

TOBIAS BICKEL - THE MORAVIAN

Tobias Bickel, the Moravian of North Heidelberg Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania, was the son of **John Gotthard Bockel** and wife, **Anna Sybilla Gastenberger**, and was born 13 November 1711, at Durkheim, Rhenish Bavaria, Germany. Tobias, with his family, sailed from Rotterdam (The Netherlands) on the Ship *Saint Andrew* and qualified at Philadelphia on 26 September 1737. After coming to Philadelphia, Tobias settled in North Heidelberg Township. Although baptized in the Lutheran Church in Germany, Tobias became a Moravian about 1744, after his settlement in Berks County.

"Tobias acquired 282 acres of land at Heidelberg. The deeds to him from the sons of William Penn are dated in 1748 and 1765, but probably Tobias occupied the land, or at least a part of it, shortly after his arrival. The records show that shortly before his death he divided the farm into two parts, and gave one-half to his son Anthony and the other half to his son Tobias (or John Tobias), Jr."

Tobias Bickel, the father, was the warrantee for the following tracts of land in Heidelberg Township:

- 1) Tobias Beekil, 50 acres in Lancaster County, warrant dated 28 October 1742.
- 2) Tobias Boeckel and Tobias Bechtel, 200 acres in Lancaster County, warrant dated 20 August 1747.
- 3) Tobias Bockel, two warrants for 20 acres each in Berks County, each dated 10 June 1756.

Tobias deeded the above 50-acre tract on 20 May 1748 to "Joseph Spangonberry, Charles Brogden and Timothy Housfield." In this deed he was referred to as "Tobias Boeckell of Heidelberg Township." The tract had been patented to him 13 May 1748, and was located adjacent to other land he held. Tobias Boeckel was taxed on 150 acres in Heidelberg Township in 1779; but Tobias Bickle, Sr., was taxed only for personal property in 1784, while Tobias Bickle (Jr.) was taxed for 116 acres.

In his will dated 14 Jun 1789, and probated at Reading on 21 April 1792, Tobias Boeckel made provision for his second wife Mary Elizabeth. To his sons John Tobias and Anthony he bequeathed his "land and planation as they have parted it among them, for which they must pay 400 pounds to my other children as follows: to Elizabeth, Magdalena, Frederick, John, Nicholas, Mary, and the heirs of my deceased son John."

From various sources and the burial records of North Heidelberg Church, it appears that Tobias Boeckel was born 13 November 1711 in the Palatinate, and died 29 September 1791. He married first, in the Palatinate on Palm Sunday 1734, **Anna Christina Kuester**. Anna Christina was born 6 May 1714, a daughter of Jacob Kuester (Kyester) and his wife Elizabeth Dikle, and died 31 January 1775. Tobias and Anna Christina had either 14 or 15 children, of whom 7 or 8 survived. Tobias married second, in 1779, **Maria Elizabeth Tock (Dock)**, widow of Nicholas Glat, who survived him.

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Known children of Tobias Bickel and Anna Christina Kuester:

1. Catharine Elizabeth Bickel, b. 29 November 1734; d. January 1735 in Germany.
2. Anna Elizabeth Bickel, b. 1736; d. 1737 aboard ship off the coast of Holland.
3. Tobias Bickel, b. March 1738; d. December 1738.
4. Eva Elizabeth Bickel, bap; 28 November 1739; d. February 1743.
5. John Nicolaus Bickel, b. 20 October 1741; d. 13 September 1822; m. Barbara Moll.
6. Frederick Bickel, b. 9 November 1743; d. 1 October 1802; m. Anna Barbara Frey.
7. Maria Bickel, b. 30 November 1745; living when her father wrote his will in 1789; no further information.
8. Daniel Bickel, b. 8 January 1748; d. 1 February 1748.
9. Philip Jacob Bickel, b. 17 December 1748; d. 6 February 1749.
10. John Bickel, b. 6 April 1750; d. 1 September 1782; m. Mary Eva Batteicher.
11. Magdalena Bickel, b. 9 May 1752; d. 14 January 1814; m. Joseph Knauss.
12. John Tobias Bickel, b. 6 December 1754; d. 24 December 1814; m. 1st, Salome Glat; m. 2nd, Elizabeth Feiser.
13. **Anthony (Anton) Bickel**, b. 23 February 1757; living in 1789 when his father's will was written; m. Magdalena Romig.
14. Elizabeth Bickel, b. 13 April 1759; d. 17 December 1821; m. Abraham Knauss.

Source: "*The Tobias Bickels of Old Tulpehocken*" by John F. Vallentine, Genealogies of Pennsylvania Families, Volume I, A - He, The Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine

NOTE: This Tobias Bickel is 1 of 3 known Tobias Bickels in the Berks County area of Pennsylvania in that time period.