in 1797. He and Michael Gundaker opened a dry goods and grocery store. An unusual feature of the store was its lumber department in which white and yellow pine boards, and bedpost scantling were sold. According to the *Lancaster Daily Express*, April 19, 1873, "They [Mathiot and Gundaker] were the first and only persons who . . . sold lumber of that description . . . as early as 1800. The boards were yellow pine from Juniata and Dauphin counties." The same newspaper account describes the accidental death of John Mathiot: "Mr. Mathiot, while hunting upon one of the islands — Mifflin Island — below the dam, was accidentally shot by a friend who mistook him for a muskrat, he having taken off his hat and laid down in some bushes — the hair of his head was only seen." John Mathiot's estate was sufficient to maintain his widow and eight living children in comfort. They had ten children:

¹⁰ Lancaster County Records, Recorder's Office, Deed Books, PP-91, PP-95, I. 2. 525

- A. Jacob, 1783-1788
- B. John, 1784-1843
- C. Catherine, 1786-1865
- D. George, 1788-1802
- E. Jacob, 1790-1873
- F. Mary, 1793-1822
- G. Henry J., 1795-1846
- H. Joseph, 1797-1826
- I. Samuel, 1799-1870
- J. William, 1801-1877

A study of these children and their progeny will reveal a subtle social pattern.

B. John Mathiot, born December 26, 1784. He married Mary Gonter. In 1807, President Jefferson appointed him postmaster of Columbia, which office he held until he was elected sheriff of Lancaster County in 1819. Although Mathiot was a Republican, he was supported by the Federalists of the county. His entire career was in public affairs; he was a scrivener, and for many years was clerk of the select council of Lancaster, and was in 1831 elected mayor. He was re-elected to that office eleven times. He became the third president of the Lancaster School Board in May 1839, and served up to his death in 1843. He was a stockholder in the Columbia School in 1807; and was a member of the Columbia Presbyterian Church and the Columbia Fire Company in 1814. He marched to Kennett Square with Captain Jacob Strickler's Company in the War of 1812; since their services were not required they returned. John Mathiot was a member of the Union Fire Company, No. 1. He was a Past Master of Lodge 43, Free and Accepted Masons. He died January 22, 1843.¹¹ John and Mary Gonter Mathiot had three children:

1. William

2. Ann Louise, *who married Dr. Henry Carpenter on May 28, 1846. He was a son of Henry and Mary Ann (Cook) Carpenter. His mother was a granddaughter of Colonel Bartram Galbraith. Dr. Carpenter was the fifth member bearing that name in five successive generations of the illustrious Carpenter family. They had three daughters:*

¹¹ Ellis and Evans, *History of Lancaster County*, p. 549.

a. Mary, who married C. C. Carpenter.

b. Sarah, who married John C. Hubley.

c. Catherine, who married Dr. Robert Miller Bolenius (1847-1922) in 1875. Dr. Bolenius was a son of Major Adolphus William Bolenius, and Emma Miller, daughter of "Devil" David Miller, sheriff in 1834-1836. The Bolenius' had six children: Henry, Emma, Adolphus, Mary, Robert, and Katherine (Mrs. Lloyd Ritchie).

3. Catherine, unmarried.

C. Catherine Mathiot, born October 24, 1786, married Robert Barber on May 4, 1807. He was born March 8, 1771, and died February 13, 1854. Robert was the second son of James and Elizabeth Wright Barber, and was the grandson of Robert and Hannah Tidmarsh Barber, early settlers of Columbia. Elizabeth Wright Barber was the daughter of William Wright and the granddaughter of John Cartlidge, an early Quaker Indian trader. Robert Barber erected many of the early buildings of Columbia. Catherine died February 16, 1865. They had seven children:

1. Susan (1808-1855) who married Owen Bruner Goodman.

2. James (1809-1885) unmarried, Columbia merchant.

3. Mary (1816-1878) who married Chester Robinson.

4. Catherine (1820-1888) who married Horace Williston.

5. Emeline, born 1824, who married James C. Evans.

6. Anna E., born January 17, 1828, who married *Colonel Samuel Shoch* on August 2, 1865.

7. Sarah (1831-1844).

E. Jacob Mathiot, born October 14, 1790, married Anna/Nancy Wisler, daughter of Michael and Sophia Harpel Wisler. Jacob Mathiot served in the War of 1812 as a member of the Columbia Independent Volunteers under Captain James Clyde.¹² On 1814-1815 tax lists he was listed as a freeman, cooper-merchant; by 1820 as a freeholder. The following year he became a trustee of the Columbia First Methodist Church, and a member of the Board of Managers of the Old Columbia Water Company. In 1827-1829 he was elected assistant burgess of Columbia. When the Columbia Library Company was organized he was a share-

