

Source: The Strickler Family
URL: <http://www.geocities.com/ibersheim/index.html>
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One of the major patriarchs of the Strickler family in the United States was **Abraham Strickler**, a native of Germany, who in the mid 1720's emigrated from Holland to Pennsylvania. Through the generations that have followed Abraham, many legends and stories about this forefather have been passed down, some are correct and many others are not correct. This biography of **Abraham Strickler** is intended to help you, the reader, to decide for yourself what is lore and what is fact. This biography will contain some concrete evidence, but will also use logic and known circumstance to help draw conclusions. Some records will be easy for you the reader to locate, and others I have been told about, but have myself, yet to find them at their source. Initially I urge you to take everything at face value. Then decide for yourself what you believe to be the truth about this ancestor. I also ask of you to provide me with any further evidentiary evidence that may prove or disprove anything that is within this biography. Thanks for your interest in the family and thanks in advance for your help.

Abraham Strickler, 1st

Son of Rev. [Hans & Elsbeth \(Löhner\) Strickler](#)

Born: ca 6 Dec 1693, near Tetenbühl-Friedrichstadt, Schwelwig-Holstein, Northern Germany

Died: abt 9 April 1746, Strickler Plantation at Egypt Bend, Page Co., VA

Buried: The Strickler Cemetery, Fort Egypt

Married: c Nov 1718 in the Netherlands possibly Amsterdam

Immigrated: ca Oct 1724 to Philadelphia probably from Rotterdam

Anna Maria Ruffner

Daughter of Hans and Elisabeth (Thommen) Ruffner

Born: 7 Apr 1696, Sigriswil, Tschingel, Bern, SWI Immigrated to Holland in 1711

Died: aft 1751, prob after 1767 (see below) Strickler Plantation at Egypt Bend, Page Co., VA

Buried: The Strickler Cemetery, Fort Egypt

Much has been written about **Abraham Strickler**, the immigrant settler to what is now Page County, Virginia. Unfortunately, most of this information has been based on tradition and not on fact. In many instances these "legendary facts" have been disproved or at least proven improbable. To help sort the "known facts" from that which is speculated, I am here dividing records here into two sections. The first will contain a list of known facts. Following each such fact, a second list of facts and ideas that remain unproved will be provided. These facts I feel may be close to the truth or will help in finding the truth.

Who were Abraham's parents?

There is no "smoking gun" evidence linking **Abraham Strickler** to any of the German Strickler families. However, known Mennonite records suggest he is the son of **Rev. Hans Strickler** and his first wife, whom may have been Elsbeth Löhner or Elsbeth Schneider.

The connection of **Abraham Strickler** to **Hans Strickler** is purely by process of elimination. The number of Mennonite Stricklers living in Germany during the 1690's was limited to only 3 or 4 families: Hans, Hans Jacob (father of Hans) Hans Jakob (called Jakob) and Hans Conrad Strickler.

Hans Jacob Strickler b. 24 Jul 1636, the father of **Hans Strickler** and **Hans Conrad Strickler**, was too old to be the father of **Abraham Strickler**.

Hans Conrad Strickler moved to Friedrichstadt, GER. His children are found in the records of Friedrichstadt beginning in October 1699. He had no child by the name of Abraham.

Hans Jacob Strickler b. 20 May 1677, known in records as **Jakob Strickler**, had a number of children, the first of which was not born until 1701. This Jacob is probably the Jacob b. 20 May 1677 in Hirzel the son of **Hans Strickler** and Anna Asper. I may note here that this **Hans Jacob Strickler** is often listed as **Jakob Strickler** son of **Hans Jacob Strickler** b. 1636, however no record of a **Jakob Strickler** living to adulthood is found in the family of **Hans Jakob Strickler** b. 1636, unless he was born after the family moved from Hirzel.

Hans Strickler, b. 4 Dec 1669 is by elimination, the most probable father of **Abraham Strickler** b. c1693.

Where and When was Abraham Strickler born?

Abraham Strickler was **NOT** a native of Switzerland, **nor** was he born in 1670, as is reported by H.M. Strickler's Forerunners and many other researchers. Nor was it likely he was born at Ibersheim, Germany.

