

### **The Registration Law.**

So successful were the efforts made by the proprietors of Pennsylvania to secure settlers and so ready were the oppressed Mennonites of Europe to avail themselves of the advantages offered in America that many thousands found homes in the new land. The Germans, Swiss and Palatinates came in such numbers that the Provincial authorities became uneasy and finally, September 27th, 1727, passed an ordinance requiring the captains of ships to report the names and ages of their passengers, the place from which they came and state whether they came with intentions of becoming good citizens of the Province. They also required the men over sixteen years of age to sign a declaration of allegiance to the Province. This law makes it possible for many thousands of American citizens to know the name and date of arrival of their immigrant ancestors. These lists have been published in the Pennsylvania Archives, Series 2, Vol. 17, also in Rupp's Names of 30,000 immigrants. Many of these lists are preserved in the department of Archives, in the State library at Harrisburg. Unfortunately the printed lists are not always accurate. Our Ancestor From the year 1728 for about nine years was a period of quite active persecution of the Amish and Mennonites both in Switzerland and the Palatinate. It is not known whether our ancestor left the old world as a direct result of these persecutions, or whether he joined the steady line of immigrants that came to better their conditions in America. Nor do we know the place from which he came. When he declared his allegiance to the Province, the entire company of 151 men were said to be from the Palatinate, upon the Rhine and places adjacent. The term Palatine was used to include the Swiss who had come down the Rhine through the Palatinate or Rhine Province. The captain of the ship reported that his vessel began its voyage at Rotterdam in Holland. One naturally inquires whether there are at Rotterdam any records of the previous residences of immigrants who there embark. The American Consul there wrote in answer to inquiry, that such records are now kept, but go back only about fifty years.

3 "At the court house of Philadelphia, September 1, 1736, Present, The Hon. James Logan, Esq., President; Clement Plumstead, Thomas Laurence, Samuel Hasell, Charles Read, Esquires; William Allen, Mayor of Philadelphia, and Derick Janssen, Esq., one of the Justices of Philadelphia County. 151 Foreigners from the Palatinate upon the Rhine and the places adjacent, with their families, making in all 388 persons, were imported here in ship Harle, of London, Ralph Harle, Master, from Rotterdam but last from Cowes, as by clearance thence, were this day qualified as usual, whose names are as follows." Among the names is that of Jacob Hofstedler. Col. Records, Vol. 3, pp. 58-9.

(Manifest also listed Johann Georg Mehn as one of the passengers taking the oath)

WGM research note)