

## The Buchtel Family

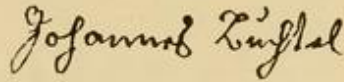
BY HENRY MEYER, REBERSBURG, PA.

THE appearance of the very interesting sketch of Hon. Henry A. Buchtel, Governor of Colorado, in the June number of THE PENNSYLVANIA-GERMAN, suggested the propriety of putting on record in permanent form some facts about John Buchtel, the ancestor of the Buchtels in this country. These facts were collected incidentally by the writer several years ago, while tracing the genealogies of the Meyer and Bierly families, several of whose members were joined in marriage with members of the Buchtel family. This sketch will be brief, however, and may be disappointing to persons who, from the title, may have been led to anticipate a complete history of the family.

### John Buchtel's Arrival and Marriage

John Buchtel, the ancestor of a numerous train of descendants in America, emigrated from Württemberg in 1753, sailing in the ship *Edinburg*, Captain James Russel commanding. The company of emigrants of which Mr. Buchtel was a member landed at Philadelphia and were qualified in the courthouse, Friday, September 14; probably the ship had arrived the same day or the day before. A list of these people may be found in Prof. Rupp's *Thirty Thousand Names*, page 303, but the name of John Buchtel is there spelled *Buchstel*, which was an error either of the copyist or of the printer, for on examination of the original list on file in the office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth at Harrisburg, Pa., it will be seen that the name is there written *Buchtel*, as signed by himself, and corresponding with his signature as found on old deeds and other papers. Mr. Buchtel was still single when he emigrated to America, and it is said he left his native land in order to avoid military service in a war then pending or about to open in the home country.

It appears that Mr. Buchtel was not burdened with a superabundance of this world's goods at that time, for he was

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Johann Buchtel".

AUTOGRAPH OF JOHN BUCHTEL  
As found on a Deed dated May 14, 1808

obliged to serve a certain period with some citizen of the new country to pay for his passage across the ocean. A young lady immigrant, serving for a similar purpose with a near neighbor, became his wife. Her Christian name was Catharine; her other name is not known. The couple lived at McKees Half Falls, now Snyder county, Pa., but how long is not known. Mr. Buchtel's name appears on the assessment-list of that locality for the year 1778. In 1791 or 1792 the family moved from McKees Half Falls, to Brush Valley, now Centre county, and located on a tract of land of 334 acres in the center of the valley. The family were pioneer settlers and the region was one vast expanse of forest, inhabited principally by bears, wolves, panthers and deer. The only road then was a mere path through the woods which Colonel Samuel Miles had cut out, beginning in Buffalo Valley at the lower end of Brush Valley Narrows, thence running west through said Narrows fourteen miles and on through the middle of Brush Valley a further distance of twenty miles, to its western terminus, Colonel Miles at one time owned the whole valley and had this road opened to induce settlers to come in, purchase or lease tracts from him and improve them.

### Pioneer Settlers in the Forest

Mr. Buchtel must have entered the valley by this road, as Mr. Anthony Bierly, a near neighbor, became a settler in the place about the same time and tradition says he was the first to bring in his family by this road. The Buchtel family, among whom there were then at least several adult children, built their pioneer cabin on a spot south of the



present residence of Mrs. Philip Hubler, several rods below the public road, about one mile northwest of the present site of Rebersburg.

After providing a place of shelter their next concern was, like that of all new settlers, to clear the land, plant potatoes, corn, and sow winter grain as speedily as possible, so that the family would have a supply of provisions. Sometimes those early settlers were brought to the verge of starvation. On a certain occasion food became so scarce that people were obliged to dig up the potatoes which they had planted, peel them, eat the potatoes and replant the peelings. Meat, however, appears to have been abundant in those early times. Any one fortunate enough to own a rifle could procure all the meat required in a family by strolling a few rods beyond the clearing and shooting deer. Indeed, deer were so numerous that they became a nuisance to the settlers. They would destroy the crops. Bears, too, were plentiful and bold. Often they would come into the clearings, climb into pigpens and carry off hogs.

