



THE KUHRY-ZETTEL FAMILY

Compiled by Helen Ann Aaberg



The first weekend of Aug. 1986, will see a gathering of the Zettel family in Formosa, Ontario, Canada. There probably will be more than a hundred descendents of Lucas Zettel who was the first of the family to arrive in North America. Lucas is my great great grandfather.

My parents, Peter M. Kuhry and Elizabeth H. Zettel, came to Montana in 1915 settling in Great Falls. Elizabeth was born in Formosa, Ontario. Peter was born in Leighton, Michigan. After his mother's death when he was eight years old, his father and two children moved to Formosa. Peter and Elizabeth were married there and headed west to Medicine Hat, Alberta and several years later to Great Falls, Montana. Their move to Chester, Mont. was to have been of short duration, but fate in the form of a depression changed the business climate and they stayed on in Chester. Peter died in 1961 at age 82 and Elizabeth in 1970 at 86 years of age..

My genealogy research began about eight years ago. Like too many of us I waited until the search became more difficult--after the death of my parents. My Zettel research has been relatively easy with so many relatives to draw information from. The Kuhry family research is much more difficult. They seem not to be abundant in number and to date I've not encountered anyone searching that surname..

Elizabeth Zettel Kuhry was born in the little village of Formosa.. It was a predominantly German-Catholic settlement with lots of families being related and having come from Germany in the early 1800's. The Zettels were a musical family with several outstanding musicians in their lineage. Their main amusement was songfests and dancing. Elizabeth was also famed as a seamstress who not only sewed beautifully but who created her own designs..

The Zettels came to America in 1831. In a Bible the story of the journey is written telling how they drove by horse and wagon for three weeks from Schwaidorf, Rottenberg, Kingdom of Wuertenburg to LeHarve, France, to sail. They sold the horses and brought the wagon to America with them, the journey by water taking thirty-one days in a three masted ship. Lucas Zettel was 46 years of age when they left Germany, his wife, Monica Straub, was 40. Their seven children ranged in age from three to seventeen, my great grandfather, Andrew, among them. Andrew and his wife, Magdalene

Holrad, decided to settle in an area of Bruce County called Culross. They left their children except an infant with their families and set out for a new home carrying a sack of flour and the baby. They expected to return for the children in a short while. Instead, it took them two years to clear land of trees and brush, build a shack and lay claim to their land. When they did return they found a little daughter had died three weeks earlier. My grandfather, Lucas, was said to be the first white child born in their new settlement in 1854. Lucas married Helen Schuhmacher, my grandmother. Very little of the Schuhmacher history is known to me except that the father's name was Anton and the mother was Anne Marie Morbacher.

The Kuhry side of my ancestry has been more difficult to trace. My father's father, also named Peter, was born in Canada to Valentine Kuhry and Magdalene Fach or Foch. Valentine and several brothers came from Alsace, village unknown, to Canada in about 1840. Legend has it that they probably came from Strasbourg but were originally from Switzerland. The name is of Swiss origin. It is interesting to note that when the Kuhrys left Alsace it was under French rule but they considered themselves German. Some census lists will show their nationality French and others German. Magdalene died when my grandfather Peter was very young, and his father then married a Philippina Ohlheiser. The family farm was near St. Clements, Ontario in Waterloo County. It was near a farm owned by a Mennonite family- the Jabez Millers. Young Peter and Barbara Miller had eyes only for each other and despite the difference in religion and a move to Michigan by the Millers, they were married and also moved to Michigan.

Jabez Miller had come to Ontario from York County, Pennsylvania, where he was born in 1808 as was his father Abraham, born in 1769. The Millers were strong in their Mennonite belief and were against war, choosing to serve in ways other than bearing arms. Running supplies in their Conestoga wagons fulfilled their obligation to their new country. Most of these people had been given passage to America and, previously, sanctuary from oppression, by the Queen of England so they felt a strong sense of loyalty to the crown. When the war of 1812 erupted they decided this young nation was not a peaceful one and made plans to move to Canada. Again, their trip to "Upper Canada" was a harrowing one, traveled by Conestoga

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wagon through the mountains of Pennsylvania to the Niagara River where they used their wagons, chinked with clay and leaves, to ford the river in a strong current several miles above Niagara Falls. After the Civil War the state of Michigan offered a great opportunity to farmers to obtain land. They were eager to have the state settled and the land tilled, so the Miller family moved to land near Grand Rapids. Each member of the family had at least forty acres of land. The original Jabez Miller farm is still being farmed by a descendent. It was here that Peter Kuhry, my father, was born and resided the early years of his life. An epidemic of diptheria took the life of his mother and three siblings within two months. In mute testimony to the tragedy stands the grave markers in an almost abandoned cemetery near an abandoned country church they helped build.

One wonders in our journey through life what it was that shaped our destiny--our personality--our likes--our prejudices--our talents. Experts still argue whether environment or heredity is most responsible for who we are as individuals. In looking at the lives of my ancestors, I think I see some traits of mine and even my children that I might trace back to them. I doubt that I would ever have had the courage and strength they had to leave their homes and sail to a new land, but then, it was a different age. Perhaps future generations will look at all the new technology of our age and see in us something that we are not aware of. Perhaps they will think of us as strong and courageous. Perhaps.....

