



Orangeburgh Genealogical Society

First Families of Orangeburgh District (SC)

RICKENBACKER

(RICKENBAKER, RICKENBACHER, RIGGENBACHER)

First Family Biography

FIRST GENERATION

1. HEINRICH (Heini, Henry) RICKENBACHER was baptized 23 Feb 1690 in Runenberg, BL, Switzerland^[1] and died in 1739 in Orangeburgh Township, South Carolina.^[10, 11] He was the son of HANS JACOB RICKENBACHER and BARBARA NEBICKER.^[1] He married ANNA BURGI on 08 Oct 1714 in Runenberg, BL, Switzerland.^[1] She was baptized 29 Sep 1695 in Bubendorf, BL, Switzerland^[2] and died 31 Aug 1759 in Orangeburgh Township, South Carolina.^[10, 11] She was the daughter of HANS RUDOLF BURGI and ANNA THOMMEN.^[2]

An Auswanderung [emigration] report of 18 Dec 1734 states that Heini Riggenbacher was influenced to emigrate by, "conversations on this topic in the city and country and besides especially by Emanuel Giegelmann, his brother-in-law."^[7, 8]

Heinrich and Anna auctioned their belongings for 328 pounds 5 shillings and 4 pence (about \$55,000 today) on 24 Mar 1735 in Runenberg.^[4] They started down the Rhine in mid-April in a party of 42 with the Gieglemanns (two families), the Salis, the Bitterlis, the Busers, and the Straumans.^[5, 8] They took passage on the ship Samuel, leaving Rotterdam about 11 May 1735. After a stop in Cowes, they arrived in Charleston on 13 Jul 1735. They left Charleston on 24 Jul 1735 for Orangeburg.^[9]

Heinrich's grant of 350 acres and town lot #167 were surveyed on 18 Sep 1735.^[12] The approximate present-day bounds of the grant are the Edisto River to the SW, Rutledge Avenue to the SE, Wells Drive to the NE, and Mason Drive to the NW. Hillsboro Road runs more or less down the middle of the grant. Grant data suggests that Heinrich may have obtained his 350 acres by claiming one family member from each of the Gieglemann families and two family members from the Sali family. Perhaps he had paid the passage for them. There were 24 known individuals in these four families, and their 1735 grants totaled 1,200 acres.^[8, 12, 13]

In 1739, Heinrich sent a letter to his brother via the agent Hans Springer.^[8] (I have not been able to find this letter.) He must have died shortly thereafter for his widow Anna married Conrad Alder on 1 Jan 1740.^[10, 11] Anna died on 31 Aug 1759 and was buried on the Rickenbacher plantation, then owned by her son Heini.^[10, 11]

Heinrich's final remaining property right in Switzerland (the use of a piece of meadow) was not settled until 24 Sep 1798.^[6]

Child of Heinrich Rickenbacher and Anna Burgi is:

+2. a. HEINI (Heinrich, Henry) RICKENBACHER

There is no evidence that Heinrich Rickenbacher and Anna Burgi had any children besides Heini. The Jacob Rickenbacher mentioned in Salley, p 104, is transcribed by Joop as Jacob Khun, a known resident of Orangeburgh at the time (15 Mar 1747.)^[10, 11]

SECOND GENERATION

2. HEINI (Heinrich, Henry) RICKENBACHER, baptized 22 Feb 1722 in Runenberg, BL Switzerland,^[1] died 1780-81 in Orangeburg District, South Carolina,^[14, 15] married ANNA TILL abt. 1740 in Orangeburgh Township, South Carolina^[10, 11] (see Till Family).

Heinrich Rickenbacher signed a claim for 1600 pounds for repair of the Fort in Orangeburgh on 7 Jan 1780.^[15] By 11 Nov 1781 his wife Ann was providing supplies to the militia in her own name, an indication that Heini had died.^[14]

Children of Heini Rickenbacher and Anna Till are:

- a. HANS HEINRICH (John, Henry, Jr.) RICKENBACHER, bapt. 7 Mar 1741,^[10, 11] d. 1810-20.^[16]

Baptized Hans Heinrich, he generally appears in the census records as John Rickenbacher as does his brother Johannes.

