

The Origin and History of the Minich / Minnick Family and Name.

The name Münch, as originally spelled, means "monk" or "friar." It was derived from an estate, purchased from an order of monks in France. The diaeresis or "umlaut" over the name Münch has the effect of "ue" (Muench). The name Minnick is chiefly of German and Swiss origin, meaning, "one who led an austere existence."

In the early part of the 18th Century, British subjects outnumbered all other immigrants in Pennsylvania. All other subjects were classed as "Foreigners" and some were compelled to spell their names in conformity with the English language; thus the name Minich or Minnick. This may explain in part, the spelling of our name Minnick. But all are from the same origin.

The early Munchs were Catholics. During the reign of Louis XIV, in France, a Baron Munch, who had embraced the Calvinistic religion and was a powerful factor in the Huguenot political party, was stripped of all his possessions, his chateau burned and he was among those massacred. His kinsman, after the dissolution of the title, fled to Germany after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, 1685. Some of the younger men joined the armies at war with France and others, when the opportunity opened later, united with the Palatines and came to America with their families.

In the 18th century, a great exodus from the southern part of Germany along the Rhine River, better known as the Palatinate, took place. The Palatinate described as a most beautiful country, highly cultivated fields, vine-clad hills, and the enchanting scenery ceased to exist in 1801. About 30,000 Germans and Switzers landed in Philadelphia between the years 1727 and 1776. Their towns and villages had been burned, their property confiscated or destroyed, their churches and schools ruined, and finding no peace or security in their own land, they fled from this tyranny and religious persecution to make a home in the New World.

In 1681, the British Crown owed Admiral Penn, William Penn's father, a debt of 16,000 pounds. To liquidate this debt, King Charles II granted William Penn 40,000 square miles of territory in America. This province was later known as Pennsylvania. Penn, also a victim of religious intolerance and persecution, sympathized with the Rhinelanders and invited them to come to Pennsylvania where he assured them the right to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience.

This journey took from four to six months and was marked with much suffering and hardship. The trip down the Rhine was tedious and exhausting because the boats had to pass by numerous custom houses and delays were long and costly. By the time they left Holland, the passengers' food supply and money were greatly depleted.

Thence to the English port of Cowes on the Isle of Wight. Here they faced another long delay either because of customs or waiting for favorable winds.

The third stage of the journey was the long voyage across the Atlantic Ocean, perhaps eight to twelve weeks depending on the winds. The passengers suffered from over-crowded conditions, hunger, disease, raging storms and fear. Not being prepared for such hardships, many did not survive.

When they finally landed at Philadelphia, they experienced new problems. Before leaving the ship, a health officer checked every passenger before they were marched to City Hall to render the oath of

allegiance to the King of England. Arriving back to the ship they faced the problem of paying for their passage and very few had enough money left to satisfy this demand. The ship then became a "market place" where buyers came to make their selections and bargain with the newcomers. After paying their passage and other debts, the buyers received a document from the government which made these "foreigners", as they were called by the English, their property for a definite period of time.

However, these new settlers kept coming in spite of the hardships they had to endure. After their years of service, they emerged as successful farmers and by working together they transformed the land into the America of today. One of the first things to claim their attention was to establish their faith. The strongest denominations were German Reformed, Lutheran, and Mennonite, but there were also many Presbyterians who united with them in the erection of a house of worship. These ancestors inherited the blessings of religious thought and habit and were happy to live in a free world.

Johan Simon Muench (was among the passengers on the ship *The Samuel*, which landed in Philadelphia on August 30, 1737. In the publication "Pennsylvania German Pioneers", Vol. 1, we find Simon on three ship rosters:

[List 44 A] A List of Men Passengers of Sixteen Years of Age & Upwards Imported in the Ship Samuel, Hugh Percy, Master from Rotterdam. [Qualified August 30, 1737.]

[List 44 B] Palatines imported in the Ship Samuel, Hugh Percy, Master, from Rotterdam, but last from Cowes. Qualified the 30th day of August 1737.

[List 44C] At the Courthouse of Philad August 30th 1737. Present The Honble James Logan, Esqr, President, Clement Plumsted, Ralph Assheton, Thomas Laurence, William Allen. The Palatines whose Names are underwritten, imported in the Ship Samuel, Hugh Percy, Master, from Rotterdam, but last from Cowes, did this day take & subscribe the Oaths to the Government.

He was listed as Simon Minech.

Unfortunately many captains of ships at that time failed to submit a complete passenger list, they thought that listing only male members, 16 years of age and older, was all that was required. Therefore, the names of the women and children were omitted.

<http://www.searchforancestors.com/passengerlists/history.html>

<http://www.brumbaughwise.com/history-1/palatine-ships>

<http://berks.pa-roots.com/library/church/ChristLittleTulpehocken.html>