Although the exact location of **Abraham Strickler's** birth remains unproved. It is pretty well accepted across the board that **Abraham Strickler** is the oldest surviving son of **Hans Strickler**. Some debate has been as to whether he was older or younger than **Hanseli Strickler** who was born in 1697. Assuming Abraham was the oldest son by Elsbeth, the proven first wife of **Hans Strickler**, we can determine that Abraham was born after October 1693 when **Hans Strickler** and his wife with no children left Ibersheim, GER. It is not known if Elsbeth was pregnant with Abraham before they left Ibersheim and if so how far pregnant she might have been. So Elsbeth could have been up to 9 months pregnant meaning Abraham would have been born shortly after reaching Friedrichstadt in November 1693. If Elsbeth did not become pregnant until they reached Friedrichstadt then Abraham could have been born no earlier than August 1694. So from these facts Abraham could have been born anywhere from November 1693 thru or after August 1694.

An old bible, often referred to as the Ancient Strickler Bible, contains but one entry for the Strickler family. Written there appears to be the birth date (or baptism) of **Abraham Strickler**. The name "Abraham Strickler of" (two words) then "was" then (a word) then "**Abraham Strickler**" then "1693 6 D—"

The only record I can think of dealing with **Abraham Strickler** from the 1690's would have been his birth or baptism. So this record could indeed represent the birth or baptism of **Abraham Strickler** 6 December 1693.

From the limited research I have done I am told it would have taken up to 6 weeks to travel from Ibersheim to Friedrichstadt, depending on the route. Often the families went to Friedrichstadt via Amsterdam following the Rhine River north and the traveling eastward across the Netherlands and then north to Friedrichstadt.

From this we know that Abraham, if born between November 1693 and August 1694, was not born in Ibersheim, Germany as many report.

By November 1693 the family would have probably traveled as far as the Netherlands. By December 1693, the family was probably near or to Friedrichstadt, Germany.

Judging from the birth of his oldest son Abraham, Jr. in ca mid 1719, it is safe to assume that Abraham was born no later than 1699.

So it is most likely, but **NOT** proven, that **Abraham Strickler** was born in or near Friedrichstadt, Germany.

When Did Abraham Strickler Arrive in America?

This question has been the source of much argument and speculation. There are many theories that have evolved. None have been proven. One suggested that **Abraham and Conrad Strickler** came to America with the Brubaker family, arriving at New York Harbor 16 June 1710. However, when Richard W. Davis of Provo, Utah looked into the 16 June 1710 immigrants, he could find no Brubakers or Stricklers arriving at that time.

Davis lists **Abraham and Conrad Strickler** as immigrants arriving in 1726.

H.M. Strickler suggested they arrived in America in or about 1700. This date is much too early for Abraham or Conrad to have arrived in America. Based on known data about Abraham's birth, Abraham would have been 6 or 7 years old in 1700 and Conrad not more than 5 years old. Most German Mennonite Immigrations to America did not occur until after 1717.

Another theory again includes the Brubaker family. On 27 September 1717, Johannes Bruppacher and Christian Hershey took up a warrant of 1,000 acres on the Little Conestoga Creek in West Hempfield, PA. This land was near where **Abraham and Conrad Strickler** first appear in records. The Brubaker family has ties to Ibersheim and Friederichstadt, Germany and to the same locations in Switzerland as the Strickler family. This theory is based on the idea that families who had moved together for so many years, also came to America together. The conclusion here being the Stricklers arrived in America about 1717 with the Bruppachers.

What is known about the arrival of **Abraham Strickler** is as follows. He first paid taxes in Little Conestoga, Lancaster Co., PA in 1725. He paid tax there thru 1727. No deed for property exists for these years. In 1728, **Abraham Strickler** purchased 160 acres of land, more or less, from John Daugherty. He pays tax on this land through 1733. After that **Heinrich Strickler** pays tax on the property, **Abraham Strickler** having moved to Virginia. This indicates that **Abraham Strickler and Heinrich Strickler** were brothers. **Heinrich Strickler** immigrated in 1727. Also on March 8, 1725, Abraham was issued a trading pass for transit from Pennsylvania to Virginia. In the 1920's the cornerstone for Abraham's trading shelter was found at Egypt Bend in present day Page Co., VA, with a date reported etched into one stone of 1725.

