

***From Duck Farmer and Candle-snuffer to
Millwright, Innkeeper and General:
Ramsauers, Ramsowers, Ramsaurs, Ramsours & Ramseurs***

My ancestor was Johannes Dietrich (Dirk) Ramsauer who came to Philadelphia on October 2, 1727 with 53 Palatinates on the ship "Adventure." Dietrich was born ca 1690 in Germany or Switzerland. He was Protestant and joined a Lutheran church, just west of Philadelphia. He had purchased 110 acres of land in the old Markham tract in the area of Trappe, Pa. (Upper Providence Township), old Philadelphia county, present day Montgomery county. The church was the Augustus Evangelical Lutheran Church (Old Trappe Church}. This church is said to be the oldest standing Lutheran church in America. Dietrich's land was offered for sale in 1751 and it was described as one mile from the Lutheran church. He later purchased 600 acres on the South Fork of the Catawba River and Clarks Creek (currently west of the town of Lincolnton in Lincoln Co, N.C.}. Three of Dietrich's sons are listed in N.C. on the list for the Spanish Alarm or Capt. Samuel Corbin's Militia list, Henry, Jacob and David, and they all signed their name Ramsour [Lorena Eaker's book]. Eaker thinks this is 1753-1754.

Dietrich's wife's name is said to be Catherine with the only mention of her being in the baptismal record of his eldest son, Johannes {according to Lorena Eaker's book , however I have not been able to confirm this from a primary source}. See comments at the end of this article about a possible second wife, named Margaret. Six of the children were baptized in the Old Trappe church. The Baptismal Records:

Ramsauer, JOHANNES,

son of Dietrich and _____, b. May 29, 1728; bap. By Pfarrer Hinkel; sponsors: Johannes Buhler & wife Anna Marria.

Ramsauer, JAKOB, son of Johannes Dietrich and _____ b. Feb. 11, 1731; bap. July 17 __ sp. John Jacob Muller & wife, Anna Maria Apolonia

Ramsauer, DAVIT, b. Sept. 23, 1733; bap. By Rev Muhlenburg

Ramsauer, JOHAN HEINRICH, b. July 9, 1736; bap. By Rev Muhlenburg _____

Ramsauer, ANNA MARRIA, b. Jan. 7, 1738; bap. By Rev Muhlenburg _____

Ramsauer, KADRINA b. Mar 31, 1742; bap. Rev Muhlenburg May 7, 174_, sponsors Anna Margerta, Henrich Ramsauer's wife.

Old family tree records list two more daughters: Margaret b. 1739 and possibly Elizabeth.

Why Rev Muhlenburg's name is listed as the pastor who baptised many of these children is unknown, because Rev Muhlenburg didn't come to the US until 1742. Perhaps Muhlenburg recorded these baptisms at a later date when he

***From Duck Farmer and Candle-snuffer to
Millwright, Innkeeper and General:
Ramsauers, Ramsowers, Ramsaurs, Ramsours & Ramseurs***

was pastor to keep family data recorded in an accurate manner or perhaps he really did baptize 4 of the children as a group after he arrived , or sometime after 1743.

Dietrich's oldest son, Johannes,/John at some point in his life, lived in Lancaster Co., Pa. and left on August 27, 1752 to travel alone to N.C. He wrote a journal of the trip (copies found in Wilson Library @UNC. Chapel Hill, N.C.). John's Memorandum Book tells the story of his journey at each stopover and river crossing including prices for food, lodging and expenses for his horse. Also he diagrams plans for farm equipment and the design of a gristmill. John and brothers build a gristmill in Lincoln Co. and it the same mill that the Rev. war battle is named "Ramsour's Mill."

Kadrina Ramsauer's(Dietrich's daughter) baptismal sponsors(Henrich & Margretha Ramsauer) had arrived on August 11, 1732 on the ship "Samuel" with 279 Palatinates. Henrich Ramsauer is listed as age 30, Johannes Ramsauer age 9 and wife Anna Ramsauer age 32. Henrich & Margretha (Anna Margretha) Ramsauer have a son Adam Ramsour who is naturalized in Radnor (Chester Co.) Pa. Adam marries Maria Margretha and has a dau, Susanna, born Mar. 2, 1747. This Adam & Johannes are the same "Johannes Adam", who drops the Johannes. At some point we find this family and descendants in Frederick, Md. and baptisms in the Evangelical Reformed Church and Evangelical Lutheran Church. Also spellings of the name become Ramsower. None of Dietrich's progeny use this spelling. They use Ramsauer initially going to Ramsaur & Ramsour. Later spelling in the 1800's in the family of Stephen Dodson was Ramseur. He became the youngest Confederate general killed in the war and died at Cedar Creek at age 26. A town was renamed Ramseur (near Asheboro, N.C.) in his honor and many later distant relatives changed their spellings to Ramseur to highlight their connection.