¹² W. F. Worner, "Military Activities in Lancaster—War of 1812," in *The Lancaster County Historical Society Publications*, XXXV, 224.

holder.¹³ Among properties owned by him were Frog Island and Rush Island; the latter, together with his brother John's holdings, constituted "Mathiot's Fishery".¹⁴ In his later years he was called "Father Mathiot" by the citizens of Columbia. He died on May 10, 1873, and is buried in Mount Bethel Cemetery. Jacob and Nancy had eight children:

1. Ann Martha, who married (1) Christian Snyder, (2) Rev. Thomas Bean, of Columbia.
2. Charles, who married Margaret, and had children: Preston, Honora, and Ellada.
3. Mary, born January 21, 1824, married (1) George W. Ralston, (1819-1843) a portrait artist of Strasburg, Pa. They had one child:
 - a. Anna (1841-1884) who married Joseph Boyd, Jr. (1837-1877), and who had three children: Mary Alice (wife of *John Ward Willson III*),¹⁵ Gertrude (wife of Ramon De Reyes [1] and Elmer Ayers [2]), and Charles.

Next she married Jacob Snyder, merchant of Columbia and Bainbridge. To them were born Mary Elizabeth and Alyse Eugenia. Mary Elizabeth married John Baer Wisler, grandson of Lewis Wisler. Columbia historian *John Jay Wisler, Sr.*, is a son of Mary and John Wisler.

4. Elizabeth married John E. Tyler, of Columbia.
5. Susan married John A. Jackson.
6. Henrietta married John A. Johnson.
7. Anna married (1) Samuel J. Atlee, Jr., son of Colonel Samuel J. Atlee. The younger Atlee operated a tannery east of Columbia.¹⁶ After his death, Anna married George Harriman.
8. Catherine, married Thomas McMeeken.

F. Mary Mathiot, born 1793, married Philip Eberman. He succeeded John Mathiot as postmaster of Columbia in 1818.¹⁷ She died in 1822.

¹³ Ellis and Evans, *History of Lancaster County*, pp. 551-553.

¹⁴ Lancaster County Records, Deed Book, D-10-201.

¹⁵ Grandparents of the author, Jack Ward Willson Loose.

¹⁶ Lancaster County Records, Deed Books, S-3-166, Z-3-123.

¹⁷ Ellis and Evans, *History of Lancaster County*, p. 549.

G. Henry J. Mathiot, born January 16, 1795, married Mary Wike, daughter of George Wike, Columbia. She died 1876, and Henry died June 11, 1846.

H. Joseph J. Mathiot, born June 1, 1797, died February 6, 1826.

I. Samuel Mathiot, born June 30, 1799. He was assistant burgess of Columbia in 1840, and became chief burgess in 1842.¹⁸ In 1859 he was borough treasurer. To Samuel and Sarah, his wife, were born:

1. Annie, married Samuel Maxton [1], J. D. Janvier [2].
2. Rachel, who married John Q. Denney. He erected and managed many of the iron furnaces and rolling mills in the Harrisburg area.¹⁹ To Rachel and John Denney were born Edith, J. McCormick, and DeWitt C., who was the father of Dr. John D. Denney of Columbia.
3. Sarah, who married John Miller.
4. Cyrus, (1840-1920) who married Mary , and had children: Lillian, Sarah, Edith, George and Edward, of Columbia.
5. Owen, who married Charlotte
6. Joseph, who married Anna
7. Ella, who married William Stevenson.

J. William Mathiot, born January 19, 1801, married Catherine Hager, daughter of Christopher and Catherine Sener Hager. Catherine's sister, Cecilia, was married to Nathaniel Ellmaker, Esq., one of Lancaster's most noted attorneys, and son of the Hon. Amos Ellmaker, equally famed in the Bar and political affairs of Lancaster. William Mathiot read law with the latter, and was admitted to the Bar in 1841. He was a member of the Democratic Committee of Correspondence in 1843, and when Zachary Taylor visited Lancaster William Mathiot made the address of welcome. From April 1845 to April 1848, he served as deputy attorney general. Mathiot was an honored member of the Old Residents' Society of Columbia which consisted of thirty-two quality gentlemen of more than fifty years' residence in Columbia. William Mathiot was a shareholder in the Columbia Library Company in

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 551.