Abraham Strickler and Conrad Strickler both took oaths of Naturalization in March 1728 in Lancaster Co., Pennsylvania. It was often a few years before an oath of allegiance was taken. This indicates that Abraham and Conrad Strickler arrived as early as 1723 to 1724.

I personally feel that **Abraham and Conrad Strickler** arrived in America about Oct 1724. They may have lived for several months with the Brubaker family. By 1725, the Strickler and Brubaker families had all grown and room was limited, so Abraham and Conrad ventured out on their own. In 1728, they purchased land from John Daugherty. They each lived there with their brother **Heinrich Strickler**. Conrad then moved south of the Sesquehanna River to York Co. and Abraham further south into the Valley of Virginia.

Most ships docked in September and October. Since we know Abraham had a taxable crop by August 1725, he had to arrive in America in time to secure rent land, plant a crop and grow it. So it is only possible that he arrived in Pennsylvania before the growing season of 1725, or by March 1725. Since most ships with immigrants arrive in September and October, it is most likely **Abraham and Conrad Strickler** arrived about September or October of 1724.

When Was Abraham Strickler Married?

When **Abraham Strickler** married has been another source of constant conflict. Estimates for his marriage run from H.M. Strickler's date of about 1705 up to 1728.

Based on **Abraham Strickler's** approximate birth date of ca Dec 1693, it is probable that he married between the ages of 20 and 30, or 1714-1724. Approximate and unproven birth dates for his children suggest Abraham married about Nov 1718, probably in Holland (where the Ruffner family lived).

Who Was Abraham's wife?

For many generations, tradition has stated that Abraham Strickler married Peter Ruffners' only sister. This has never been proven. The only known and **proven** fact about Abraham's wife is that his wife was named **Anna**. Upon Abraham's death, his wife Anna refused to administer his estate. Peter Ruffner was appointed to do this.

It has been assumed by most that Peter Ruffner was asked to administer the estate because he was the brother of the widow. Thus the tradition is established that Abraham married Anna Ruffner.

Ruffner family tradition in America states that the family was from Hanover, Germany. However, known records of the early Ruffner family place them in Tsigriswil, Bern, Switzerland. In 1711 many of the Ruffner families were expelled from Tsigriswil for being Tauffers

(Anabaptist Mennonites). Amongst these families was the Hans Ruffner family who moved near Amsterdam. This family established a prosperous winery. The children of Hans Ruffner included one Anna Maria Ruffner b. 1696 and a Peter Ruffner b. 1705. Which indeed matches the tradition of Anna and Peter being brother and sister.

What I personally believe is that it was on one of the Mennonite exiles from Germany to Amsterdam that **Abraham Strickler** met and married Anna Maria Ruffner. I also feel that this may have been as early as 1712, possibly as late as 1717. But, like so many other questions about the family, there remains no solid proof of any marriage within this family.

Who Were and When were Abraham's children born?

I have seen little hard evidence concerning the births of Abraham's children. I have seen births varying as much as 20 years for each child. Below I will give my best opinion as to when his children were born and a brief mention of the rather scant evidences that indicate each to me.

From the estate settlement of **Abraham Strickler, Sr.** it is known that he had sons, Abraham, Jr., Isaac, Benjamin, Jacob and John. There was also a daughter Mary who is never mentioned in these deed records. They appear to be named in these deeds in order of their births.

(Note that the biographical page for each of these children contains a much more detailed account of each)

- **Abraham Strickler, Jr.** born 26 August 1719 probably in or near Amsterdam, Holland. He married (Catherina Schneider?) It has been indicated to me that the Ancient Strickler Bible that has within it some 18 loose pages of material, including two large oversized sheets containing information written in German, once had with it a third over sized sheet. The father of the current owners of the bible also recall a third sheet but he did not know its location. He said there was also a fourth sheet but thinks it was blank. On the third oversized sheet was included the date 29 Aug 1723. In 1932 H M Strickler assumed that this date was the birth date of Abraham Strickler, Jr. This date appears to have been misreported and then repeatedly cited. It appears that the date does not appear as 29 August 1723 in the bible, but that date was arrived at from a age at death calculation that appears in the bible itself, not on the oversized sheets.