The name Ramsauer appears as one of the early family names in the northeastern part of Switzerland in the Protestant demi-canton of Appenzell-Ausser Rhoden. This name is noted as far back as the 1400's. It is said to derive from the market town of Ramsau, which is situated in the Schwanberg portion of Herisau. The other demi-canton of Appenzell, Inner-Rhoden, is Catholic and has no Ramsauer names. In the 1930's and later, some amateur family genealogists cite an article naming the home of Ramsauers as the village,

***From Duck Farmer and Candle-snuffer to
Millwright, Innkeeper and General:
Ramsauers, Ramsowers, Ramsaurs, Ramsours & Ramseurs***

Ramsau am Dachstein (Austrian Alps). (Article by R.F. Hoddinott in British Weekly). Other kinfolk have wanted to claim Ramsau bei Berchetsgarten in Germany (Bavaria) as our homeplace, because it has one of the most scenic churches along a little stream. They forget to notice the church is Catholic. I have visited the Bavarian town and the church graveyard. There are no graves of Ramsauers. Also letters to mayors of the two towns have stated no Ramsauers were ever in those two towns. Actually Austria has four small towns called Ramsau one of which is referred to as Ramsau am Dachstein and is today a famous ski resort., Germany has three towns named Ramsau and one named Ramspau. All of these towns can be viewed on the internet on <maps.expedia.com>. Switzerland has a small crossroads called Ramsau, located 1-2 miles s.w. of Flawil, just west of Herisau. The latter is the only one in a predominant protestant territory and it has remained Protestant even to this day.

My correspondence with German genealogists & later Swiss genealogists led me to Herisau, Switzerland as the main origin of the Swiss family of Ramsauer. Every Swiss family name has one or more towns identified as a "Heimatort" for that family. Herisau is the "Heimatort" for Ramsauers. In the book "Bibliography of Swiss Genealogies" by Mario Moos, p. 406, is listed the history of Ramsauers from Herisau. This document is in German & housed in the Schweizerische Landesbibliothek in Bern, Switzerland.

The origins of the Reformed Church started in Switzerland and the leader, Ulrich Zwingli, was from Wildhaus, which is located in the N.E. tip of Switzerland, very close to Herisau. I have visited two protestant Ramsauer families in Appenzell (Herisau & St. Gallen) and stayed in their homes & have continued to correspond with them for about 15 yrs. Coats of Arms of 34 original families of Herisau are mounted in stained glass above the windows of the council chamber in the government building of the town of Herisau. I have a copy of a pamphlet printed in 1924 describing the Escutcheoned Windowpanes by heraldist Jakob Signer of the 34 family coat of arms decorating the Herisau Council Chamber. The Ramsauer coat of arms is a duck with two similar objects under the duck that resemble candle snuffers. Herr Signer writes,

"A Rudolph von Ramsau appears as witness in 1276 in Herisau. The manor by the same name, situated between Zellersmuhle and the Rosenberg, was

***From Duck Farmer and Candle-snuffer to
Millwright, Innkeeper and General:
Ramsauers, Ramsowers, Ramsaurs, Ramsours & Ramseurs***

bestowed on them at the Rosenberg as a fief. Traces remain which suggest an old courthouse at Ramsau. The place name, Ramsau is mentioned as early as 882, and later it even serves more precisely as the name of the citadel “Rosenburg”, which is also called Ramsen- or Schwanberger-Burgstock. The Schwanberg troops, to which the Ramsauer family belonged, played an important role in Appenzeller wars. On the coat of arms the duck is thought to mean a poultry farm, the yield of which was always valued, and represents some sort of court privilege. The two crossed objects below the duck are felt to be candle snuffers and are probably connected with the sacristan’s office of the small church at Teufenau{ which had already disappeared in the 15th century.}”

The sacristan was the keeper of the ceremonial equipment of the church. I have a photo of this stained-glass coat of arms in my files.

Two leads that may tie into our Dietrich have been found:

A Hans Ramsauer is a swineherder in Alsenborn, Germany and his wife is Katharina and a child, Hans Velten Ramsauer b. Oct 18, 1687. The same couple seems to be in Zaisenhausen Germany. Hans Ramsauer came to Zaisenhausen from Herisau at some unknown date. He is listed as a Beisitzer in the history of Zaisenhausen, which means “tenant farmer or landless cottager or inhabitant without civil rights”. He married a Catherina of Calvinist faith. The couple had two sons, Hans Ulrich born of August 31, 1682 and Johannes born on August 28, 1684. There is no further mention of the family in the historical archives of Zaisenhausen. Both Zaisenhausen and Alsenborn are in the western Rheinland-Pfalz (Palatinate). Several passengers (Muller, Ulrich, Baumann, Ruhl) are aboard the ship sailed by Dietrich as well as Stutzmann. The origin of the first 4 names was Lambsheim and Gonnheim for the last (both localities are west of Ludwigshafen, which is not too far from Zaisenhausen or Alsenborn). Aboard the ship sailed by Heinrich Ramsauer(sponsor of Dietrich’s daughter) were large groups of persons from Neckarbischofsheim and Schwaigern, both which lie to the east of the Rhine in the Kraichgau region.

