

The Mylins, Hans and Martin

by Clyde L. Groff

The student of local history is confronted with several large problems to overcome when he starts researching the Mylin family of Lancaster County. The biggest and greatest challenge is to prove that Martin Mylin was the gunmaker that he has been given credit for being. The second challenge is to prove that Martin Mylin and Hans Mylin are indeed brothers. The third and very important challenge is to prove that Hans Mylin had a son named John Mylin who became Brother Amos at the Ephrata Cloister. Confusion was very prevalent in this research work as we found the Mylin's name spelled in many ways: Mylan, Myley, Milin, Millin, Miley, Meilin, Meyley, Mayle, Maylen, Mayly, and Mayley. We do believe that all these different spellings are one and the same family of Mylin's.

Martin Mylin was one of the group who purchased land here in 1710 in what we often refer to as the "Ten Thousand Acre Tract." The patent for his 265-acre tract is entered in the records now located at the Pennsylvania Land Office, indexed as A-4-235, dated June 30, 1711, in the name of Martin Myley. The Martin Mylin story is best told in a land deed recorded here in Lancaster County, indexed as Deed 4-238, dated September 10, 1761, being the title for 212 acres of land, part of the afore-mentioned 265 acres. Among other things in the body of this title, it states that Martin Myley died leaving a will dated March 17, 1747, devising this land to his only son, Martin Myley. This second Martin Myley died intestate, in possession of part of the 265-acre tract which was bounded by Joseph Stoneman, Martin Kendrick, and Christian Herr. The latter is the builder of the Christian Herr House, now being restored in West Lampeter Township, and this Mylin tract and house is just directly west of the restoration work.

The title continues with information about the family of the second Martin Mylin. Besides his widow, Anna, who later married Abraham Newcomer, five children are named: John Mylin is called the eldest son; Mary, wife of Benjamin Bare; Ann, wife of Felix Binkley; Elizabeth, wife of John Furry; and Martin Myley. We are also told in this deed that at an Orphan's Court held at Lancaster on March 4, 1761, John Myley, eldest son of the second Martin Myley, was to hold the 700 acres which his father owned at his death.

On September 10, 1761, this 212-acre tract, part of the 265-acre tract, was sold to Martin Miley, orphan son of the second Mar-

tin Mylin. Since he is a minor a declaration of trust is signed by Christian Hare (Herr) and Jacob Carpenter, his guardians. Sale is subject to dower rights of Anna, wife of Abraham Newcomer, late widow of the second Martin Mylin.

The problem in researching these two Martin Mylins lies in the fact that we have no death date for the second Martin Mylin and the 700 acres he owned when he died. Searching for the date of when the second Martin Mylin died led to two papers filed at the Lancaster County Court House. The first one is titled, "A true and perfect inventory of all the goods and chattles of Martin Mylins of Lampiter [sic] in the County of Lancaster, late deceased, praised by the subscribers the 27th day of August 1751." Christian Herr, Adam Breneman, and Hans Rohrer are the three mentioned subscribers. This is the famous document that the late Dr. Herbert Beck published as being the inventory of the first Martin Mylin. We suggest that it is the inventory of the second Martin Mylin and will submit reasons for coming to this conclusion as we examine the second paper. We shall refer to this first paper as the Martin Mylin Inventory.

The second paper is titled, "The account of Abraham Newcomer and Anna his wife, late Anna Mylin, Widow and Relict of Martin Mylin late of the County of Lancaster, Yeoman, dec'd, and Peter Worrall, which said Anna and Peter are Administratrix and Administrator to the estate of the said Martin Mylen dec'd as well of all the goods and chattles, rights and credits of the said Dec'd as of their payments and disbursements out of the same as follows;" This is a very large document that was exhibited to the Court on 2nd day of December, 1760. The total amount of this estate of the second Martin Mylin is two thousand, four hundred and seventy nine pounds, five shillings, and three pence.