As soon as Mr. Buchtel had cleared a small space, he planted an apple-orchard. The terms of Colonel Miles's lease required the lessee to plant at least one hundred apple-trees and sow at least seven acres with English grass. The small apple-trees Mr. Buchtel carried on his shoulder from his old home at McKees Half Falls to his new home, a distance of forty miles in a direct line. So stated Colonel Henry Royer, a near neighbor of the Buchtel family. Some of these trees are still remaining and are considerably over a hundred years old. Several of them are giants of their kind, measuring three and a half feet in diameter near the ground. Among the different varieties was an early sweet apple, red-striped and of fine flavor. These are still perpetuated in the valley and are known as the Buchtel apple. Mr. Buchtel also planted a vineyard on the second mountain north of his place, and the spot is still known as *Wci'kop*. He believed that an elevated position would afford the best conditions for grape-culture. The manure for the vines he car-

ried up the mountain in a basket, says Mrs. Richards, a great-granddaughter of his. The plants flourished, but the enterprise was a failure, because the "bad boy" was already in existence and carried off the grapes.

Among the near neighbors of Mr. Buchtel were four of his sons-in-law: Nicholas Bierly, Abraham Kraemer, Simon Pickle and Michael Meyer; but the last-named did not move into the valley until 1805. Reference will again be made to these further on.

#### A Mechanic and a Student

Mr. Buchtel was a cooper by trade and was an excellent mechanic, not only in this, but in several other departments of woodcraft. Specimens of his handicraft are still extant, among them being a wine-keg made of one solid piece for the staves, the end or head-pieces being in place like those of an ordinary keg. How they were put in position was always a mystery to people inspecting the vessel. He was a student and a proficient scholar in mathematics, astronomy and philosophy. He and his friend John Motz, of Penn's Valley, used to order books from Germany on those subjects. Astrology was also one of his favorite studies, and people still mention some predictions of his which were fulfilled. Several years ago the writer was shown a diagram with certain calculations connected therewith, worked out by Mr. Buchtel, which predicted the War of 1812. In those times people had great faith in astrology, not only the illiterate, but some among the professional and educated classes. It may be doubted whether Buchtel believed in it himself to a very great extent. It is difficult to conceive how any one could apply himself to such abstruse studies as mathematics, astronomy and philosophy under the unfavorable surroundings of those pioneer days.

#### Buchtel's Death—Family Moving to Ohio

Mr. Buchtel was a member of the Lutheran church, but seldom attended preaching services. "Ministers went to him to learn," stated an old citizen of the neighborhood. The date of his birth is not known, nor the exact date of his de-



cease. It is stated that he died in 1809; he signed a deed in 1808, when, of course, he was still living. He died quite suddenly, falling down in the doorway of his house and expiring. The manner of his death seems to have been a fulfillment of his own prophecy, for he had often said that he would not die in bed. He lies buried in the Union cemetery at Rebersburg, a plot of ground of which he and Jacob Walter were the first trustees. The grave has no headstone, but is located close to the fence on the western side of the cemetery, within nine or ten rods of the northwestern corner.

About the year 1812 Buchtel's widow and all the surviving children, except two of the daughters, moved to Stark county, Ohio, and settled at or near the present site of Uniontown. Michael Meyer, a son-in-law, followed in 1814 and located at the same place. Several of the Buchtel children died young and are buried somewhere on the old homestead farm near Rebersburg.

#### John Buchtel's Descendants

The writer has not made any special effort to trace the successive generations of Mr. Buchtel's sons, only those of three of the daughters intermarried with persons whose genealogies were written up by him several years ago. The descendants of these are numerous and a history of them would fill a small volume.

There were nine children, four sons and five daughters.

I. John Buchtel married Catharine Snyder. He lived on the old homestead-farm, now owned by the heirs of Philip Hubler, and moved to Ohio about the year 1812. Issue, three sons and three daughters:

1. Henry, married Elizabeth Meyer, daughter of Michael Meyer. The couple were cousins. They moved to Ohio and had sixteen children, not enumerated here.
2. John, baptized Sept. 14, 1794, according to the church records.
3. Hannah, born Sept. 18, 1796.
4. Catharine, born June 4, 1799.
5. Herman, born March 16, 1803.
6. Julia.