Mrs. Virginia Strickler Melbourne made reference to the same record in a batch of notes written in August 1934 in her preparations for the Strickler Reunion. Mabel Strickler Rosen made a third reference to this date in 1959. Neither of them quoted a primary source and both might reflect the research of H M Strickler.

It must be noted that H M Strickler was incorrect in his assumptions about the meaning of nearly every date found in the Strickler Bible and the pages there in. The oversized pages appear to have once been part of the bible itself. It might be noted that the Bible did not come into possession of the Strickler family until after 1742 so any date before 1742 is probably not for a member of the Strickler family. However there is at least one exception and that's on the first oversized page when the name of Abraham Strickler appears with the date of 1693.

I will note that in the bible itself written along the bottom of the page which I think was Exodus 22 is this note:

"The life of Abraham Strickler ended 30 December 1754 aged 12901 days" (or approximately 35 years 4 months 4 days) or born 26 Aug 1719.

On the bottom of the page which I think contained Exodus 23 is this note:

"The deceased Abraham 3974+1754=5728 days" (15 years 8 months 8 days)

Obviously Abraham did not die at the age of 15 years, so this second set of numbers is a mystery. It may represent the length of time he was married. Which would give a marriage date of 22 Apr 1739, which is consistent with the age of his children.

- **Isaac Strickler, Sr.** born ca Nov 1722 in probably the Netherlands or Germany., PA md Magalena Neff. No known record of birth for Isaac has been located. His birth is based on the birth of his oldest known child Anna Maria, born 20 Feb 1746 . Assuming Isaac was about 20 years of age when he married then he would have been born about 1724-25 (21-22 years from Feb 1746) His wife, Magdalena Neff, reportedly was born in 1723. Isaac was most certainly born in what is now Conestoga, Lancaster Co., PA. The date given above is simply a figure based on a birth about half way between Benjamin and Abraham Strickler, Jr.

- **Benjamin Strickler born 21 Oct 1725** W Hempfield, Lancaster Co., PA md Anna Maria Funk When Benjamin Strickler died, several obituaries appeared in local papers. Each gave a different age for him when he died. But using either date, his birth was either 21 Oct 1725 or 21 Jun 1725. I have not seen these obituaries. The Funk History states that Benjamin was about 1720-25. If Abraham's children were indeed listed in the estate settlement according to age, then Benjamin's birth would fall between Isaac and Jacob, or between 1725 and 1728.

- **Jacob Strickler** born 9 December 1728 W Hempfield, Lancaster Co., PA md 1st Nancy Kauffman md 2nd Magdalena Moomau. Jacob Strickler's birth is reportedly contained in Mennonite Ministerial records . I have not been able to find the manuscript containing these dates. It would be interesting to know how they obtained these dates and how accurate of a source it was. His birth is reported as 9 December 1728. From other known records, a 1727-28 birth date seems to be accurate.

- **Joseph Strickler** born 1 September 1731 W Hempfield, Lancaster Co., PA md 1st Elizabeth Stöeklei=>Stickley md 2nd Barbara Harnish (who is also a Strickler descendant!) There has been little dispute over the birth date of Joseph Strickler. Tobias Miley reported Joseph's birth in his research and it has never been challenged. It appears to be an authentic date.

- **John Strickler** born ca December 1732 W Hempfield, Lancaster Co., PA. md Magdalena Kauffman His birth is surmised from known deed records showing when John came of age. (An in depth description of records detailing his date of birth can be found with his biography.

- **Maria Elisabeth Strickler** born 14 May 1736, Egypt Bend, Orange Co., VA (now Page Co.) md 1st Joseph Roads md 2nd Jacob Huddle Like others in the family, her birth cannot be confirmed. A researcher in the Roads line listed her birth as shown above. However this date is NOT proved. From known records of marriage and children, the date of 1736 seems possible as a birth in that year would

have made Mary a few months short of 20 years old when her oldest known child was born.

When Did Abraham Strickler Die?

This is one fact that we finally have some concrete evidence for. There is no disputing it, Abraham Strickler died in April 1746. This is well established by land, deed and estate settlement records.

