



## Orangeburgh Genealogical Society

### First Families of Orangeburgh District (SC)

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# OTT

## (OTH, OTTH)

### RESEARCH NOTE:

Many histories<sup>[1]</sup> trace the OTT line of Orangeburgh to an immigrant named MELCHIOR OTT, and assume that there was only one immigrant of this name. However, records in both South Carolina and Switzerland indicate that there were two men of this name, of almost exactly the same age, who immigrated to South Carolina from adjacent Swiss parishes.<sup>[3]</sup> Most, and probably all, of the OTT families of Orangeburgh District derive from one of these two men. - mj

### **First Family Biographies**

#### *MELCHIOR OTT OF MEIRINGEN*

1. MELCHIOR OTT was born in the parish of Meiringen in Oberhasli District, Canton Bern, Switzerland, and was baptized there on 16 Feb 1699.<sup>[4]</sup> He was the son of HANS OTTH and ANNA IMDORFF. He died on 23 Oct 1755 in Orangeburgh District, South Carolina.<sup>[1, 2]</sup> He married a woman of uncertain name<sup>[4]</sup> in Meiringen, probably in 1719.

The Meiringen parish registers record two marriages for men of this generation named Melchior Ott, with no indication as to which one applies to our Melchior: on 19 Jan 1719 to Anna Nägeli, and on 9 Nov 1719 to Barbara Balmer.<sup>[4]</sup>

Melchior Ott immigrated to South Carolina in one of the first ships of Swiss and German settlers, probably the Samuel, which arrived in Charleston on 13 Jul 1735.<sup>[5]</sup> On 31 October of that year, he was granted 350 acres of land on the Edisto River,<sup>[6]</sup> the typical allocation for a household of seven persons. The land was located at the western corner of Orangeburgh Township. Melchior also received town lot 55 on Fenwick Street in Orangeburgh township.<sup>[7]</sup> Rev. John Giessendanner referred to this Melchior Ott as a weaver.<sup>[2]</sup>

All of Melchior's children were probably born in Switzerland during the period 1719-1735. Unfortunately, the Meiringen baptism register for that period is lost, and we have no proof of this Melchior's family. However, since we have what appears to be a complete list of the "other" Melchior's children (see below), and since no other Ott received a land grant in the first generation of settlers in Orangeburgh, it is likely that any unaccounted Otts in the second generation belong to this Melchior.

Children of Melchior Ott of Meiringen and his unknown wife are:

- a. HANS OTT, perhaps born around 1720 in Meiringen, may have witnessed two baptisms in the Giessendanner record, in 1739 and 1742.<sup>[2]</sup> He then vanishes. Both baptism records are poorly legible, and Hans might not have existed at all.
- b. MELCHOIR OTT, JR., born probably in the early 1720s in Meiringen; died 1770-1771 in Orangeburgh, South Carolina.<sup>[8]</sup> He married (1) Unknown, by whom he had at least two sons named Jacob and Abraham;<sup>[8]</sup> he married (2) Isabella Catherina Schellinger.<sup>[9]</sup>

Melchior Jr paid a quitrent in 1770; his son Jacob paid it on the estate of Melchior Ott in 1771.<sup>[8]</sup>

- c. JACOB OTT, born probably in the mid-to late 1720s in Meiringen; died probably between 1790-1800 in Orangeburgh, South Carolina as he appears in the 1790 census (p. 334) but not in the 1800 census. He married Margaret Fichtner on 3 Dec 1754 in Orangeburgh.<sup>[1, 2]</sup> They had at least two children, Jacob<sup>[1, 2]</sup> and an unknown girl whose name may have been Mary.<sup>[1, 2]</sup>
- d. ESTHER OTT, born probably around 1730 in Meiringen; died probably in Newberry District, South Carolina. She married John (Johannes) Heller on 26 Sep 1752 in Orangeburgh, South Carolina;<sup>[1, 2]</sup> they had a daughter named Ann,<sup>[1, 2]</sup> and may have had sons named Jacob and John.

### *MELCHIOR OTT OF GUTTANNEN*

2. MELCHIOR OTT was born in the parish of Hasli-im-Grund in Oberhasli District, Canton Bern, Switzerland, and was baptized there on 12 Feb 1699.<sup>[4]</sup> He was the son of CASPAR OTT and MAGDALENA ABBÜHL. He died on 9 Mar 1758 in Orangeburgh District, South Carolina.<sup>[1, 2]</sup> He married (1) MARGRETH VON BERGEN in Hasli-im-Grund parish on 23 Nov 1722.<sup>[4]</sup> Margreth died in Hasli-im-Grund parish on 7 Apr 1742.<sup>[4]</sup> He married (2) ANNA BARBARA (STRAUMANN) ZÄNGER, widow of Simon Zänger, in Orangeburgh on 19 Feb 1746/7.<sup>[1, 2]</sup> Anna Barbara died in Orangeburgh on 21 Mar 1759.<sup>[1, 2]</sup>

Melchior Ott lived in the town of Guttannen, in Hasli-im-Grund parish.<sup>[10]</sup> In 1744, he paid an emigration tax to the Swiss authorities and set out for America.<sup>[11]</sup> His ship was captured by the Spanish and Melchior and his family spent nearly two years in prison in Havana, before an English

merchant named Park Pepper bribed their way out.<sup>[12]</sup> They finally arrived in South Carolina, penniless, in 1746. Melchior evidently had some serious debts to work off before he could receive his land grant. He finally petitioned for land on 8 Febr 1751,<sup>[13]</sup> and was granted 350 acres, indicating a household of seven; the household included Melchior, his second wife Anna Barbara, her daughter Barbara from her previous marriage, and four of Melchior's six children. His land was located on "Pork Swamp". (No plat or survey for this land grant has been found, however, a 1776 deed of sale of the land by Melchior's son Caspar Ott describes it as being "on Pork Swamp in Berkley County.")

