

# The Volpp/Fulp/Phelps Story

TAPhelps 6/2/2016

This is the story of our Germany Ancestry and how it evolved to a number of American surnames such as Fulps, Fulp, Fultz, Felps, Phulps, Phelps and others. It is the result of many hours, weeks, months and yes, years of laborious but enjoyable research and is supported with family tradition, public documents and y-DNA. Most Germany records were taken from the Hohenlohe-Zentralarchiv in Neuenstein and the Landeskirchenarchiv in Stuttgart. First names were usually hereditary in Franconia during this period (the first son was named after the paternal grandfather, and so on). The result was a lot of men in the Volp line named Georg. As with any ancestry search, some conclusions are based on the preponderance of evidence. However, our connection in Germany is clearly proven with a passenger list, court probate record and baptismal record.

## Our Story

About the middle of the seventeenth century near the end of the rule of the Holy Roman Empire in Europe, there was a Georg Volp living in the town of Sindringen. Today, Sindringen, is part of the municipality of Forchtenberg in the region of Baden-Wuerttemberg. This was a town of about 300 citizens at that time. Georg is found in many tax and court documents in Sindringen from 1662 to 1694. About 1663 he had a son that he also named Georg. When his son became of age and owned property, the records show him as Georg Volpp (the young) and his father is then recorded as Georg Volpp (the old). They both were farmers who owned and operated Vineyards. Their land was small but based on taxes paid, it was very valuable. Georg (the old) became a Viertelmeister in 1689. This was kind of like a foreman who was responsible for representing the citizens for a quarter of the town. Georg (the old) had another son he named Friedrich Volpp. Georg (the old) is thought to have died before 1695.

Georg (the young) is recorded as paying property taxes between 1688 and 1732. In 1689, he became a town Viertelmeister, probably replacing his father. About 1685 he had a son named Georg Crafft Volp who went by the name "Crafft". Georg (the young) is thought to have died in 1732 after which his widow is shown paying property taxes. Some of his children had moved to other provinces, so when he died they had to pay export tax for removing their inheritance from Sindringen. His widow paid taxes from 1733 to 1738, when she is presumed to have died.

Crafft Volp is seen in various court and tax records from 1719 until 1750. The court records were mostly small complaints by him and against him. For example, he complained about people driving across his field cutting a road into it when the normal road was flooded. Farmers in that area were told by the court to dig ditches to prevent the road flooding and stay out of his field. He suggested a method that would allow the farmers to prevent flooding in the Glen. He signed a petition regarding the "Easter

Quarrel". Explanation: Sindringen belonged to the Principality of Hohenlohe-Pfedelbach, and after the Counts Hohenlohe-Pfedelbach had died out in 1728, this became part of Hohenlohe-Bartenstein. The Counts Hohenlohe-Bartenstein had converted to the Catholic religion in 17th century and tried to make their peasants convert, too, but the peasants were insistent on remaining Lutheran. This resulted into a long religious war which is known as the Easter Quarrel (Osterstreit). This quarrel ended up at the Reichskammergericht and the Reichshofrat as the two supreme courts of the Holy Roman Empire and produced many files (which are partially preserved in the Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, C 3 no. 2002 and 2004).

Crafft had a son in 1718 who he named Georg Crafft Volpp. The son went by the name "Georg". On October 6, 1742, Maria Magdalena Guldig the daughter of Georg Guldig, a citizen of Mockmuhl, claimed to have an affair with Georg Volpp of Sindringen and claimed she was carrying his child. She wanted them to get married and give her child a name. She said that Georg had not promised to marry her, but he did promise that he would not desert her. This was a serious offense for this small Lutheran community. Charges were made against Georg and Maria and they and their parents had to appear in court for questioning. Georg admitted this declaration completely and wanted to marry Maria but he could not afford to do so at this time unless his father gave him the customary endowment that would give him a start in his new life with a family. His father testified that he did not object to them getting married but he could only afford the cost of his son's fine and nothing more. Mr. Guldig testified that he did not object to the marriage and he could provide his daughter the money for the fine but nothing more. The court determined that since he did not promise to marry her, they would not be forced to marry but the child would take the name of the father. Georg would pay the child 5 florins per year until he reached the age of 12. He was to also pay Maria 10 florins per year. The penalty to the dominion for each was 10 Reichstalers plus court costs. Both Georg and Maria had to "suffer treatment by the moral supervision court in the third degree". This was probably a lesson on the Lutheran standards for good behavior. If they married they would be allowed to live in Sindringen as by-settlers (inhabitants without citizenship). At that time, anyone who came to live in Sindringen was consider a "by-settler" and they had no rights to use any public facility such as a bathhouse nor did they have the protection of the court system. These facilities and services were for people with full citizenship which had to be purchased and approved by the town's ruling body. There was also a less expensive "protection" citizenship which was mainly to allow use of the court system.