Deeds, Property, Death & other records of Abraham Strickler listed chronologically

19 Aug 1725 Abraham Strickler pays a tax of 2 shillings and 9 pence on land at Little Conestoga. This tax appears to only be personal property tax as no deed or record of land is ever found for Abraham in Little Conestoga. It is possible that Abraham was living on the same land later deeded to him by John Dougherty.

8 Mar 1726 This is the date reported to have been on an old traders pass that allowed Abraham Strickler to travel between Virginia and Pennsylvania for the sale and trade of furs and goods.

Sep 1726 Abraham Strickler pays tax of 2 shillings and 9 pence on land in Little Conestoga.

1726 This is the year reportedly etched into a stone and the corner of an old foundation found on the Ft. Egypt estate in present day Page County, VA. This foundation was for a small structure on a rise near the bend of the river and was believed used as a shelter for Abraham Strickler when he came to the Valley for purposes of trade. The stone was reportedly found in 1924 when a group of farmers were clearing land near the river for cultivation. The location of this stone is currently unknown and some suggest it is just a part of Page County lore. There does appear to be some recorded evidence of the stone as I was once shown an article from the Page County News that mentioned the stone in a brief.

Fall 1727 Abraham Strickler pays tax of 2 shillings and 9 pence on land in Little Conestoga.

8 Jan 1728 Abraham Strickler is given deed to 160 acres of land from John Dougherty in West Hempfield Township, Lancaster Co. This land was located on the Susquehanna River near what is today Columbia. In March 1728 Abraham said he resided at Little Conestoga. It is not presently known by me if the area of the 160 acres at Hempfield was at that day called Little Conestoga.

Mar 1728 Abraham Strickler is naturalized with brother Conrad Strickler in Lancaster County, PA. They were residents of Little Conestoga. Abraham signed his name but Conrad simply marked with a "K". They mentioned they were Mennonites.

1729 Abraham Strickler pays tax on 160 acres of land in Hempfield Twp., Lancaster Co., PA

1730 Abraham Strickler pays tax on 160 acres of land in Hempfield Twp., Lancaster Co., PA

1730 Abraham Strickler is mentioned as one of a small group of Germans along with Matthias Selzer who had visited Virginia from Lancaster Co., PA with intent to settle. [Virginia Magazine of History and Biography Vol. 29 p.174] It seems unlikely that Matthias Seltzer visited Virginia in the fall of 1730. Matthias Selzer did not arrive in America until he arrived at New York Harbor in September 1730 [fwd]

1731 Abraham Strickler pays tax on 160 acres of land in Hempfield Twp., Lancaster Co., PA

1732 Abraham Strickler pays tax on 160 acres of land in Hempfield Twp., Lancaster Co., PA

Fall 1733 Abraham Strickler appears to have moved family to Virginia as his brother Heinrich Strickler pays tax on the property owned by Abraham Strickler in West Hempfield.

Fall 1733 Matthas Selzer in lawsuit over land transaction with Jacob Stover. [Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, Vol. 13 pages 121, 122, 123, & 297] Selzer mentions friend and neighbor Abraham Strickler who can attest to his claim [later statement apparently added by Herb Britt]

12 Dec 1733 Abraham Strickler is granted 1,000 acres, more or less, of land in Virginia from Jacob Stover. Later resurveys show the tract contained 1,033 acres.

10 Nov 1734 Abraham Strickler sponsors and provides safe passage for Hans Jacob Rothgeb and his wife Barbara (Hallar) Rothgeb who departed from Zürich, Switzerland on 4 October 1734 under the leadership of Rev. Maurice Goetschy. Rev. Goetschy departed with a large group of Reformers and Mennonites who were in towns nearby to Zürich (Wallisellen in the case of the Rothgebs). On 28 October 1734 the group reached Neuwied, Westerdal, Bavaria where four couples were married, including Jacob and Barbara (Hallar) Rothgeb. In July 1735 the group reached Rotterdam, Holland where they stayed until early February 1735 at which time they set sail for America aboard the ship Mercury under Capt. William Wilson Master. They arrived in Philadelphia on 29th May 1735 and made their way to Lancaster Co., PA where they were indentured to Abraham Strickler for 7 years. It is unclear as to if the Rothgebs remained on the Strickler farm in Lancaster County or came to Virginia soon after May 1735. Tradition in the Rothgeb family is that all their children were born in Virginia. John Wayland disputes the account of John Jacob Rothgeb stating that J Jacob Rothgeb was NOT a redemptioner (one brought to America under the bondservant acts). However he offers no evidence against the traditional claims.