¹⁹ H. A. Keefer, "Early Iron Industries of Dauphin County," in *The Dauphin County Historical Society Publications*, 1927, pp. 21, 29.

1829.²⁰ No children were born to William and Catherine Hager Mathiot.

APPENDIX I

BARBER FAMILY

The Barber Family of Lancaster County stems from Yorkshire, England, where the following Barber brothers lived.

- I. Thomas.
- II. *John*, whose son, Robert, came to Chester, Pa., about 1699.
- III. Richard.
- IV. Robert, who came to Chester, Pa., about 1687, died 1709.
- V. James, who came to Chester, Pa., about 1700, died 1732.

A. *Robert Barber*, born about 1690, came to Chester about 1699 to learn shoemaking from his uncle, Robert (IV). Robert married *Hannah Tidmarsh*, daughter of William Tidmarsh of Chester, Pa. In 1726, he took up five hundred acres on the eastern bank of the Susquehanna River, now Columbia. He died in Columbia in 1749. His children:

1. *Eleanor*, born 1718
2. *John*, born 1720
3. *Robert*, born 1722
4. *Thomas*, born 1724
5. *Nathaniel*, born 1727
6. *Elizabeth*, born 1729
7. *Mary*, born 1732
8. *Sarah*
9. *James*, married *Elizabeth Wright*. Issue:
 - a. *William* married *Elizabeth Laub*
 - b. *Robert* married *Catherine Mathiot*
 - c. *Hannah* married *Ziba Webb*
 - d. *Mary* married (1) *Capt. Jacob Stake*, (2) *Col. John Dicks*
 - e. *Eleanor* married *Elisha Moore*
 - f. *James*
 - g. *John* married *Sarah Whitehill*, daughter of John and Mary Atlee Whitehill.
10. *Samuel*

APPENDIX II

WISLER FAMILY

The Wisler, or Wislar, Family of Columbia is descended from *Michael Wisler, Jr.*, who was born in 1756 at Trappe in Montgomery County. His father came to America about 1740 from Alsace-Lorraine. Michael served in Captain Henry Christ's rifle company during the battles of Flatbush, Long Island, White Plains, Princeton, Trenton, Brandywine and Germantown, from 1776 to 1778. He re-enlisted to march with the army to put down the Whiskey Rebellion in western Pennsylvania. In passing through Wright's Ferry he noted the commercial potentialities of the place, and

²⁰ Ellis and Evans, *History of Lancaster County*, p. 567.

thereupon resolved to locate his home there. He set up a brickyard which prospered as Columbia grew. He died on September 14, 1824. His wife was *Sophia Harpel* (or Herblin). Their children were:

- I. *Lewis*, born 1780, died 1852
- II. *John*
- III. *Kitty*, who married William Christy
- IV. *Magdalena*
- V. *Peggy*, who married Samuel May
- VI. *Sally*, who married Ezra Breece
- VII. *Philip*
- VIII. *Nancy*, who married *Jacob Mathiot*
- IX. *Michael*, 3rd.

I. *Lewis* married *Anna Forrey* (1781-1856), daughter of *John and Elizabeth Bixler Forrey*. Among their ten children were *Jacob F.* and *Henry Wisler*. The former, born 1813, was the father of *John Baer Wisler*, and the grandfather of Columbia's historian, *John Jay Wisler, Sr.*

It will be noted that *John Baer Wisler* married *Mary Elizabeth Snyder*, daughter of *Jacob and Mary Mathiot Snyder*, and granddaughter of *Jacob and Nancy Wisler Mathiot*. *John's* grandfather, *Lewis*, was a brother of *Nancy*—his wife's grandmother!

Henry Wisler was the father of *Anna Wisler* who married *Joseph Zeamer*. To the *Zeamers* were born *Harry Wisler* and *Minerva Zeamer*. *Harry W. Zeamer's* son, *H. Wisler Zeamer*, was editor of the defunct *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, and his grandson, *Michael W. Zeamer*, is currently a well-known young journalist and television director.