

## Notes Pertaining to

### Men Named Jacob Sommer in Early PHL

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Besides differentiating the Georg Sommers of my line from other people of that name and time (see my article, "*Differentiating Sommer Surnames*," 30 Nov 2012), I've also been seeing a lot of mixing-up of the person named Jacob Sommer. This article talks about the three individuals of that name living in the PHL area from 1750-1850.

#### ***My Sommer Family – Freistett, Germany***

Three brothers from my Sommer family came on PHL from Friestett, Baden, Germany aboard the ship Brothers in 1752, namely Hans Georg, Johannes (John), and Martin. The sources that support these conclusions are:

- church records from PHL and NJ
- church records from Freistett
- passenger records

We know that Georg Sommer (1722-1785) lived in Lower Dublin and Smithfield (later called Somerton) before moving to Sussex, New Jersey, from where my line descends. His brother Johannes (John) Sommer (1724-1792), lived in Moreland and Byberry, married to Anna Eva, and had only one child who survived, **Jacob Sommer (1758-1827)**, and who was, besides being a farmer, also a lay judge. I believe the other brother, Martin Sommer, (1729-1799), married Margaretha, lived in Lower Dublin and Moreland, and had several children from 1764-1784, of whom we know little about. All these people, however, can be associated with the St. Michael's and Zion Lutheran Church in Philadelphia.

#### ***Sommer Family of Germantown - Carriage Makers***

**Jacob Sommer who was a carriage maker in Germantown lived from 1749-1817.** According to Findagrave, his parents were Johann Sommer and Anna Margaretha Frobisch – this information is not sourced and it's not clear where Jacob was born, and if not in America, then when he came to America. Nevertheless, this Jacob Sommer supposedly married Anna Marie (Mary) Dauber in 1772, and participated in the Revolution in the rank of Captain. He died in 1817, and his wife Mary died in 1827, leaving their property to their son, Jacob Jr. who then sold the property in 1829. This Jacob Sommer Jr, whose dates are believed to be 1775-1842, married supposedly Elizabeth Bright.

Jacob Sommer Sr. of this line had a brother named Leonard Sommer 1759-1836, who married Elisabeth Phelps (Phillips or Phillipi), and served in the Revolution. He can be found in the 1790 census in Germantown but after that he was in Harrisburg where he was noted as being a coach maker.

Leonard had a son, Jacob Sommer, 1781-1860, who married Catherine Schaeffer, and they moved to Baltimore where supposedly an establishment called Jacob & Sons Coach Making was run until after the Civil War.

The sources for this information are admittedly secondary:

"*Genealogical Notes*" on ancestry.com

"*History of Old Germantown with a Description of Its Settlement....*", p. 199-200, partially available on google books.

## **Sommer Family of Hamburg – PHL Merchant**

**John Jacob Sommer 1769-1847 was a merchant from Hamburg**, who married Susannah Louisa Ginder, a third cousin of my ancestor Ernst Menge. Not much else is known about the origin of this Jacob Sommer other than references to Hamburg. He was naturalized in PHL in 1798, and presumably arrived before that, but when and from where is not known.

## **Different Jacob Sommer's**

This section will focus on the first two men named Jacob Sommer, since those are the two who are most often confused.

There were two Jacob Sommer's of about the same age in the same area enumerated in the 1800 census.

1. Jacob, the Carriage-Maker, 1749-1817, found in the 1790-1810 censuses of Germantown, parents supposedly named Johannes and Anna Margaretha, which can only be corroborated by the baptism record of Jacob's presumed brother, Leonard in 1763 (St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Germantown).
2. Jacob, the Judge, 1758-1827, the son of Johannes Sommer of Freistett, and his wife Anna Eva, was born and baptized in PHL, and can be found in the 1800-1820 censuses of Moreland where his father, John Sommer, had been enumerated in 1790. This Jacob's will leaves his many properties to his son, Dr. John Sommer.

The source "*Genealogical Notes*," as well as other undocumented sources out there say that the father of Jacob Sommer the Carriage-Maker was named Johannes Sommer. Given that Carriage-Maker Jacob was born in 1749, I can see where it is tempting to say that Johannes Sommer from my line, 1724-1792, was Jacob the Carriage-Maker's father. Except that:

1. there are records of Johannes Sommer from both Freistett and Philadelphia showing his wife's name of Anna Eva. This is contrary to notes that say the wife of Johannes the Carriage-Maker was named Margaretha.
2. in 1768 there was a baptism record for Johannes Leonhard Sommer, son of Johannes and Anna Margaretha at the St. Michael's Evangelical Church in Germantown, which is evidence supporting the Carriage Maker story that Johannes Sommer was married to Anna Margaretha and not Anna Eva.
3. in the source, Names of Foreigners Who Took the Oath of Allegiance to the Province and State of Pennsylvania, 1727-1775, there were 3 Sommers on the Ship Brothers who arrived 22 Sep

1752. Johannes, Georg, and Martin - all known to be brothers from Freistett. At least one other name associated with my family, Jacob Braun, is found on the same passenger list. All of which is to say I don't believe that Johannes the Carriage-Maker arrived on the ship Brothers in Sep. 1752. More research would be required to establish his arrival.

4. I have the will for Jacob the Judge, who died in 1827 in Moreland. It mentions one son named Dr. John Sommer, and no mention of a wife nor any other children, and notably not one named Jacob. Additional sources say Jacob the Judge was 69 when he died, which lines up perfectly with the baptism record in 1758 for the son Jacob born to Johannes and Anna Eva Sommer. This is significant because there is supposedly a 10-year difference between the ages of Jacob the Judge and Jacob the Carriage-Maker, the latter being older.