Heinrich Ramsauer, who arrived on the ship “Samuel” with his wife and son and who was a sponsor for Dietrich’s daughter, Kadrina, must have been a relative of Dietrich ? brother, cousin. Also a possible third Ramsauer male property-owner has been found in the same township of Pa in the 1740s: Theodore Ramsauer owned adjacent land to Heinrich Ramsauer in 1749, which is described as part of the Markham Tract. Later Heinrich Ramsauer sells his land

***From Duck Farmer and Candle-snuffer to
Millwright, Innkeeper and General:
Ramsauers, Ramsowers, Ramsaurs, Ramsours & Ramseurs***

to Andrew Miller who later sells it to Dietrich Ramsauer in 1749. Dietrich is still in Providence Township on Jan 2, 1753 to serve as witness for Madalena Bauer's will and is listed as "witnesses, Margarett Ramsourin, Diterich Ramsourin" (F, p. 476 of Abstracts of Wills of Philadelphia Co.). Theodore bought lot no. 11 of the Markham Tract, 117 acres in 1741. Later he acquired an additional adjoining 56 acres in 1745. In 1753, Theodore & wife, Margaret sold these two lots, consisting of 173 acres, to Francis Schunck (father of a later Pa. Governor) for 450 lbs. A distant Ramseur cousin and researcher, Philip Leonard has suggested that Theodore Ramsour was in fact Dietrich, using another version of his first name. Magaret Ramsaur is listed as Theodore's wife on several of these land transfer documents . Dietrich is the German form of Theodoric and the names can be used interchangeably(see German names & nicknames website at end of document). Perhaps using Theodore as his first name was another example of Dietrich trying to fit in to an English society as was later done by descendants using the spelling of Ramsower. Additional support for Leonard's theory is the total absence of a Theodore Ramsauer on any of the ships arrival records, where we find both Dietrich & Heinrich. Also there is no later data on anyone named Theodore Ramsaur. He seems to have vanished.

Johannes Adam Ramsauer(Heinrich's son) drops Johannes and is known as Adam Ramsower, Sr. He becomes an innkeeper and is the oldest of the 2nd generation of Ramsauers/Ramsowers. Dietrich's first child, Johannes is 4 yrs younger than Adam. Adam became the innkeeper of the "Publick House", known as the "Yellow Springs Inn" of Pikeland Township of Chester County in 1754 and operated the inn from 1754 to 1762, although he didn't own the property.. The inn is still in existence and many of the early buildings have been restored. In 1762 Adam moved a few miles S.E. to Radnor Township and purchased 100 acres on the old Lancaster Turnpike, near 14th milestone west of Phila. He then built a new inn to be named the "Spread Eagle Tavern". This inn became a famous landmark. During the encampment of the American army at Valley Forge, the tavern was used as an outpost by Geo. Washington and his troops. Adam Ramsower, Sr sold the famous inn sometime before 1772. There is an Adam Ramsower who purchases land in Chatham Co, NC and he seems to be there for at least 6 years from 1773-1779. He owned land on Rocky River, probably just east of Siler City, NC . Later Adam Ramsower, Sr is found in Frederick, Co., MD in 1780 and dies there in 1785. This could be the same

***From Duck Farmer and Candle-snuffer to
Millwright, Innkeeper and General:
Ramsauers, Ramsowers, Ramsaurs, Ramsours & Ramseurs***

Adam Ramsower, who seems to travel a lot. Other Ramsowers are found in Chatham Co. & Randolph Co, NC. Randolph Co, NC census data reveals on the 1810 census a Henry Ramsower with one free white male aged over 45 yrs, one aged 26-45yrs and one less than 10 yrs. Females listed for Henry are one over 45 yrs, 1 16-26 yrs, and one less than 10 yrs. There are no slaves listed Also in 1810 just 3 households away is Mike Ramsower with 1 male over 45 yrs , one 26-45 yrs, one 10-16 yrs, one less than 10 yrs. Listed are one female 26-45 yrs, 2 females 10-16 yrs and one less than 10 yrs. There are no slaves listed.

