

THE BECKELHEIMER FAMILY

By Deanna Adams Holm

The first to arrive in America was John Bechleshammer. From "The Brethren in Colonial America," a source book on the transplanted and development of the Church of the Brethren in the Eighteenth Century, edited by Donald F. Durnbaugh, The Brethren Press, Elgin Illinois. Page 16 - "Some of these people came over to Pennsylvania in the year 1719, others in 1729, and others afterward. They came from Schwarzenau and others at Krefeld. Page 18 - "There lived on the banks of the Rhine" (my grandmother always told me her German people lived on the Rhine). Page 23 - The first major group of immigrants from the Lower Rhine, had established Germantown near Philadelphia as the center for German immigration. Page 24 - From Friesland under the leadership of Alexander Mack, first minister of the Brethren, took place in 1729. Page 100 - Amwell, N.J. has listed Brethren minister, "Bechtelsheimer". Page 187 - Successor to Rev. John Naas was Rev. John Bechleshammer.

The first Beckelheimer to appear in Virginia showed up in the Tax List of Botetourt County of 1785. Abraham, John, and Jacob were listed as Picklesimore.

These names are from an old German Bible owned by Hines Beckelheimer, and they were given for inclusion in the Smith-Riffe collection by A.J. Beckelheimer who lived at Harper, Raleigh County. A. J. was Andrew Johnson Beckelheimer, the son of Henderson Beckelheimer.

Jacob Beckelheimer was born August 20, 1761 in Germany. M. Christina was born September 30, 1768, in Germany. Their children:

1. Isaac was born 1788. He married Rosanne Ferguson and Rachel Vest.
2. Moses was born November 13, 1799.
3. William was born July 15, 1802.
4. James G. was born March 3, 1805.
5. Cary was born February 18, 1813.
6. Aaron was born October 27, 1814.
7. Levi was born 1815. He married Artimissa Ferguson, Nancy Ann Newman, and Elizabeth Smith.
8. William J. was born December 19, 1828. He may have been in Company A, 54th Vol. CSA.
9. Amanda was born May 4, 1839.

10. Morgan was born November 11, 1821.

There are three other illegible entries.

Revolutionary War – Personnel of Botetourt County Companies as Districted includes a list of men registered for recruitment in the Revolutionary War, which was copied verbatim from the original papers found in the basement of the Botetourt County, Virginia, Clerk's Office. Included in this list were John Picklesimon and Jacob Picklesimon. (**NOTE:** This, however, does not prove that they served in the War.) Source: A Seed-Bed of the Republic - Early Botetourt by Robert Douthat Stone.

Jacob and son Levi had land on Brush Creek, Montgomery County, Virginia. Levi Beckelhimer was listed in the 1850 census for Montgomery County, Christiansburg township. Levi was head of the household with two sons (Henderson and Harrison) listed. Levi's occupation was listed as a farmer. Also, listed in that same census was Levi's brother, Isaac Beckelhimer. Isaac's occupation was a distiller.

Levi took a new wife by the 1860 census. Harrison disappeared from the household; and Henderson went to live with his Uncle Isaac Beckelhimer in Floyd County, Virginia. Both Henderson and his brother Harrison joined the Southern cause and were in Company B of the Virginia 54th under Jubal Early.

Henderson and Sarah Beckelhimer

By 1870, Henderson returned from the war; and he and his wife Sarah Smith were living very close to Levi and his wife Elizabeth (Smith) (Lasley) Henderson. Levi bought a large parcel of land in Raleigh County on Paint Creek Road. Henderson Beckelhimer came to Raleigh County by the 1880 census. Most of the descendants of Isaac Beckelhimer migrated and lived in Fayette County. Levi's descendants came to Raleigh County. Henderson Jyles Beckelhimer was born May 20, 1840, according to his tombstone. About 1860 in Montgomery County, Henderson married Sarah E. Smith, daughter of Abram Smith and Malinda _____. During the Civil War, some county records were lost or not recorded. No marriage record for Henderson and Sarah has been located. Sarah E. (Smith) Beckelhimer was born December 13, 1841, according to her tombstone. Both are buried in Calfee Cemetery, Mt. Tabor, Raleigh County. Their children:

1. **Martha Ann Beckelhimer** was born August 27, 1861, at Brush Creek, Montgomery County. She married Daniel Fitzpatrick on January 20, 1881. Martha died 1941 at Jumping Branch, Summers County, West Virginia. Daniel was the son of Timothy Fitzpatrick and Ellen F. O'Neil. Their children:

a. Charles W. Fitzpatrick was born September 27, 1883, in Summers County. He died December 29, 1912, in West Virginia. Charles married Effa Pyne Massey who was born September 1, 1885, in Raleigh County. They were married on October 16, 1903

in Raleigh County. Effa died May 8, 1967 in West Virginia. Her parents were William Jefferson Massey and Mary Olivia Williams. Mary was the daughter of John L. Williams and Martha Ann Bragg.

b. Deeda A. Fitzpatrick was born March 17, 1886 in West Virginia. On March 21, 1917, she married John Homer Lilly who was born April 27, 1883 in West Virginia. John died at Camp Creek, Mercer County, West Virginia.

c. Sadie E. Fitzpatrick was born March 24, 1889. She married _____ Upton on November 13, 1907 in West Virginia.

d. Nellie M. Fitzpatrick was born July 25, 1891. She married _____ Harvey on December 24, 1914.

e. Kelly P. Fitzpatrick was born October 18, 1893, and died December 28, 1976, at Hinton, Summers County. Kelly married Victoria Mae Lilly who was born November 24, 1896, in Summers County. They were married on July 18, 1918, in Summers County.

f. Corda A. Fitzpatrick was born October 22, 1895.

g. James B. Fitzpatrick was born March 22, 1896, in West Virginia. He died October 1, 1939.

h. Adney D. Fitzpatrick was born November 22, 1899, and died February 04, 1919.

i. Bertha P. Fitzpatrick was born March 21, 1902. She married Vernon Ratcliff who died October 23, 1973.

j. Edith E. Fitzpatrick was born August 9, 1908. She married _____ Upton.

2. **Mary Henderson Beckelheimer** was born 1866 at Brush Creek, Montgomery County. She married George Fenton Wilson, the brother of my great-grandmother, Annie Lou Wilson. They were married May 22, 1890, in Raleigh County. Mary died in 1912 in Raleigh County. George was the son of Robert Thomas Wilson and Sarah Frances "Sallie" Stanley. Mary and George's children:

a. Phillip H. Wilson was born 1893.

b. Lona Wilson was born 1896. She married _____ Thompson.

c. Roberta Wilson, born 1898, married _____ Farley.

d. Edith Wilson was born 1904.

e. Alice Wilson was born 1904.

f. Paul D. Wilson was born 1909.

3. **Sarah Amanda Beckelhimer** was born May 12, 1868, at Brush Creek, Montgomery County, Virginia. She never married. She stepped on a nail and died of tetanus on May 29, 1888. She is buried with her mother and father at Calfee Cemetery, Mt. Tabor, Raleigh County.

4. **John H. Beckelhimer** was born about 1872 in Brush Creek, Montgomery County, Virginia. John married Bettie Cooper in 1896. John died in 1920 in Lincoln County, West Virginia. Their children:

a . Pearl Beckelhimer, born about August 1896, married Alex Watson.

b. Basil Beckelhimer was born August 1897.

c. Margie Beckelhimer, born February 1899, married Dave Lucas.

d . Minnie Beckelhimer as born March 1900

e . Goldie Beckelhimer married Willie _____.

f . Cecil Beckelhimer.

g. Grace Beckelhimer married John _____.

h. Henderson Beckelhimer married Alice _____.

i . Delbert Beckelhimer married Carrie Clay.

j. John Harvey Beckelhimer was born May 12, 1905, and he died July 14, 1955. John married Lydia Jane Clay on August 28, 1930, in Logan County, Virginia. Lydia was born January 16, 1914.