Among the credits they charge themselves with is mentioned an inventory, which was exhibited and remained in the Registers Office, amounting to sixteen hundred and forty three pounds, two shillings, and four pence. *This is the same amount as the Martin Mylin Inventory.* They charged themselves with nine years and three months rent for the plantation on which Abraham Newcomer lived. This also puts the death date of the second Martin Mylin in the year of 1751. They also charged themselves for rents and interest collected over the same nine year period and with other monies also collected and also six pounds for a colt omitted in the inventory.

The list of names of persons to whom they paid money is a researcher's dream as is still another list of persons indebted to the Estate, "Debts Due on Vendue Sale not yet recovered". Following this is a long list of repairs to houses and barns over the nine year period which included thatching roofs, new locust fence around the garden, for laying 170 feet of pipe to lead water to the house from the spring, a new 30 feet by 25 feet addition to the barn, sawing laths and scantling. They then ask for credit or allowances for two

errors on the inventory which are nine pounds for funeral expenses and six pounds and eighteen shillings for a mall [maul?] and iron wedges. Both of these items are listed on the Martin Mylin inventory. The accountants still had over two thousand pounds remaining in their hands which belonged to the estate.

Before we identify the 700 acres of land owned by the second Martin Mylin, we should report on Hans Mylin who came to this same area in the year 1717. Richard Hill, Isaac Norris, and James Logan, Commissioners of William Penn, by patent, recorded in Book A Vol. 5 Page 220 (Land Office Records) granted 700 acres to Hans Meilen, 30th August 1717. We should note that this 700 acre tract had been surveyed for Christopher Schlegel, builder of the first grist mill in Lancaster County, then part of Chester County in 1712. Schegel had wanted 1,000 acres and had agreed for same, but after his tract was only 370 acres, a surveyor came here and using the northern boundary of the 1710 Tract, surveyed the tract, but Schlegel refused to take it up.

If Martin Mylin was a gunsmith we would expect him to be so called on deeds and other records. This writer has never seen any such record. Although we have no record of Strasburg Township as being one of the named townships when Lancaster County was formed in 1729, it was so called in 1722 when "*Hans Meilin of the Township of Strasburg* in ye County of Chester, Yeoman* sold 106 acres to Martin Meilin of the same place, Yeoman.

The price was thirty pounds which was up from the price of five pounds per hundred acres for the 1710 Tract. The tract was bounded on the south by Christian Herr, builder of the Christian Herr House and father of the wife of the second Martin Mylin. Charles Christopher was on the east, his land being part of the 700 acres which Hans Meilin had sold to him in 1718, Christian Herr being the only persons named. Hans Mylin died intestate in 1727

* Editor's note: Before Lancaster County was erected from Chester County in 1729, the mother county had established several townships in what was to become Lancaster County. Conestoga Township was laid out in 1718, and encompassed the area west of the Octorara Creek. In 1720 West Conestoga Township was created, and it included all land north of the Pequea Creek and west of the Welsh settlement at the head of the Pequea Creek. The following year Pequea Township was laid out to include the Welsh settlement west of Caln Township. In 1722 West Conestoga Township was changed to Donegal Township. None of the area mentioned above included a Strasburg Township; indeed the Chester County Court never created a Strasburg Township. It will be noted there was a "vacuum" existing from 1710 until the creation of Conestoga Township in 1718. The settlers apparently "filled the vacuum" by designating the area in what is now Lampeter Township as "Strasburg Township." Popular usage remained after 1718 when the locality received an official name. Upon the erection of Lancaster County in 1729 the area of the first Germanic settlement became officially Lampeter Township, a name rich in Welsh associations. It is logical to assume the Germanic settlers had little inclination to accept the new name any more than they did the Indian Conestoga. Moreover, the Ulstermen had their way in renaming West Conestoga to Donegal.

as witnessed by a bond filed in Chester County, signed by Hans Mylin, Martin Mylin, and Joshua Lowe, a photo copy of which the writer has in his possession. Also filed was the inventory which was taken and also signed by H. C. for Howry Carpenter, who is the famous Henry Carpenter, and Martin Mylin. Beside 300 acres of land in Conestoga, which was the Township of Chester County, the inventory called for three horses, two mares, thirteen cows and steers, fifteen sheep, wagon and gear, utensils for the use of the plantation, plow hoes and others, kettles, pots and others, some bedding, some books, and was dated 16th Jan'y 1727/8. Most interesting is that the land was valued at one hundred and fifty pounds or fifty pounds per hundred acres.