In the same county census of 1830 we see a Michael Ramsower listed as aged 30-40, with a son listed in each category of 5-10 yrs, 10-15 yrs, 15-20 yrs. (Perhaps this was Michael Ramsower, Jr or nephew of the Henry Ramsower mentioned in the 1810 census). This same Michael has a wife age 20-30 yrs and 2 daughters in the groups: less than 5 yrs and 5- 10 yrs. On the same 1830 census on page 23 is listed John Ramsower with male and female age 40-50, age 20-30 1 female, age 15-20 one female, age 10-15 2 females, age 5-10 one male, and under 5 yrs 2 males and 1 female. John Ramsower has one free colored male age 10-24 yrs. There are no Ramsowers in the 1840 Randolph Co census. I have not reviewed the Chatham Co, census records. Other records show a Michael Ramsower owned 150 acres on Little Brush Creek in Chatham Co, just west of Siler City, NC in 1787. Henry Ramsower owned 100 acres on head of Richland Creek in 1793, which is 1-2 miles east of Asheboro, NC. Michael Ramsower owned 500 acres on Muddy Creek near 200 acres that he owned on Uwharrie River, Randolph Co., NC in 1823-1829. This seems to be just south-east of present-day High Point, NC. Some later Ramsower generations migrated into Ohio & Missouri and even some Ramsowers change the name back to Ramsour. The grandfather of H.C.Ramsower moved into Licking Co, Ohio ca 1825. The great,great-grandfather of Ed Reith was Greenberry Ramsower who lived in Gurensey Co, Ohio and married Huldah Perego in the mid 1830s with progeny of William, Issac, Katie & Martha Ramsower.

If one looks up Ramsauers in the German-speaking countries today, we find 600+ in Germany, 400+ in Austria and 200+ in Switzerland. The location of the Ramsau towns in Germany & Austria are in Bavaria and close to Salzburg, which are today virtually all Catholic. I have written a Kurt Ramsauer in Canada, who emigrated from Austria in 1955. He traced his ancestors in the local Catholic Church in Albtenu, Austria all the way back to the 1600s. Interestingly there is a small village close to Albtenu named Ramsau. I believe

***From Duck Farmer and Candle-snuffer to
Millwright, Innkeeper and General:
Ramsauers, Ramsowers, Ramsaurs, Ramsours & Ramseurs***

the Bavarian & Austrian Catholic Ramsauers may have derived from their own Ramsau villages in those areas. Interesting enough, when we find today someone spelling their name Ramsauer in the US census or phone book, it is almost always an imigrant from the Catholic regions of Bavaria or Austria.

Another false lead is the Swiss family name of Ramseier or Ramseyer. They originate near Bern from the village Ramsei. This is a separate family from ours, although there were Protestants among them who came to the US during the 1700s.

Another lead is that a Ramsauer family is found in the Diedlesheim and Guglingen communities of Germany which are 10 km s.w. of Zaisenhausen and they also originally come from Herisau, Switzerland. The records list a Christian Ramsauer, a leinenweber, arriving in Guglingen in 1705. Six children are listed as offspring but no Johannes Dietrich and no Heinrich. Also this family seems to stay in this area past the time that Dietrich & Heinrich departed to America.

Another lead that finds Protestant Ramsauers leaving Salzburg, Austria is found in the Salzburger Expulsion Lists , Edited by Lewis Bunker Rohrbach. A Christian Ramsauer, born Oberwibm, jurisdiction of Wagrain (Salzburg), married Magdalena Mayr and had a child, Wolf, born 1732. They emigrated to East Prussia to Waiwern, parish Gunbinnen, Szabassunen parish Ischdaggern (district Gumbinnen). This family also does not fit the dates for emigration for either Dietrich or Heinrich Ramsauer.

Dietrich Ramsauer's full name was Johannes Dietrich Ramsauer. So perhaps he is the Johannes Ramsauer, born in 1684 in Zaisnehausen to Hans Ramsauer and wife Catherina. Unofficially "family tradition" has stated that he was born ca 1690, but no primary sources can verify this date.

Two Ramsauer brothers, Dietrich, & Heinrich is an intriguing possibility that needs further proof. Theodore is most likely Dietrich using another version of his first name. Margaret is definitely his wife in the 1740-50s. It remains to be proven if Catherine was his first wife. This tale will continue to evolve when more facts are learned about the family that might called "From duck farmer & candle snuffer to farmer, millwright & inkeeper & later general".

***From Duck Farmer and Candle-snuffer to
Millwright, Innkeeper and General:
Ramsauers, Ramsowers, Ramsaurs, Ramsours & Ramseurs***

References:

German names and nicknames: <<http://www.kerchner.com/nicknames.htm>>