Census records indicate that Hans Heinrich may have had as many as five children (3 sons, 2 daughters), all currently unknown.^[16]

- b. NICHOLAS RICKENBACHER, born abt. 1747, married Mary Heckle, died 7 Jul 1812.^[17]

While we have no baptism record for Nicholas, there is no evidence of any other Rickenbachers in Orangeburg at this time who could be his parents. Nicholas was probably named after his maternal grandfather, Niclaus Till (he is the first Nicholas in this line). It is likely that he was baptized by the Rev Giessendanner and that his is one of the missing records implied by Salley (p. 92): "The parts, preserved and translated, of those records kept

up to the time when the younger Giessendanner went to England [Oct 1749] are very meagre and scattering, but those kept after his return [Mar 1750] are very complete."^[11]

Census records indicate that Nicholas and Mary may have had as many as eleven children (5-6 sons and 4-5 daughters)^[16] although we can name and prove only two.

- c. JOHANNES (John) RICKENBACHER, bapt. 19 Aug 1750,^[10,11] married Elizabeth Rowe, died 1810-20.^[16]

John Rikenbacker appears on Pay Abstract #27, Col. John Fisher's Regiment, Orangeburgh Militia, Capt. Samuel Rowe's Company, 30 Nov 1781 along with Jacob and Samuel Rikenbacker.^[19] (I assume this is Johannes but it could be Hans Heinrich.)

Census records indicate that Johannes and Elizabeth may have had as many as four children (1 son, 3 daughters)^[16] although we can name only two.

- d. ELIZABETH RICKENBACHER, born 3 Jun 1753,^[10, 11] married John Mack abt. 1759 per Mack family records.
- e. ANNE CATHARINA RICKENBACHER, born 10 Aug 1756.^[10, 11]

Some sources say Anne Catharina (as Anne Catharina Baker) married John G. Varn. Other sources dispute.

- f. SAMUEL RICKENBACKER, born abt. 1760, died aft. 1820.

Samuel Rikenbacker appears on Pay Abstract #27, Col. John Fisher's Regiment, Orangeburgh Militia, Capt. Samuel Rowe's Company, 30 Nov 1781 along with John and Jacob Rikenbacker.^[19] Since militia ages were between 16 and 60, he was born before 1765. I've assigned a birth of abt. 1760 to put him in the obvious gap between Anne Catharina and Jacob. There is a small possibility that Samuel could be the son of Hans Heinrich.

Samuel also appears in the 1820 census as a single white male aged 45+ in a household with 29 slaves.^[20]

- g. JACOB RICKENBACKER, born abt. 10 Dec 1763,^[18] married Margaret C. Rowe abt. 1740, died 11 Feb 1841.^[18]

Although we have no baptism record for Jacob, we rely on Salley's quote (p. 67) from the writing of John Lucas: "The said Jacob Rikenbacker [the grandfather of Donald and John C. Rowe] was the son of the first Rikenbacker that came to this country from Germany."^[11] Since Jacob was born over 20 years after the death of Heinrich, he must be the son of Heini, the only other Rikenbacker to come from abroad.

Jacob Rikenbacker appears on Pay Abstract #27, Col. John Fisher's Regiment, Orangeburgh Militia, Capt. Samuel Rowe's Company, 30 Nov 1781 along with John and Samuel Rikenbacker.^[19]

Jacob and his wife were buried in the old Rickenbacker burial ground in the vicinity of Club Acres. Their tombstones were move to Memorial Park Cemetery in the 1950's.

The surname is consistently spelled Rickenbacher in the Swiss Church Book records and by Rev. Giessendanner. A few Swiss government records used the variant Riggenbacher. Many variant spellings of the name are found in the early American records, but family records have used only three: Rickenbacher, Rickenbacker, and Rickenbaker. Current spellings in Switzerland are Rickenbacher and Riggenbach. Riggenbacher has fallen into disuse.