15-16 Dec 1735 Abraham Strickler of Providence of Pennsylvania is given a deed of lend and lease from Jacob Stover of St. Mark's Parish, Orange County, VA. The payment was 84 pounds 5 shillings for 1000 acres of land, more or less, on the Massanutten on the North side of the river. (Orange Co DB 1 pages 206-210)

21-22 Sep 1737 Abraham Strickler is a witness to a deed. It reads: " Concrat (sic) Ambyon of St. Mark's Parish (Orange Co.), planter, to Christopher Zimmerman and deed on Lease and Release for 30 pounds, 445 acres of land on Potato Run on the great fork of the Rapahannock River granted Ambyon 1 May 1728 corned to Timothy Stamp and Christopher Zimmerman. Witnessed Thomas Hill, Abraham Strickler and John Newport. Acknowledged by Conrad Amberger. (Orange Co DB 2 p. 100-104)

This 1737 deed is significant in the fact that it shows Abraham Strickler spent considerable time on the east side of the Blue Ride Mountains in what is now Culpepper and Rapahannock Counties where the great fork of the Rapahannock River is located. He was probably there to help his brother Heinrich Strickler who is known to have been in that area in 1737 constructing roads.

(9 Oct) 1738 Abraham Strickler of Orange County is warranted 200 acres of land part of the Mouldin patent along the river formerly Windlekite's land. This 200 acres was later surveyed for John Strickler, son of Abraham Strickler.

29-30 Sep 1743 Abraham Strickler of Orange County sells to Jacob Bowman of same county for lease and release for 20 pounds, 100 acres of land in said county. Wit. Richard Yarbrough, Richard Mauldin, Jr. and James Porteus. (Orange Co. DB 7 p. 347 or dated 30 Jul 1743 DB 1 374)

1744, Abraham Strickler taxed with 129 pounds of tobacco in Frederick Co., VA. This is recorded in Col. James Wood's fee book.

13 March 1745, "...we the undersigned subscribers, have viewed and laid off and marked the road in the said order as followeth, viz:- To begin at Thomas Brook and Frederick County Line and to go hence to Benjamin Allen's Ford and Robert Callawell's Path, and that Henry Fulkinburg, James Dalton, Charles Buck and Abraham Strickler be overseers of that part, and they have for their gang all the inhabitants between the mountains from Frederick County line to Calwell's Path;....." (Abstracts of Augusta and Frederick County Records, this passage taken from German New River Settlement page 13)

12 June 1747

Two land surveys recorded at the Orange County Courthouse proves that Abraham Strickler, 1st had six sons:

A warrant in Orange County in 12 June 1747 appears to name Abraham Sr.'s sons by age. It reads, Abraham Strickler execution for division of 647 acres in two tracts, land of Abraham Strickler, dec'd. Said land divided by Abraham Strickler, Jr. amongst himself and his brothers. It lists them Abraham, Jr., Isaac, Benjamin, Jacob and Joseph. The same is found in 1749 except John has been added to the end.

This survey entered into record on June 12, 1747, done by George Hume on behalf of Abraham Strickler, eldest son of Abraham dec'd and his brothers Isaac, Benjamin, Jacob, and Joseph (no mention of John). Land surveyed and divided into two plats of 263 and 384 acres, respectively, and lying on Misonuttin, being part of a patent formerly granted to Jacob Stover of 5,000 acres December 15, 1733, lying on the North side of the Shenandoah River. The land above mentioned shall be divided (Unreadable words). The division is as follows:

On the tract of 263 acres, Joseph Strickler 102 acres; Jacob Strickler 106 acres; to Abraham Strickler 55 acres On the 384 acres tract, to Benjamin Strickler 201 acres; and to Isaac Strickler 183 acres
(From Orange County Court Records p. 32 Book #??.)

This record was also found by Peggy Shomo Joyner and is in Vol. 1 of Northern Neck Warrants and Surveys 1730-1754. Her abstraction was slightly different, but the material was the same.