II. Martin Buchtel married Eva Walter. He lived on the farm now

owned by Charles Bierly, which was a part of the original Buchtel tract. Issue, two sons, six daughters:

1. Catherine.
2. Eva.
3. Elizabeth, born April 7, 1805.
4. Michael
5. Susan (name in church record, Sophia), born July 2, 1809.
6. Fannie.
7. John.
8. Ann.

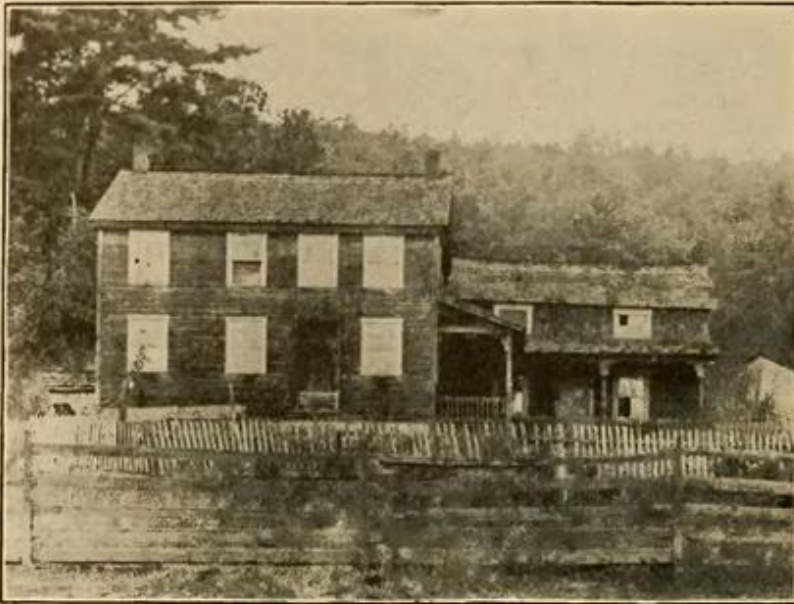
III. Peter Buchtel married Margaret Kreamer, sister of Abraham Kreamer, who was married to Peter's sister, Maria Buchtel. Peter lived on the farm now owned by the Jonathan Walker heirs, about one and one half miles southwest of Rebersburg. A member of the Buchtel family in Akron, Ohio, sent the following sketch of him several years ago:

Peter Buchtel settled on what is now the John Kepler farm, near East Liberty, in 1816. Summit county at that time was an almost unbroken wilderness. The nearest trading-place was Canton, eighteen miles away, whither supplies were brought from Pittsburg in wagons. To Canton members of the Buchtel family had to go whenever they wanted anything from a plug of tobacco to a hogshead of molasses. Peter Buchtel was a great hunter. He looked upon the woods in that country as his own, and it made him angry if any one settled within five miles of his home. He was an expert bee-hunter and kept his family well supplied with honey, as well as venison, which were two of the staple articles of food. The story connected with his death will probably never be learned. He left at the first outbreak of hostilities in the Harrison campaign and was never seen or heard of again. William Buchtel has spent considerable time and money in trying to get some trace of his grandfather, but without avail. No one was ever heard of who could throw any light on his fate.

The date 1816, given above, is probably wrong.

The Buchtels are a long-lived people. Many of Buchtel's descendants reached ages ranging from eighty to ninety years, and a number of them lived almost a hundred years. It will be observed that Peter's family was especially remarkable for the great ages which its members attained. His issue was four sons and eight daughters:

1. Solomon, baptized May 14, 1794.



HOUSE BUILT BY SOLOMON BUCHEL

Near Rebersburg, Centre County, Pa.

2. John, born November 17, 1796, died Dec. 26, 1893, aged 97 years. He furnished a list of his father's children. His son, John R. Buchtel, was the founder of Buchtel College, Akron, Ohio.

