

John Sechler (1739-1831)  
Sergeant, Philadelphia Associators

John Sechler was born in what was then Philadelphia Co. Pennsylvania in 1739 to Johannes Sechler (Zechler, Segler) and Anna Maria Maurer. John was in the middle of eight sons and two daughters born to this couple, members of the Goshenhoppen Reformed Charge (now Goshenhoppen UCC). Baptismal records were found for only three of John's siblings; his brothers, Jacob 1734, Andreas 1740, and Friedrich 1743. John married Christina Goodman, born 11 Jan 1750 and fathered six children. The couple settled in Mahoning Twp. then in Northumberland Co. (now Montour Co.) Pa. It is recorded John was plowing in a field when news came of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and he said to his wife, "Washington has called for men and I must go".

John Sechler is shown to be a Sergeant in Col. Daniel Heister Jr's Philadelphia Co. Battalion of Associators in 1776 and 1777. (Pa. Archives 3d Series, Vol. xxiii, Pg. 465) John's son, Jacob Sechler later served during the War of 1812.

John was not alone in his service, his elder brother, Jacob Sechler served during the Indian wars (Pa Archives Series 5, Vol. i, Pg. 321) as a Sergeant commencing 29 July 1763 for three months under Captain Jacob Wetterholt (Wetherhold) in "lor smit fill twp" (Lower Smithfield) in as I recall, what is now Lehigh Co. then Northampton Co. Several years earlier, in November 1756 and June 1757 are recorded Indian raids during which many settlers were murdered. It was for these reasons that the company of volunteers were formed to put an end to the raids. Jacob Sechler lived in Allemangel on 240 acres by the Blue Mountain as did his brother, Andrew (Andreas). That Andreas later served as a Private during the Revolution is recorded in the DAR Patriot Index, Centennial Edition.

John's younger brother, Friedrich Sechler was listed as a Major (Pa. Archives Series 5, Vol. viii, Pg. 442). Friedrich is recorded as being buried in Jacob's Church Cemetery, Jacksonville, Lehigh Co. Pa. However, another Sechler researcher descendant learned that Frederick and his family relocated to China Grove, NC and is buried there at Mt. Zion Church. Persons descended from Friedrich will need to confirm this last information.

Yet another much younger distant cousin of John, Jacob and Andrew; Michael Sechler was born 7 March 1762 in Lycoming Co., Pa. Michael served in a company of Heavy Dragoons under Captain Bartholomew Von Heer to guard "the person and headquarters" of General Washington from 1782 until his discharge in Philadelphia on 31 Dec 1783 (Pa Archives Series 5, Vol. iii, Pg. 921). There was a plaque erected by the Lycoming Chapter DAR which is recorded in an article published in the Williamsport, Pa. Sun Gazette (my copy is undated ).

On 12 May 1831 (he died in December at age 92) John Sechler left a will recorded in Columbia Co., Pa. Will Book 1, pages 359-362. John and Christina, nine other Sechlers and others were buried in the old Presbyterian Graveyard (across Bloom St. from the Grove Presbyterian Church) in Danville, Pa. In the 18 July 1907 edition of the Montour American which served Montour Co., Pa. is recorded "Court Orders Removal of Bones" (some were, some weren't including the eleven Sechlers). The area exists today as a Memorial Park in the Borough of Danville, Pa. Nice guys they were, right???

The Sechler men as a group were very likely big very physical men, some well over six feet tall, I've actually met two which were about 6'4" tall. The most compelling word description was that of John Yorks Sechler (aka "Arkansas John") who was "lost in the West" in the late 1800's. John was a teamster 6'4" tall and about 300 pounds. A long interesting biography of his life of his life would easily be as long as this document., so I will stop.

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