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Ancestor Chart

Person No. 1 on this chart is the same person as No. _____ on chart No. _____

Chart No. 1

b. Date of Birth
 p.b. Place of Birth
 m. Date of Marriage
 d. Date of Death
 p.d. Place of Death

4 Peter Kuhry
 (Father of No. 2)
 b. 1846
 p.b. Canada
 m. 26 Aug. 1845
 d. 21 Nov. 1914
 p.d. Formosa, Ont., Can.

2 Peter Miller Kuhry
 (Father of No. 1)
 b. 1 Oct. 1879
 p.b. Leighton, Mich.
 m. 26 Nov. 1912
 d. 13 Dec. 1961
 p.d. Chester, Montana

5 Barbara Miller
 (Mother of No. 2)
 b. 1 June 1852
 p.b. St. Clements, Ont.
 d. 15 Aug. 1887
 p.d. Leighton, Mich.

1 Helen Ann Kubry Aaberg
 b. _____
 p.b. Chester, MT
 m. _____
 d. _____
 p.d. _____

8 Lucas Zettel
 (Father of No. 3)
 b. Culross Twp., -Ont., Can.
 p.b. 1854
 m. 1880
 d. 23 July, 1941
 p.d. Formosa, Ont., Can.

3 Elizabeth H. Zettel
 (Mother of No. 1)
 b. 31 Aug. 1884
 p.b. Formosa, Ont., Canada
 d. 31 Dec. 1940
 p.d. Chester, Mont.

7 Helen Schuhmacher
 (Mother of No. 3)
 b. 1862
 p.b. _____
 d. 18 Jan. 1945
 p.d. Mildmay, Ont., Can.

(Spouse of No. 1)

b. _____
 p.b. _____
 d. _____
 p.d. _____

8 Valentine Kuhry
 (Father of No. 4)
 b. 1811
 p.b. Alsace
 m. _____
 d. April, 1881
 p.d. St. Clements, Ont.

9 Magdalene Fach
 (Mother of No. 4)
 b. _____
 p.b. _____
 m. _____
 d. _____
 p.d. _____

10 Jabez Miller
 (Father of No. 5)
 b. 14 Sept. 1808
 p.b. York Co., Penna.
 m. _____
 d. 14 April, 1896
 p.d. Caledonia, Mich.

11 Catherine Grenfelder
 (Mother of No. 5)
 b. _____
 p.b. _____
 m. _____
 d. _____
 p.d. Caledonia, Mich.

12 Andrew Zettel
 (Father of No. 6)
 b. 1817
 p.b. Near Maryhill, Ont.
 m. _____
 d. 1894
 p.d. Formosa, Ont.

13 Magdalene Holrad
 (Mother of No. 6)
 b. 1822
 p.b. _____
 m. _____
 d. 1883
 p.d. Formosa, Ont.

14 Anton Schuhmacher
 (Father of No. 7)
 b. 1828
 p.b. Ramstein, Germany
 m. _____
 d. 10 May, 1891
 p.d. _____

15 Anne Marie Marbacher
 (Mother of No. 7)
 b. 1828
 p.b. Landstuhl, Germany
 d. 13 Sept. 1918
 p.d. _____

16 b. _____ (Father of No. 8, Cont. on chart No. _____)
 m. _____
 d. _____
 17 b. _____ (Mother of No. 8, Cont. on chart No. _____)
 d. _____
 18 b. _____ (Father of No. 9, Cont. on chart No. _____)
 m. _____
 d. _____
 19 b. _____ (Mother of No. 9, Cont. on chart No. _____)
 d. _____
 20 Abraham Miller
 (Father of No. 10, Cont. on chart No. _____)
 b. 13 July 1867
 m. _____
 d. 3 Aug. 1844
 21 Barbara Shahr Shae
 (Mother of No. 10, Cont. on chart No. _____)
 b. 17 April, 1788
 d. 9 April, 1838
 22 John Grenfelder
 (Father of No. 11, Cont. on chart No. _____)
 b. _____
 m. _____
 d. _____
 23 Elizabeth Olendorph
 (Mother of No. 11, Cont. on chart No. _____)
 b. _____
 d. _____
 24 Lucas Zettel
 (Father of No. 12, Cont. on chart No. _____)
 b. 14 Oct. 1785
 m. _____
 d. _____
 25 Monica Straub
 (Mother of No. 12, Cont. on chart No. _____)
 b. 5 May 1791
 d. 1874
 26 Andreas Holrad
 (Father of No. 13, Cont. on chart No. _____)
 b. _____
 m. _____
 d. _____
 27 Maria Hettich
 (Mother of No. 13, Cont. on chart No. _____)
 b. _____
 d. _____
 28 b. _____ (Father of No. 14, Cont. on chart No. _____)
 m. _____
 d. _____
 29 b. _____ (Mother of No. 14, Cont. on chart No. _____)
 d. _____
 30 b. _____ (Father of No. 15, Cont. on chart No. _____)
 m. _____
 d. _____
 31 b. _____ (Mother of No. 15, Cont. on chart No. _____)
 d. _____