REFERENCES:

1. Evangelische-Reformierte Kirch Kilchberg (Basel), "Kirchenbuch, 1559-1911", FHL INTL Film #953142.
2. Evangelische-Reformierte Kirch Bubendorf (Basel), "Kirchenbuch, 1529-1870", FHL INTL Film #953112.
3. Evangelische-Reformierte Kirch Pratteln-Augst (Basel), "Kirchenbuch, 1625-1879", FHL INTL Film #953182.
4. Swiss Archives, Auction of Heini Rickenbacher's effects, Bezirksschreiberei-Archiv BSA Sissach, Bd 133 01.01 (1730-1760), Folio 59.ff.
5. Swiss Archives, ProtoKolle des Kleinen Rats 106, fol. 389 [Cited in Faust as RP].
6. Swiss Archives, Gerichtsarchiv V 21, pp 39, 40 [Cited in Faust as GAV].
7. Swiss Archives, Auswanderung A1, report from 18 Dec 1734 [Cited in Faust as AA].
8. A. B. Faust and G. M. Brumbaugh, *Lists of Swiss immigrants in the Eighteenth Century to the American Colonies, Vol. II*, pp 90, 91
9. SC Archives, *The South-Carolina Gazette*, July 19, 1735 & July 26, 1735..
10. Joop Giesendanner, "The Book of Record, Orangeburgh, SC". <http://www.xs4all.nl/~sail/>.
11. A. S. Salley, *The History of Orangeburg County, South Carolina*, pp 95, 96, 210.
12. SC Archives, Colonial Plats, Vol. 20, p 81, #1.
13. SC Archives, Colonial Plats, Vol, 20, p 562, #1, Vol. 17, p. 383, p.384.

14. SC Archives, Accounts Audited, 6401 Rickenbacker, Mrs. Ann.
 15. SC Archives, Accounts Audited, 6402 Rickenbacker, Henry.
 15. SC Archives, Accounts Audited, 6402 Rickenbacker, Henry.
 16. United States Census, South Carolina, Orangeburgh District, 1790, 1800, 1810, 1820.
 17. S. E. Rickenbacker, Family Bible.
 18. Memorial Park Cemetery, Tombstone of Jacob Rickenbacker.
 19. Murtie June Clark, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War: Vol.I*, p. 202.
 20. United States Census, South Carolina, 1820, Microfilm: M33-118, p. 221A.
- Other references to this surname are found in OGSGS Newsletters: Vol 1, #11, p.56; Vol. 1, #22 p127.

Information provided by Jim Rickenbacker 11/17/02, updated 8/28/03 and 2/6/05.

Family Migration

During the early and mid-Nineteenth century many descendants of the early Orangeburgh area families migrated to Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Arkansas, Texas, Mississippi, Louisiana and other points west. The information we have provided about a family's migration to another state is an attempt to document those migrations in order to assist family researchers in connecting their ancestors back to Orangeburgh or account for missing branches of their families.

At this time, we have no record of descendants with this surname having migrated to other states. If you have updated information, please share your documents with the Orangeburgh Genealogical Society.

Please help maintain, correct and expand these pages. Send comments, corrections, updates and additions to: migrations@ogsgs.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: An initial implementation of these pages (and most of the information for them) was created by Gene Jeffries and published on this web site about 2002. The pages were removed from the web site when maintaining and updating the many files proved too onerous. With Gene's consent, we are republishing these files as an aid to Orangeburgh researchers and are working on streamlining the maintenance and update process.

DISCLAIMER: The family information included in Orangeburgh Family Migrations was compiled from a variety of sources, many of which are not documented. These pages have not been checked for accuracy and should not be treated as authoritative documentation on these families. They are provided as a hopefully helpful source of leads to further research into these families.