

Wunderthäuser in Oxford

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The most important settlement point in America for emigrants from Wunderthausen was Wheatland, Iowa, but the area around Oxford, New Jersey, in Warren County also served as both a destination and a way station. Warren County is in the western part of the state, thus close to the Delaware River and the state of Pennsylvania. Earlier emigrants usually came in from the port of Baltimore to the south. In later years, they were apt to pass through New York instead.

Even in the early 1800s, industry and mining were important parts of the economy of the area. This is one important contrast to the farm economy around Wheatland, which even today remains a sparsely populated rural area. Furthermore, the Wunderthäuser in Wheatland were numerous enough to form a "critical mass" with their own institutions (notably St. Paul's Church and Cemetery). The emigrants to Oxford were close to each other and accommodated kinsmen who came later, but their descendants no longer constitute a community.

For this paper, I have had to rely primarily on the schedules of the United States Census, limited family records, and on records from Wunderthausen. I do not have a source of information on births, deaths, marriages in New Jersey at this time. What I can offer is a brief listing of the Wunderthäuser who we either know to have lived at Oxford, or who we suspect did so.

The paper is organized around the traditional house names used in Wunderthausen (e.g. Mannes).

* Indicates birth

+ Indicates death

geb. Indicates a woman's maiden name (German, geboren)

Known to Have Lived at Oxford

From Mannes

The Potts and Strackbeins from Mannes are at the center of the Wunderthausen emigration to Oxford. At least three children of Johannes Pott (*1789, +1856) and Elisabeth Wilhelmine Riedesel (*1803, +1878) settled around Oxford, as did two or more of their grandchildren.

Johannes Pott, *January 8, 1827. Probably came to America between 1850 and 1860 where he was known as John Pott. He was still single in 1860 and living with the family of his brother, George, but married shortly thereafter. His wife's name was Christiana Hirt, and she was born about 1841 in Berne, Switzerland. They had at least four children. John (Senior) worked in the mines and was still alive as of 1897 when a sister and nephew from Wheatland, Iowa, visited. Both are buried in the Jonestown Hillside Cemetery, Warren County, NJ. He died in 1910, and she in 1906.

Johann Georg Pott, * July 13, 1834. Family records say that he came to America when he was 18, or about 1852, and he was naturalized in September of 1859. He was known as George Pott. George was married twice and had children from each marriage. His first wife's name was Eliza

Lienebach, and she was born about 1836 in the German states. They were married in the late 1850s, and she died about 1872. His second wife, born Mary Johanna Glashner or Glasner, was a widow with small children who also lived with them (name Teal). She was born about 1840 in Weimar. George died in 1913. [Click here](#) for a photo of George and Mary's grave markers in the Jonestown Hillside Cemetery near Oxford Furnace, NJ.

Anna Catherine Pott, *February 13, 1831. Came to America some time between 1853 and 1854. She married Johann Franz Schneider from Hanphilipses in New Jersey in 1854; they had had a child together in Wunderthausen. By the late 1850s the family had moved to Wheatland.

Wilhelmine Pott, *October 7, 1836. Family records hint that two other sisters came to New Jersey and married Strackbein men. I have no evidence one way or the other, but there is no record of Wilhelmine's death in Wunderthausen. It is unclear which other daughters of the family could have emigrated. Two who we believe remained in Germany did marry Strackbein brothers.

The oldest child of Johannes and Wilhelmine (geb. Riedesel) Pott was Anna Elisabeth (*1822). She married Ludwig Heinrich Strackbein (*1818 Kurts, +1869) in 1844, and they became the owners of Mannes. Four of their children went to America. I have been able to place three of them in Oxford. The fourth may well have passed through Oxford.

Johannes Strackbein, *June 2, 1845. He married Anna Elisabeth Homrighausen in Wunderthausen in 1872. She was born May 22, 1850 in Brückeschneiders. By 1874 they were living in New Jersey; they had at least five children. He was known as John and worked in a blast furnace.

Johann Georg Strackbein, *May 4, 1854. Family records say that he left Germany in 1881 and lived for at least a while at Oxford before moving on to Wheatland and points west in Iowa.