Children of Melchior Ott of Guttannen and Margreth von Bergen are:

- a. MAGDALENA OTT, baptized on 12 Mar 1724/5 in Hasli-im-Grund Parish, Oberhasli District, Switzerland.<sup>[4]</sup> There is no record of her in South Carolina; she may have remained in Switzerland when her father emigrated.
- b. CASPAR OTT, baptized on 7 Jan 1728 in Hasli-im-Grund Parish, Oberhasli District, Switzerland.<sup>[4]</sup> He married Maria Stehely in Orangeburgh on 19 Dec 1752;<sup>[1, 2]</sup> they had at least six children: Margaret, Hans George, Maria, Mary Elizabeth,<sup>[1, 2]</sup> Caspar Jr., and Jacob.

Caspar Jr is a likely child based on the fact that he is living next door to Caspar Sr on the 1790 census for Orangeburgh District (page 95). For Jacob, see Mark James, "The Nine Jacob Ott's of Orangeburgh, South Carolina."<sup>[17]</sup>

- c. MELCHIOR OTT, JR., baptized on 12 Mar 1730 in Hasli-im-Grund Parish, Oberhasli District, Switzerland.<sup>[4]</sup> He remained in Switzerland and died there in 1781.<sup>[4]</sup>
- d. HANS (or JOHN) OTT, baptized on 2 Nov 1732 in Hasli-im-Grund Parish, Oberhasli District, Switzerland.<sup>[4]</sup> No marriage or death record for John survives, although he appears frequently in land and church records in Orangeburgh.
- e. PETER OTT, baptized on 28 Aug 1735 in Meiringen Parish, Oberhasli District, Switzerland.<sup>[4]</sup> He married Anna Magdalena Tapp in Orangeburgh, South Carolina.<sup>[14]</sup> Land records suggest a family of six,<sup>[15]</sup> but the names of his children are unknown.

We know about this marriage only because Peter Ott sold the land that his late wife had inherited from her grandfather; the relationship is described in the deed of sale.<sup>[14]</sup>

- f. ULRICH OTT, baptized on 27 Jul 1738 in Hasli-im-Grund Parish, Oberhasli District, Switzerland.<sup>[4]</sup> He married Barbara (maiden name unknown) in Orangeburgh, South Carolina;<sup>[1, 2]</sup> they had at least two children, Elizabeth<sup>[1, 2]</sup> and William.<sup>[16]</sup>

William's parentage is attested in an 1806 deed of gift in which William disposes of land that "devolved upon the said William Ott after the demise of his father Ulrich Ott."<sup>[16]</sup>

Melchior Ott of Guttannen and Anna Barbara (Straumann) Zänger had no children of their own, but raised Anna Barbara's daughter Barbara, from her previous marriage to Simon Zänger. Barbara Zänger married John Geiger<sup>[14]</sup> of "Weberite Heresy" fame.

## REFERENCES:

1. A. S. Salley, *History of Orangeburg County, South Carolina*, Reprint 1994.
2. Joop Giesendanner, "The Book of Record, Orangeburgh, SC". (<http://www.xs4all.nl/~sail/>.)
3. Mark James, "One Melchior Ott or Two?" (<https://freepages.rootsweb.com/~tmark/genealogy/OttMels.html>)
4. John Häppi, "Ott Family Entries from the Swiss Parish Registers of Oberhasli District" (report for J. Wayne Hilton, Graniteville, SC), 25 August 1994, pp. 5,6.
5. *South Carolina Gazette*, issue 77, dated 12-19 July 1735.
6. SC Archives, Colonial Plats (Melcher Ott), Ser. S213184, Vol. 0016, Pg. 00557, Itm. 02
7. Margaret Waters, *A Preliminary Study of the Colonial Landowners of Orangeburgh Township, SC, 1733-1749*, (Savannah, GA, 2002), pp. 34, 35.
8. Theresa Hicks and Frances S. Osburn, *South Carolina Quitrents 1772-1773-1774*, (Columbia, SC: 1998), pp. 69, 143, 189.
9. Theresa Hicks, E-mail message dated 29 September 1996 (via Gene Jeffries) to the Orangeburgh\_SC-L mailing list.
10. Oberhasli Amtsrechnung, 1722 - 1752 (Oberhasli District Tax Records), p. 5
11. A. B. Faust and G. M. Brumbaugh, *Lists of Swiss Emigrants in the Eighteenth Century to the American Colonies*, (Washington, D.C.: 1920), volume II, p. 27.
12. South Carolina Council Journal, volume 1745-1746, pages 144-146 (entry dated 31 July 1746).
13. Brent Holcomb, *Petitions for Land from the South Carolina Council Journals. Vol. II: 1748-1752*. 1997, p. 171.
14. Clara A. Langley, *South Carolina Deed Abstracts 1719-1772*, (Easley, S.C.: Southern Historical Press, 1983), volume IV, pp. 151, 254.
15. SC Archives, Colonial Plats (Melcher Ott), Ser. S213184, Vol. 0019, Pg. 00014, Itm. 01
16. South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Miscellaneous Records, volume 4L, pp. 271, 272.

17. Mark James, "The Nine Jacob Otts of Orangeburgh, South Carolina"

Other references to this surname are found in OSGSG Newsletters: Vol. 1 #4 p. 24, Vol. 2 # 12, p. 157, Vol. 4 # 1 p. 7, Vol. 4 #2 p. 14, Vol. 4 #3 p. 19, Vol. 5 #5 p 96

**Information provided by Mark James 05/20/04.**

## **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.

Some members of the OTT family migrated to Mississippi. See Orangeburgh Migrations Project for more information.

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