We can find no marriage record in Germany for Georg and Maria because all Parrish records in Sindringen were destroyed during World War II. However, a 1757 church record in Pennsylvania shows that they did marry (discussed later). Georg is not seen in any later tax or court records because he now had no rights to these services since he was classified as a "by-settler". We know that he stayed in Sindringen because in 1750 he

requested to buy the lower level citizenship called "Protection". It seems that he and his wife were still being punished for their embarrassing and shameful act, because the request was denied. Fortunately for us, Georg used his money to immigrate to America.

Georg Volpp is listed by himself on the ship Patriot's passenger list which arrived in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on 25 Sept 1751. However, the passenger lists at that time did not include the names of wives and children. His name was signed on his Oath of Allegiance to the King of England as George Volpp. A clerk probably signed the name as was required on the document when the immigrant could not sign their name. An "X" was not acceptable.

Georg's father Georg Crafft Volpp died in 1754 and his probate record shows that he had six children who were his heirs with one gone to America:

1. Susanna Maria Lentz in Waldbach
2. Sebastian Friedrich Volp
3. Georg Crafft Volp (in the New Land)
4. Elizabeth Volp, Mrs. Illinger
5. Rosina Volp
6. Martin Volp

As Georg Crafft Volpp has moved to the New Land **with his family**, the local alderman Johann Michel Hanselmann was officially nominated his legal representative (Curator).

The term "**with his family**" seems to refer to Georg, Maria Magdalena and their one eight year old child. Of course, they might have had other children as well. It is thought that Valentine Volp was the oldest son and possibly the one born in 1743.

Georg first settled in Lancaster County, PA where his second son, Michael Volp was born in 1755. We know this from the pension application for Michael's wife. George later moved to Windsor Township in York County, PA, which is about half way between York and Lancaster, PA. This is where his third son, Peter Volp was born on May 12, 1757. Peter's baptism record is shown in the book, "Pennsylvania and New Jersey Church and Town Records, 1708-1985" by Rev Daniel Schumacher. It shows the parents as Jurg (Georg) and Maria Magdalena Volp. His wife's name, shown as Maria Magdalena, confirms that they were married in Germany and immigrated together and likely brought their eight year old son, Valentine Volp with them. As a point of interest, his brother Michael later named a son Valentine, as was the family custom to use names of parents and siblings (see the album: "Volpp Fulp Naming Patterns" located in the Album section)

Georg moved with his family to Surry County, North Carolina about 1765, where he was encouraged to do so with the offer of free and cheap land for settlers. It is thought that this was when George changed his family name to George Fulps. It was common in the 1700's for immigrants to change German and other European names to ones that were easier to spell and pronounce in English. Also, names were changed to "fit in" and possibly avoid secular conflicts that were common at that time. So now there was George and wife Mary with children Valentine, Michael and Peter Fulps.

From George's Last Will and Testament that George and Mary Fulps also had two daughters, Catherine and Mary who have not been found in any birth or baptismal records and may have also been born in Germany. Not much is known about either of them. However, Mary married a Mr Taylor and died in Stokes County, NC in 1828.

When George Fulps died in 1786, he requested that a bishop Koehler of the nearby Moravian Church, hold his funeral services. Another passenger on the same ship with George and his family was Jacob Koehler. There are some indications that this person eventually settled in the Stokes County, North Carolina area near George Fulps. George Fulp's death and funeral was recorded in the "Heritage of Stokes County, North Carolina" publication, written by the Stokes County Historical Society in 1981. It reported that the Moravian Salem Diary on October 26, 1786, read as follows:

"Br. Koehler went to Belews Creek, sixteen miles from Salem, to hold the funeral of a friend of the Brethen. George Fulps by name. This man was born in 1718 and led a Christian life. The Brethren proclaimed the Gospel several times in his house. Before his end, he arranged that a Brother from Salem should conduct the funeral."

A director at the Moravian Archive in Winston Salem, North Carolina, advises that their priest Koehler was not the Jacob Koehler on the ship with George because their priest arrived in America in 1763. However, there may have been a relationship between the two. The director also advised that their records did not show George as a member of the church. However, he confirmed that their Moravian conversion of the name Volp would be Fulp. Also, he showed their "Salem Diary" record for the date of George's funeral and behold, the name is actually recorded as **Georg Volp** and not **George Fulps**. Someone at the Stokes County historical society, must have changed it for the publication because his friends and family only knew him as George Fulps. Prior to this discovery, yDNA evidence had already confirmed that George Fulps was a descendant of the surname Volp(p) in Germany. This yDNA story is shown in the Album section of the website.

For more information on the children of George and Mary Fulps please see the various Profiles shown in the Album section of the website.