Johann Heinrich Strackbein, *May 27, 1862. He was living with his brother, John, in New Jersey as of 1880 and working in the mines. He was known as Henry.

From Wetzels

Georg Ludwig Riedesel, *May 13, 1817. He was one of the youngest of many children from the three marriages of Johannes Riedesel (*1762), and a half-brother of John Rittase (see below). It is not clear when he came to Oxford, but it was probably in 1837. Here he was known as Louis/Lewis Radle or Riedel or Rudle or Riddle. Had at least seven children from his marriage to a German-born wife, Caroline, and three or more with a second wife Catherine. As of 1850 he was a laborer. He died February 27, 1903 and is buried in what is now the lower Hazen Cemetery.

Anna Catherine Riedesel, *April 22, 1815. She was the sister of "Louis Radle" and the wife of "George Radle" from Seimes/Weißkopfs. She came to America in 1837, and was still alive in 1900.

From Gründchen

Georg Ludwig Lauber, *November 6, 1844. Ludwig was the son of Johann Georg Lauber and Catherine Pott (and through his mother, the nephew of several earlier settlers at Oxford). He came to America in 1865, apparently without the company of other Wunderthäuser. Several of his letters home survive and have been published. He was an industrial worker and met an early death in an accident on December 31, 1873. In 1869, he had married an Elisabeth Riedesel, daughter of Ludwig (whom I assume to be Ludwig Riedesel of Wetzels).

Almost certainly from Weymers

Another Wunderthausen Riedesel underwent a name change in New Jersey.

Johannes Riedesel. "John Radle" had come to Oxford by about 1840 and married a German-born woman named Maria Catherine Repp. Although he and his children were known as Radle, later generations were not unaware of the Riedesel origins. By 1860, the family had moved to Wheatland, Iowa. Catherine died and was buried at Wheatland in 1869. The widowed father and children moved on Cherokee, Iowa, shortly thereafter. He died June 30, 1873 at Cherokee. All evidence points to a Johannes Riedesel who was born October 28, 1810 in Wunderthausen.

From Hanphilippes

At least four children of Johann Philipp Schneider (*1788) and Maria Amalia Riedesel (*1789) came to America. They settled at Wheatland, but one or more of them lived for a period in New Jersey. We are certain only about one.

Johann Franz Schneider, *October 27, 1829. He and Anna (geb. Pott) and their daughter Anna (*June 17, 1853) came to the U.S. in 1854. They were married on August 3, 1854 in New Jersey. As of 1860 they were still living in New Jersey, but moved to Iowa shortly thereafter. Franz died on July 10, 1892 and Anna Catherine on July 18, 1910, both at Wheatland. They had eight children in all.

From Seimes/Weißkopfs

Two generations from this house emigrated to Oxford.

Johann Georg Riedesel, *November 3, 1810. He was known in America as George Radle, but his last name and those of his five children varied widely. Riddle was apparently used, but he was also called Ritesel after the Wunderthausen dialect. I cannot locate him in the 1880 Census and presume he was deceased by then. He married Anna Catherine Riedesel from Wetzels (see above).

The older brother of George Radle remained in Wunderthausen and inherited Seimes/Weißkopfs. He was Georg Ludwig Riedesel (*1801), and married Maria Catherine Homrighausen (*1810) from Linde. Three of their children went to America, and we know that these two lived at Oxford.

Florentine Riedesel, *December 23, 1843. Came to America in 1871 and married Heinrich Baumgartner in Oxford.

Anna Catherine Riedesel, *May 5, 1853. Came to America in 1871 and married Karl Busch in Oxford. They were still living there in 1900. She had had seven children, though only four were living.

From Lotzes

Two sons of the marriage of Johann Georg Fuchs (*1792) and Elisabeth Amalia Knoche (*1796) came to America in the early 1850s. They lived among their relatives in Oxford before heading west in 1856 to search for gold; eventually they settled in Wheatland, Iowa.

Johann Georg Fuchs, *February 7, 1825. Came to America in 1851 and lived at Oxford. He was known as George Fox. Never married.