5. **Mahala Artimissa “Artie” Beckelhimer** was born September 30, 1874, in Hinton, Summers County, West Virginia. Artie was named for her grandmother Artimissa Ferguson who was Levi Beckelhimer’s first wife and mother of Henderson. Artie married William Patterson Aliff January 7, 1896. Artie died in 1896. I believe Artie died in childbirth. She is buried at Calfee Cemetery, Mt. Tabor, Raleigh County. Their child:

a. Corli Aliff, born about 1896, died about 1916–1920. Corli married Albert John Burton.

6. Levi Harrison Beckelhimer was born February 13, 1878, in Hinton, Summers County. Levi was my great-grandfather. He was married on May 9, 1899, in Raleigh County to Annie Lou Wilson. Annie, born April 6, 1877, was the daughter of Robert Thomas Wilson and Sarah Frances (Stanley) Wilson. She was born at Mattville, Raleigh County. Annie died on August 10, 1956, at Harper, Raleigh County. She is buried at Mt. Tabor Cemetery, Raleigh County. Levi died on September 14, 1957, at Harper.



Levi Harrison Beckelhimer, Annie Lou Wilson, and their children. Left to right: Gussie Jewel on Levi's lap, Roy James on Annie's lap, Edith "Mae," and Edna "Maudie." Picture taken about 1906.

Their children:

a. Edith "Mae" Beckelhimer, born February 24, 1900, at Harper, Raleigh County, died February 17, 1989, in Beckley, Raleigh County. She is buried at Mt. Tabor Cemetery. On

October 29, 1916, at Dameron, Raleigh County, Edith married Charles Ray Dillon. Ray was born April 18, 1895, in Sandlick, Raleigh County, and he died July 26, 1919, at Willis Branch, Fayette County, from typhoid fever. He is buried at the Dillon Creek Cemetery in Raleigh County. Ray was a son of George Wentworth Dillon and Amanda Ellen Atha.

"Mae" was married second to Ocus Wilson Dillon who was born July 17, 1890, in Sandlick. They were married in May 1921 in Raleigh County. Ocus died April 15, 1953 in Harper, Raleigh County. He is buried at Mt. Tabor Cemetery. His parents were George Wentworth Dillon and Amanda Ellen Atha.



My Aunt Launa Dillon Davis, Levi Harrison Beckelhimer, on his lap is Dewain Davis, Annie Lou (Wilson) Beckelhimer behind Edith "Mae" (Beckelhimer) Dillon - 1949



Deanna Jean Adams, Annie Lou Wilson Beckelhimer and on her lap is my cousin, Michael Woodfin, and Michael's older brother, Ron Woodfin - 1949

b. Edna Maude "Maudie" Beckelhimer was born August 28, 1901 on Paint Creek at Harper. She died September 3, 1942, in Raleigh County and is buried at Mt. Tabor Cemetery. Edna married Claude Williams on November 10, 1917, at Willis Branch, Fayette County. Claude was born December 14, 1894, and died August 14, 1919, in Raleigh County. His parents were Charles "Charlie" Williams and Rebecca "Becky" Jane Woolwine.

Edna was married second to Barney Christopher White on October 2, 1922, in Fayette County. Barney was born May 5, 1902, in Russell County, Virginia. He died in March 1970 at Eccles, Raleigh County. His parents were John C. White and Eliza Rebecca (Wallen) White.

c. Gussie Jewel Beckelhimer was born December 23, 1903, on Paint Creek at Harper. Gussie died December 14, 1993, in Raleigh County. On April 17, 1918, in Raleigh County, she married Henry W. "Flat" Williams. Henry was born about 1893 and died November 16, 1931. His parents were Charles Williams and Rebecca "Becky" Jane Woolwine.

d. Roy James Beckelhimer was born January 22, 1905, on Paint Creek at Harper, Raleigh County. He died February 9, 1990, in Colliers, Brooke County, West Virginia. About 1924 in Raleigh County, Roy married Ina B. Rorrer who was born March 16, 1906, in Raleigh County. Ina died August 12, 1987, in Colliers, Brooke County. Roy and Ina are buried at Mt. Tabor Cemetery. Ina was the daughter of George A. Rorrer and Liza J. (Aliff) Rorrer.