We will note that Hans Mylin left two children who sold the above 300 acres to Martin Mylin on May 5, 1730, signed by John Myley and wife Catharine, and John Houser and wife Anna, said Anna and John being the two heirs of said Hans Mylin who died in 1727, all of which is described in Lancaster county Deed S-89 when John Myley, son of the second Martin Mylin, sold the land to John Furry, his brother-in-law.

With this background we can now place the 700 acres of land which passed from the first Martin Mylin to the second Martin Mylin to his son John Mylin.

- 200 acres, which is 212 acres when six percent for roads is added, which was part of the 265 acres of the 1710 purchase to first Martin Mylin.
- 100 acres were surveyed to Hans Hess on May 27, 1718, but Hess never settled there but went farther west to present day Baumgardner. Martin Mylin paid for a patent for this on May 17, 1734 as recorded in A-6-325 at Land Office.
- 100 acres purchased from Hans Mylin in 1722, which tract was already described.
- 300 acres from estate of Hans Mylin, which tract was already described.

We can now follow this 700 acres of land after John Mylin, eldest son of second Martin Mylin, was ordered by Orphan's Court to hold the land:

- 200 acres, being the 1710 tract, were held in trust for his brother, third Martin Mylin, which tract was already described.
- 200 acres were sold to his brother-in-law, John Furry, already covered.
- 300 acres were described by John Mylin in his will dated November 16, 1820, which is Will 0-22 in the Register of Wills Office, Lancaster County Court House.

John Mylin provided that his wife Feronica was to live in his dwelling house; son Martin Mylin was to have the 100 acres he already had in his possession; son Abraham Mylin was to have 96

acres; and son Jacob Mylin was to have residue or 114 acres and 112 perches. This is 300 acres, John Mylin having sold 2 and 3/4th acres to Christian Rohrer in 1797, being part of the 1747 exchange of 46½ acres between Charles Christopher and Martin Mylin. We should also state that John Mylin named five sons, the other two being John Mylin and Christian Mylin. The above will of John Mylin was proven on September 19, 1823, which means he outlived his brother, Martin Mylin, because his will was probated February 13, 1820, recorded as Will M-427. To his son Martin Mylin were devised the two tracts in his possession being 86 and 3/4th acres, and 17½ acres. We want to note that Abraham Mylin was living next to the first tract and was called millwright. Son Abraham Mylin was to have the rest of his plantation or 125 acres. Son Christian Mylin was to have the 40 acres in Conestoga where he had rebuilt the grist and saw mill. All children were to share in balance of his estate, being named: Martin; Abraham; John; Christian; David; Barbara, wife of Christian Kendig; Christana, wife of John Herr; and Elizabeth. Martin Mylin also mentioned that said son John Mylin had left these parts for some time, so his share was to go to his children, Henry and Sophia.

This covers the family of Hans Mylin and Martin Mylin. Their relationship is not mentioned in any of the records this researcher has read. Some past written works have stated that they were brothers, which we could not prove or disprove.

What about the marked gunshop? It is located on the 700 acre tract which was taken up by Hans Mylin in 1717 and we found no mention of it in any deed as a gunshop. We did see it called a smith shop on records. What about the gun-making tools and supplies on the already mentioned inventory. We would suggest that they belonged to the Baker family of gunsmiths, and one John Baker in particular, as recorded in the Orphan's Court records. John Baker died June 4, 1751, leaving two minor children, Eleoner and John. The court named Martin Maylen, Edward Dougherty, and Peter Worall as guardians; in 1754 David Stout replaced Martin Mylin, deceased. In 1760 Eleoner Baker chose John Postethwaite as her guardian. The son John Baker died intestate, and in debt in 1763. The sheriff sold the property to James Davis, and in 1764 Duncan Campbell and wife Eleoner, the former Eleoner Baker, asked the court to make James Davis give an account of the Baker estate.

