

While I (Fred Zehr) was researching the passenger manifests to document the arrival of the 20 families commemorated in the AMHA Zwanzigstein Garten, discrepancies were noted between the manifests and published genealogies/histories. These were written before the internet provided easily accessible information. This is intended to update the work of earlier authors. John Rieffennacht's family with his first wife is addressed in this article.

John Rieffennacht's great-granddaughter, Silvia Hoch Foster, published a genealogy in 1960 of John Rieffennacht's family with his second wife, Barbara Moser. The introduction has a brief summary of his family with his first wife, Magdalena Moser(?): "John Rieffennacht born 1794...emigrated to America in 1843, with four of his children...His son John remained in Germany, also a daughter, Mary, who later came to America." First, let's compare Foster and the passenger lists:

Foster Genealogy

Passenger Lists

Peter, m. Jane Holmes	"Waverly," May 22, 1843, age 16, France
Nicholas, m. Madeline Moshier	"Burgandy," January. 21, 1841, age 17, France
Susan, m. Joseph Schantz	"Waverly," May 22, 1843, age 12, France
Nancy, m. John S. Farney	"Waverly," May 22, 1843, age 8, France
Barbara, m. Augustus Schlieder	"Chas. Hill," November. 20, 1854, age 19, France
Madeline, m. Leopold Py	"Waverly," May 22, 1843, age 10, France
John, remained in Germany	"Waverly," May 22, 1843, age 14, France
Mary, m. John Hallgring	Unknown

The "Waverly" manifest lists John and five children. It seems that son John (Jean) Rieffennacht did not remain in Germany, but came to America, stayed here for a number of years, and may have then returned to Alsace-Lorraine.

- a. John, age 14, appears on the "Waverly" manifest with the family.
- b. John Reunough, age 21, France, 1850 Martinsburg census, farmer on George W. Henry farm.
- c. John Renouf, age 26, France, 1855 Martinsburg census, servant on Washington Henry farm, present this town for seven (7) years.
- d. Jean Rouvenach married Marie Rose Gaspard, July 25, 1860, Croismare, France. Children: 1861 and 1863 at Luneville and 1870 and 1871 at Croismare.
- e. Jean Rieffenach, April, 1872, Alsace-Lorraine, Germany French Citizenship Declarations (required as a result of the Franco-Prussian War, 1870-71). Jean born November 1, 1828, at Wissembourg, now domicile at Nancy, France (near Croismare/Luneville).

Daughter Mary apparently arrived in America before the rest of the family, possibly about the same time as brother Nicholas in January 1841. Mrs. Foster writes the following: "Daughter, Mary, who later came to America...Mary married John Hallgring; 5 sons-2 daughters." John

(age 39) and Mary (age 32) Hallgring are listed in the 1850 census living in Newark, NJ, with six children, all of whom were born in New Jersey and the oldest age eight (8) years. In 1860 John Hallgring is apparently deceased, and three additional children are listed. In total, seven sons and two daughters are enumerated; two of the sons only appear once in censuses and apparently did not live to adulthood. Michael Hallgring (listed in 1860 census) died in Newark, NJ, on December, 22, 1865, age nine (9) years. Mary Hallgring died in Newark, NJ, on February. 10, 1868, age 50 years, 5 months, 16 days. A search of the Lowville newspapers over a 15-year period reveals 14 instances of Hallgrings visiting Rieffennacht relatives in Lewis County. Also, Elizabeth Hallgring (age 19, born New Jersey) is listed as a servant in the household of David Stewart in the 1870 New Bremen census. Two of John S. and Nancy (Rieffennacht) Farney's sons married in Newark, NJ, and a third married in New York City.

The child who "came later" is likely Barbara Rieffennacht:

- a. Barbara Ruffenach, age 19, France, on manifest for "Chas. Hill," November, 20, 1854, Havre to New York.
- b. Barbara, age 19, France, in 1855 New Bremen census, sister, Nicholas Riebennacht household. Years this town for three (3) months.
- c. Barbara, age 25, France, in 1860 Lowville census, Nicholas Rivenaugh household.
- d. Barbara, age 29, France, in 1865 Croghan census, married to Augustus Schlieder (Slater) with two children, oldest age three (3).
- e. Why did eight-year old Barbara remain in Europe when the family emigrated in 1843?

As with most history, the record is incomplete with regard to John and Barbara, and questions remain to be answered. The arrival in America for Mary Rieffennacht Hallgring is still needed. The other five children are documented with their spouses and families in various censuses and other sources.

February 9, 2021

Research compiled by Frederick Jonas Zehr, Colorado Springs, Colorado.