e. Snowden Robert Beckelhimer was born December 21, 1906, at Harper, and he died September 2, 1977, at Harper. He married Myrtle Ray Maynor about 1926. Myrtle, born about 1906, died February 9, 1985, in Fayetteville, Pennsylvania. Myrtle was the daughter of Edward Elliott Maynor and Mary Ellen (Kessler) Maynor.

f. Focie Marie Beckelhimer was born August 10, 1910, on Paint Creek at Harper, Raleigh County. She died July 30, 1996, in Killen, Alabama. She married Hobart McKinney about 1930 in West Virginia. Hobart was born March 5, 1909, in West Virginia, and died May 1970 in Montgomery, Fayette County. His parents were Abram Garfield McKinney and Judy (Goode) McKinney.

g. Violet Gay Beckelhimer was born in August 1912 on Paint Creek at Harper. She married Ivan Maynor who was born about 1909 in West Virginia. He was the son of William Perry Maynor and Bessie (Miller) Maynor.

h. Opal Lee Beckelhimer was born August 29, 1914, on Paint Creek at Harper. She died in December 1983 at Fairdale, Raleigh County. About 1932, Opal married Herbert Wesley Carter who was born October 20, 1904, in West Virginia. He died October 1978 in Fairdale. His parents were James Frank Carter and Essie (Bennett) Carter.

i. Donald Ray Beckelhimer was born August 7, 1916, on Paint Creek at Harper, Raleigh County. He died January 2, 2002, in Beckley, Raleigh County. He married Ruby Garnett _____.

j. Dorothy Jane Beckelhimer was born 1918 on Paint Creek at Harper, Raleigh County.

7. **James Elbert Beckelhimer**, was born May 22, 1882 at Paint Creek. James died November 15, 1927, at Paint Creek. James married Cora Lee Aliff on January 29, 1903, in Raleigh County. Cora was born April 13, 1885, in Raleigh County. She died October 14, 1981, in Raleigh County. James is buried at Sandlick. Their children:

a. Myrtle Beckelhimer was born November 14, 1903, at Paint Creek. Myrtle died September 9, 1951, at Eccles. On July 14, 1924, Myrtle married Harvey Pierce Stanley who was born May 4, 1894, at Cabell, Raleigh County, and died in October 6, 1954, in Beckley. Harvey is buried at Mt. Tabor Cemetery. His parents were Chester Arthur Stanley and Eliza Jane (Patton) Stanley.

b. Blanche Beckelhimer was born February 18, 1906, at Paint Creek. She died July 24, 1991, in Beckley and is buried at the Pax Community Cemetery, Fayette County. Blanche married Posey Hubert Turner on August 15, 1923, in Pax, Fayette County. Hubert was born July 1, 1904, in Oley, Kanawha County, West Virginia; and he died March 8, 1974 in Beckley. His parents were Posey Garfield Turner and Almeda "Allie" (Wiseman) Turner.

c. James Vincent Beckelhimer was born April 4, 1908, at Paint Creek, and died December 4, 1909, at Paint Creek.

d. Azel Beckelhimer was born February 22, 1910 at Paint Creek, Raleigh County, and died February 2, 1985, in Colonial Beach, Virginia. Azel married Lucille Cindy Ferguson who was born March 26, 1917, in Monroe County. They were married on December 3, 1935, at Harper. Lucille died June 15, 1989, in Colonial Beach, Virginia. Lucille was buried at Historyland Cemetery, King George County, Virginia.

e. Goldie Lee Beckelhimer was born January 19, 1912, at Harper, and she died June 2, 1988, in Beckley. She married Carnie Dotson.

f. Charlotte June Beckelhimer was born May 13, 1922, at Harper. She died October 31, 1965, in South Miami, Florida. Charlotte married Noah Frederick Souder who was born February 6, 1920, at Pax Branch, Fayette County. Noah died January 1, 1985, in Jupiter, Florida. They were married on November 9, 1939, in Pearisburg, Giles County, Virginia.