3. Mary, was 94 years old when she died.

4. Maria, aged over 80 years.

5. Catherine, married Jacob Meyer, son of Michael Meyer; the couple were cousins and lived at Elkhart, Ind. She died December 26, 1893, aged 93 years, 9 months and 23 days.

6. Margaret, married — Yearick, resided at Myersville, O., and lived 88 years.

7. Peter, of Akron, O., died at the age of 86 years.

8. Michael, born April 12, 1834.

9. Elizabeth, born August 2, 1806.

10. Susan, survived all her brothers and sisters, and was 94 years old in December, 1893.

11. Rosina, born May 4, 1810. She married her cousin, Philip Meyer, son of Michael Meyer; she died aged 88 years.

12. Sally.

IV. Solomon Buchtel married Maria Reber, daughter of Conrad Reber, the founder of Rebersburg, Pa. The Reber family moved to Uniontown, now Myersville, Ohio, about the same time as the Buchtels and several other families from Brush Valley. Solomon Buchtel built and occupied the house now owned

by William Shultz, about three fourths of a mile north of Rebersburg. He died in February, 1840. Issue, seven sons, one daughter:

1. Benjamin, born February 4, 1806.

2. Joseph, born February 5, 1807.

3. Solomon, born March 2, 1810.

4. William, born March 7, 1811.

5. Thomas.

6. Henry.

7. Jonathan B., physician, father of Henry A. Buchtel, Governor of Colorado. (See sketch in June number of THE PENNSYLVANIA-GERMAN.)

8. Hannah.

V. Elizabeth Buchtel, born September 4, 1762, died September 4, 1801. She married John George Meyer, brother of Michael, who was married to her sister Agnes (see below). The family lived on the old Meyer homestead-farm near Straubstown, now Freeburg, Pa., and both parents are buried in the old cemetery at that place. Elizabeth had seven children, surnamed Meyer:

1. Elizabeth, born in 1788, died in 1856; married Frederic Richter and lived at Selinsgrove, Pa.

2. Barbara, born February 20, 1790, died



May 7, 1864; married Jacob Haines. The family lived near Freeburg, Pa.

3. Julia, born March 17, 1894, died single.

4. Susan, born Dec. 30, 1795, died April 6, 1847; married Jacob Hess. The family lived about a mile east of Tylersville, Clinton county, Pa.

5. George, born Nov. 5, 1798, died at Akron, O., March 15, 1868; married Catharine, daughter of Christopher Meyer, of Freeburg, Pa.

6. Maria, born November 8, 1799, died Jan. 30, 1867; married David Batdorf, and lies buried at Aaronsburg, Pa.

7. Margaret, born September 4, 1801, died at the house of her son-in-law, Major Jared B. Fisher, at Pennhall, Centre county, Pa., Sept. 17, 1881. She was the second wife of George Weaver. The family lived at the east end of Penn's Valley.

VI. Agnes Buchtel married Michael Meyer. The family lived at Straubstown now Freeburg, Snyder county, Pa., until 1805, when they moved to Brush Valley, Center county, and took up their abode in a small log cabin within a quarter of a mile of the Buchtel homestead. Soon afterward Mr. Meyer built a more substantial house, in which the family lived until 1814, when they again loaded their wagons and emigrated to Ohio. Mr. Meyer purchased a tract of nine hundred acres at a place later known as Uniontown, but now called Lake, in Stark county. At a later period Summit county was formed, taking in a part of the territory of Stark, and Mr. Meyer's possessions fell into the new county near the line. As already stated, the Buchtel families had settled in the same neighborhood several years earlier. The descendants of this couple are numerous and are scattered over half a dozen of the Western States.

Agnes was born December 1, 1766, and died April 23, 1852. Mr. Meyer, her husband, was born March 20, 1765, and died August 5, 1843. Both lie buried in the Old Union cemetery. Issue (surnamed Meyer), eight sons, five daughters:

1. Henry, born Nov. 12, 1788, died Dec. 6, 1874; married Elizabeth Bushong.

2. Sophia, born August 15, 1790, died Oct. 1, 1840; married Benjamin Pontius.

3. Michael, born May 20, 1792, died Nov. 14, 1868; married Elizabeth Noll.

4. Elizabeth, born April 6, 1794, married

Henry Buchtel, son of John Buchtel, her cousin, and died Sept. 20, 1843.