Among the other papers we examined was the most interesting account of Martin Milin buying goods from one Arthur Oliver, who was an indian trader of note. Current account opened under date of May 10, 1730, stating cash was due to Oliver by Millin. Three days later, on the 13th, Millin is charged for "Loafs Suger, Rice, nailles, 2 frying pans, Suger, 2 hoggs heads, 10¼ gal. of rum, some keggs, 17 gal. of wine." Two items are crossed out on the 14th. Next entry is on October 13th when Millen bought "sope, wool cards, small nails, ginger, pepper, powder, 1 Snuff Box, Shot, cash (two

pounds), Bellows, (Leather), Extra Dressing, Lead, 16 gallon rum, paid for ye barrill." The rum was dated on the 21st of October.

On the other side of the ledger marked contra or for payments, Millin is given credit for 1 "Cagg" of what appears to be butter, then three more credits of "1 Cagg Ditto, then 4 Caggs Ditto, Bees Wax, Indian Dressed Skins and 1878 measurement of Hemp," all of which came to 30 pounds, 16 shillings, and three pence, then another three shillings, four pence that Oliver owed Millin for "shooing horse".

A note signed by Oliver states, "Conestogoe Febuary 4th 1730/1 Settled with—Martin Millin and due to him Twelve pounds which I promise to pay on Demand as — Winess/my hand. Arthur Oliver"

In addition to things already mentioned as purchased by Millin we should add files, rosin, 1 book, shears, 2 hats, more rum, cash paid to Peter Yortee, to Owen Owens account, all of which came to eighteen pounds, plus, and why Oliver still owed Millin the twelve pounds.

This proved to be a most interesting document and shows Martin Mylin shod horses. We also know that Martin Kendig had horses grazing on the York County side of the Susquehanna River when the residents of Pennsylvania had boundary disputes with the residents of Maryland and the trouble with Thomas Cressop [Creassap]. We also know that Martin Mylin has been given credit for being a gunsmith. In our research of the Mylins there is nothing that shows or proves that the first Martin Mylin or the second Martin Mylin was ever a gun maker or had guns made as suggested by Dr. Herbert H. Beck [see *LCHS Journal*, Vol. 53 pp. 33-65].

The third and last item we researched was to determine if the John Mayley who was known as Brother Amos at Ephrata was indeed the son of the first Hans Mylin who purchased the 700 acre tract in 1717. Some years ago Miss Elizabeth C. Kieffer and the writer thought this to be true, but could never prove it. In the research of Professor Philip Bedient we found that after Hans Mylin signed with his wife Catharine and sold the 300 acres to Martin Mylin, he just dropped out of sight.

Among the many hats that Dr. Charles Dewey Spotts wears is one of being president of Historic Scheafferstown, Inc. He and the writer traced the homestead to land that was given by warrant to John Mayley in 1734. Then John Mayley and wife Catherina sold to Durst Thoma in 1737, and later the property passed to Alexander Shaffer (alias Sander Shaffer). Another tract was taken up by John Mayley in 1736 and was located at the head of Conestoga Creek, which is the aforementioned homestead. Dr. Spotts and the writer have visited the tract in Lampeter Township on the Weaver-Houser tract, and there is a building not unlike the Schaeffer one that suggested to us the connection between the Mylin and Houser structures.

Perhaps both houses were built by the same persons.