8. **Andrew Johnson "A. J." Beckelhimer**, was born July 19, 1885, at Paint Creek. A. J. married Nancy Jane Aliff, on March 19, 1907, in Raleigh County. According to the 1910 Raleigh County census, Andrew J. and Nancy J. were living in the Clear Fork District. A. J. died April 11, 1964, in Raleigh County. He is buried at Sunset Memorial Park, Beckley. Their children:

a. Macie Beckelhimer was born April 29, 1908, at Eccles. She died September 29, 1928, at Harper. On January 20, 1926, at Harper, Macie married James Carl Mitchem who was born February 29, 1904. James died March 17, 1961, in Baltimore, Maryland. He is

buried at Mt. Tabor Cemetery.

b. Kelly Beckelhimer was born February 25, 1910, at Harper. On June 1, 1932, at Harper, he married Thelma Marie Biggs who was born April 21, 1911, at Paint Creek. Thelma died August 26, 1989, in Beckley. Thelma's parents were Alonzo Clark "Buck" Biggs and Arminta Jean "Minnie" (Godbey).

c. Mabel Beckelhimer was born May 8, 1911, at Sandlick, Raleigh County. Mabel died on July 22, 1987 in Fairdale. She married Basil Holland on December 11, 1935.

9 - **William Jackson "W. J." Beckelhimer**, was born November 14, 1887, at Horse Creek, Raleigh County. W. J. married Lela Pettry on May 19, 1915, at Harper, Raleigh County. W. J. died September 11, 1973, in Beckley, Raleigh County. He is buried at Mt. Tabor Cemetery.

Remembering My Grandparents



The old log house that Henderson Beckelhimer built in 1880 when he came to Raleigh County stood until recently. In 1989 when my Aunt and I paid a visit to the old homeplace, she showed me the old root cellar. I remember visiting my great-grandparents in 1949. I was 11 years old and remember it as if it happened yesterday.

Pap, as my grandmother called him, played the fiddle; and he loved Annie till she died. After Levi Harrison's mother, Sarah (Smith) Beckelhimer died, Henderson married a second time to Barbara (Rupp) Thompson on December 20, 1898, in Raleigh County. Henderson died April 29, 1905, and is buried at the Calfee Cemetery at Beckley.

The old homeplace ended up with Levi and Annie Lou. At various times, their children came and went; and sometimes they brought home grandchildren to live. Life for Levi and Annie was hard. They were proud, but they were poor. My grandmother Edith "Mae" lived on five acres on a flat part of the hill on Sandlick Road. She milked the cow, fed the chickens, slopped the pigs, and tended her garden. When Granddaddy came home from the mines, he would bathe in a galvanized tub in the middle of the kitchen floor close to the wood stove near the hot water. In the evening, we would sit a spell on the front porch and swing in the old swing. All the farm animals followed me around like glue. The baby chicks thought I was their mother. Old Shep followed my every step. There was never any reason to be bored with at Grandma's house. If I got tired of swinging, I could catch fireflies and June bugs. The noise from Grandma's front porch was a virtual symphony of

sounds. I remember learning to crow like the rooster, and the cock-a-doodle-doo's echoed to several farms. I used to get all the neighbor's roosters answering me. Grandma never shared her grief and hardships; she just dealt with them; and there were many. I learned so much from her, how to make butter, how to pick blackberries, and how to make a little homestead function. She would never discuss her ancestors. When she died in 1989, I decided I needed to find out who her ancestors were. It took me on a path that was full of discovery and adventure. I appreciate all the hard work they all went through to just survive. I am here because of their endeavor. Thank you, Grandma and Granddaddy for being there for me.

Sources:

Births - Personal knowledge and family info

Marriages - Raleigh Co. Marriage records

Death records - Personal knowledge, obituaries, family members

Census records - Raleigh County 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, and 1930