Georg Ludwig Fuchs, *January 18, 1828. Joined his brother in New Jersey in 1854. They went to California in 1856 to dig for gold, but came to Wheatland in 1871 where they spent the rest of their lives. The younger brother was known as Louis Fox and married Anna Catherine Schneider (*June 17, 1853) from Hansphilippes. After she died on March 19, 1876 he married Katherine Wilhelmine Homrighausen (*October 9, 1856, Diedenshausen). Louis died on February 16, 1904 and his second wife on March 2, 1941, both in Wheatland.

May Have Lived at Oxford

From Mannes.

The earliest known child of this house to go to America was Catherine Elisabeth Pott (*November 28, 1793). She came to America with Johannes Riedesel (Wetzels) in 1814 or 1815. They eventually settled in Adams County, Pennsylvania, but it is possible that they lived at Oxford as well. They took the name Rittase.

One other son of Johannes and Elisabeth Amalia (geb. Pott) Strackbein is known to have gone to America, but may or may not have lived at Oxford for a period of time.

Georg Friedrich Strackbein, *November 25, 1859, settled in Battle Creek, Iowa.

From Wetzels

The first known child of this house to come to America was Johannes Riedesel, *September 15, 1787. He married Catherine Elisabeth Pott of Mannes in about 1815, apparently in the U.S. They settled eventually at Littlestown in Adams County, Pennsylvania. By the time of his death, he was going by the name of John Rittase, and that name was used by subsequent generations. John died November 3, 1855 and Catherine died in 1866. I have no direct evidence that they lived in New Jersey, but is it only a coincidence that many from later generations in both families did converge on Oxford?

From Kurts

The Pott connection from Mannes continued through this house. Two daughters of Johannes and Elisabeth Wilhelmine (geb. Riedesel) Pott married two Strackbein brothers from Kurts. The latter were the sons of Ludwig Heinrich Strackbein (*1789) and Maria Elisabeth Strackbein

(*1800). We have reported above on the marriage of Ludwig Heinrich Strackbein (*1818) and Anna Elisabeth Pott (*1822).

Johannes Strackbein (*1824) married Elisabeth Amalia Pott (*1833) in 1853. Their son Johann Georg Strackbein, *July 23, 1857, settled at Wheatland where he married the American-born Louisa Strackbein, *August 31, 1865. It is possible that he stayed for a while with his cousins in Oxford.

From Hanphilippes

One of their siblings, Johann Franz Schneider, lived for a period in Oxford, so it is possible that these emigrants from Wunderthausen did so as well.

Johann Georg Schneider, *October 6, 1817. He came to U.S. in about 1857 with his wife Elisabeth Florentine Mörchen, *April 10, 1824. With them were their children:

- * Johann Georg Schneider, *August 2, 1848
- * Catharine Schneider, *May 10, 1854
- * Christine Schneider, *April 25, 1856

George Schneider died March 9, 1890 at Wheatland, and his wife on January 24, 1905.

Florentine Schneider, *November 16, 1819. She married Heinrich Fey of Girkhausen, and after his death in 1866 she brought at least four children to America. She died February 24, 1894 at Wheatland. Their emigrant children were:

- * Anna Elisabeth Fey, *April 27, 1840
- * Johann Georg Fey, *October 23, 1848
- * Johann Heinrich Fey, *May 21, 1856
- * Philipp Fey, *November 5, 1859

Ludwig Heinrich Schneider, *December 2, 1826. He came to the U.S. in 1857 where he was known as Henry. He and his wife Florentine Beitzel of Hinter der Huthe (*January 10, 1831) brought at least two children to America. Henry died April 18, 1889 and Florentine died November 5, 1911, both at Wheatland. Their emigrant children were:

- * Johann Heinrich Schneider, *August 16, 1854
- * Catherine Florentine Schneider, *January 24, 1857

From Seimes/Weißkopfs

Heinrich Friederich Riedesel, *January 11, 1856. He was the brother of Florentine and Anna Catherine Riedesel whom we know settled in Oxford. Little is known about him other than that he died in 1931 in Osage County, Kansas. It is logical to suppose that he stayed for a while with his uncle or sisters in New Jersey before moving west.