5. Jacob, born April 1, 1796, died March 10, 1859, married Catharine Buchtel (see above).

6. Barbara, born Oct. 25, 1798, died March 23, 1868; married John K. Bowers.

7. Christopher, born November 10, 1800, died May 24, 1880; married Catharine Spade.

8. Joshua, born Oct. 12, 1802, died March 9, 1840; married Barbara Frank.

9. John B., born March 23, 1805, died Feb. 27, 1872; married twice, first to Sarah Yearick, second to Ann Gass.

10. Mary, born March 25, 1807, died about the year 1889; married Samuel Spade, brother of Catharine Spade, wife of Mary's brother, Christopher.

11. Philip, born Feb. 24, 1809, died Nov. 11, 1893; married his cousin Rosina, daughter of Peter Buchtel.

12. Susan, born Feb. 24, 1809, died May 23, 1824. She and Philip were twins.

13. George, born June 7, 1811, died April 16, 1887; married Barbara Smith.

VII. Lucy Buchtel married Nicholas Bierly and lived on a farm half a mile east of the Buchtel farm. Anthony Bierly, father of Nicholas, moved from the region of the Mahantango in 1791 or 1792 and settled in Brush Valley, locating on a tract of 334 acres, bought from Colonel Samuel Miles. The eastern part of Rebersburg is now situated on a portion of the tract. The farm was subsequently divided, Nicholas taking the eastern half, his brother John the western half. Lucy was born February 24, 1778, and died March 26, 1851; she lies buried in the Union cemetery at Rebersburg, Pa. Children (surnamed Bierly), ten—one daughter, nine sons:

1. Nicholas, born Feb. 8, 1799, died Sept. 18, 1877; married Catharine Mechtly.

2. Hannah, born May 26, 1800, died Dec. 16, 1892; married Henry Meyer. The family lived on a farm three miles east of Rebersburg, Pa. They had nine children, among them the writer.

3. Michael, born Nov. 25, 1801, died June 16, 1884; married Mary Mallony, and is buried at Madisonburg, Pa.

4. John, born Sept. 25, 1803, died June 22, 1882; married Priscilla Wolf, and is buried at Rebersburg, Pa.

5. David, born Dec. 6, 1805, died Feb. 24, 1901; married Magdalena Shallenbarger. Lived at Rising Sun, O.

6. Anthony, born August 26, 1807, died July 2, 1890; married Rachel Ruhl, and lived near Rebersburg. The writer is indebted to Anthony for many facts about the Buchtel family.

7. Reuben, born March 8, 1809, died Sept.

11, 1885; married first Elizabeth Weston, second Mary Cartwell. Lived in Missouri.

8. Peter, born April 13, 1814, died Dec. 7, 1868; married Sarah Kerstetter. Resided during the later years of his life near Milesburg, Pa.

9. Simon, born March 25, 1817, died March 14, 1866; single, buried in the Evangelical cemetery, Rebersburg, Pa.

10. George, born July 17, 1819; married Sarah Magee; lives at Bradner, O.

Elsewhere in this sketch mention is made of the remarkable longevity of many of the members of the Buchtel descendants. This fact is well illustrated in the ages of Lucy's children, the Bierly family, enumerated above. David reached the age of 95 years, 2 months, 18 days; Hannah lived 92½ years; George is now 88 years old; Anthony,

nearly 83 years; Michael, 82½ years; Nicholas and John, each nearly 79 years; Reuben, 76½ years.

VIII. Catharine Buchtel married Simon Pickle; the family lived in Brush Valley. Mr. Pickle was a son of Tobias Pickle, who was an early settler in the valley and at one time owned the Center Mills property.

IX. Maria Buchtel married Abraham Kreamer, a brother of Margaret, who was married to Peter Buchtel, Maria's brother (see above). The family also moved to Ohio.

Not knowing the birth-dates of all of John Buchtel's children, the writer is not certain whether their names are placed in proper order in the above list.