By 1739 we traced John Meyley (Miley) (Mylin) to the Ephrata area, and his wife's name was then Barbara when he sold land to the group of Samuel Eckerlin, Jacob Gass, Israel Eckerlin, and Emanuel Eckerlin. We traced the relationship of this John Mayley from his first meeting with Conrad Biessel in the records at Ephrata; and with Martin H. Brackbill we traced him here in Lancaster County. Our most conclusive evidence is when John Mayley signed his will in a bold hand, which is the same hand that signed the bond of Hans Mylin in 1727. Since his will is one of the most delightful we ever have read, we close with the full text of his will;

"Be it remembered, that I John Mayle of the Township of Ephrata in Cocallico Township Lancaster County do this Thirteenth Day of January Anno Domin one . . . thousand seven hundred and eighty three make this my last Will and Testament in Manner as followeth.

I order and it is my Will, that all my Joiners or Carpenters Tools shall be for Ever the Property of the Brethren at Bethania in Ephrata, and they shall be kept and lock'd in my Working Shop for constant use, And I constitute hereby my Executors hereafter named to be Stewards for said Tools, and he shall take care that they be kept together.

Item, I order, and it is my Will, that all my Casks, Buquets, Funils, Quarts, Muggs, etc: shall also be for afores'd use, and I constitute Br. John Frederik Overseer over the same, and he shall keep them locked up in the Cellar under my house for public use.

All my Cash I order to be put into the Brethren's public Stock under the Hand of their Steward and if any of my natural Relation should ask or demand from my Executor any Thing from my Estate, under Pretence, that he or they was or were my Heirs: I order my said Executor to give each an English Shilling Sterling, and besides this they shall have no farther Right to my Estate. The Residue of my Estate, not disposed here, I order my Executor by and with the Assistance of another Brother, to divide the same among the Single Brethren share alike.

Finally I constitute Executor of this my last Will my trusty Brethren in Spirit Jacob Funk. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand & seal the day and year above written. /s/ Hans Mayli"
/s/ Benjamin Bowman, Christian Lauman, and John Bowman
[witnesses]

"Memorendum, Whereas I John Mayly of Ephrata have some time ago made my Will and Testament bearing date the 13 Day of January 1783 Wherein I have ordered my Executor how to dispose of my Litle Estate I have since thought proper to give some thing particular to my beloved Brother the President of the Society of Ephrata Peter Miller So I order and it is my Will that my House Clock shall be given unto him the said Peter Miller and also some of my glass botles and . . . a funnel. Item I give my Folio Bible to Jacob Funk whom I have Nominated Executor of my last will but in other wise the above shall stand in its full power. Done this Sixth Day of July in the year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Eighty Three. Signed Sealed acknowledged by the Testator in the pressence of us; Benjamin Bowman, Christian Lauman, and John Bowman, (signed) Hans Mayli."

A closing word should be mentioned about the Baker family and Martin Mylon, as we have already noted he was named guard-

ian. In our files we have a copy of the inventory of John Baker, taken by Robert Thornbrugh and Martin Mylon (being the second Martin Mylin) on 27th February 1750/1. We note that among the items listed are Bar Iron and "Smith Tools & a piece of a forge hammer", which suggests that John Baker was some sort of a smith.

We also have the inventory of Joshua Baker, Sr. who calls himself a gunsmith. Dated 5th September 1754, it includes such items as a quantity of gunlocks and old mountings, which were taken by Thomas Butler and James Bickham. However, this paper was not intended to be about the Baker family of gunsmiths—which this writer thinks should be written.

The earliest reference in my more than thirty-five years of research that I have seen is one of 1727 when one cousin wrote to another asking him how long his father would be with John Baker the gunsmith, looking for land for him here in present day Lancaster County. [see *LCHS Journal* Vol. XXV, 1921, pages 11 and 14, Taylor Papers #2930 and #3041.] This land was next to Martin Mylin; this land was the site of the first mill; and this site is the present day location of Rockford. There are some of my fellow historians and researchers who claim that the present day foundation of Rockford is indeed an old foundation of a Baker house which stood there before General Edward Hand's house was built. I also think that this site was the location of the factory where William Henry had his guns made. If my reader desires to visit this site he should go east or west on Golf Road to Mill Creek. Along the south side of the road and using the 1824 Scott Map, he will find himself at the site of the first mill and gunmaking site.