Note that as of 12 June 1747: 286 acres of the original 1033 acre Egypt tract remains unaccounted for. This was undoubtedly the land reserved for John Strickler and also the land where Abraham's widow remained.

1033 acres -100 acres (to Bowman)=933 acres
933 acres -647 acres (to sons)= 286 acres unaccounted for (see below)

19 Feb 1749

Another survey recorded on February 19, 1749 by George Hume for an additional 208 acres of the above land is also recorded at Orange County. 208 acres to John Strickler, (now of age?), situated on the south branch of the Shenandoah River dividing the corner between Jacob, Joseph and Abraham Strickler's land.

Note that as of 19 Feb 1749: 78 acres of land of the estate of Abraham Strickler dec'd remains unaccounted for. Since John just received 208 acres it is assumed that the remaining 78 acres belonged to the widow of Abraham Strickler.

1033 acres -100 acres (to Bowman)=933 acres
933 acres -647 acres (to sons)= 286 acres
286 acres -208 acres (to John) =78 acres unaccounted for. In 1750 this land was resurveyed for Isaac Strickler (see below)

20 July 1749 Robert McClenahan lays claim to 230 acres on the Shenandoah formerly surveyed for Abraham Strickler; 200 acres part of the Mouldin patent on the river belonged to Abraham Strickler. (Extracts of Chalkley Vol II, p.378) This land was in 1752 given warrant by right to John Strickler son of Abraham Strickler

6 September 1750, Isaac Strickler receives 261 acres of land adjacent to Benjamin Strickler and cornered to Jacob Strickler and Herman (Houlahan?) 183 acres part of original tract and all part of Jacob Stover's 5,000 acres grant in 1733 purchased by Abraham Strickler dec'd. This accounts for the remaining 78 acres of land unaccounted for in 1749.

Anna Maria Ruffner

Like with Abraham Strickler, many people have speculated about the origins and identity of Abraham's wife Anna. Given tradition her maiden name was Ruffner, the only sister of Peter Ruffner who lived across the river from the Egypt Plantation up on Hawksbill Creek. This conclusion is drawn from the fact that Peter Ruffner was asked to administrate the estate of Abraham Strickler on behalf of his widow Anna.

In this section I make no effort to prove or disprove the maiden name of Anna, widow of Abraham Strickler. Instead this section is here to display known facts and common theories.

Anna Maria Ruffner

Daughter of Hans & Elisabeth (Thommen) Ruffner
Born: 7 April 1696, Tsigriswil, Bern, Switzerland
Died: after 1751, probably after 1767, possibly in 1781
Buried: Strickler Cemetery, Strickler Plantation, Egypt Bend, Page Co., VA
Immigrated by Exile: 1711 to the Netherlands from Canton Bern

Married: c Nov 1718 in Holland
Abraham Strickler, 1st. (see above)
Both immigrated c Oct 1723 to America.

Tradition in the Ruffner family states that Anna and Peter Ruffner came to America from Hanover, Germany. It further states that they were children of a wealthy land baron. This tradition can be proved false. Research into the records of Hanover reveal no record of the Ruffner family there.

Further research shows that the Ruffner family shares a common origin with the Strickler family that is of Swiss Mennonite origins. The Ruffner family originated in Canton Bern in a small village high above Lake Thun near Interlaken. The family became practicing Mennonites and in 1711 were exiled from Canton Bern to the Netherlands. The Ruffner family settled in the Netherlands along the Rhine river where they opened and operated a then well known winery. Of the Ruffner family there we find one Peter Ruffner with a sister named Anna, quite possibly the Peter Ruffner and Anna who appear in Virginia.

When and Where was Anna Maria Ruffner Born?

Anna Maria Ruffner, daughter of Hans Ruffner, was born in Tsigriswil, Bern, Switzerland. This was the location from which Hans Ruffner and his family of 7 children were exiled from.

Anna Maria Ruffner was born 7 April 1696 (per confirmation record and also from Jans Ilickson of Drenthe, Holland in 1991).

When and Where Did Anna Maria Ruffner Die?

Anna was still living in 1746 when she refused to administer the estate of her husband Abraham Strickler. She was apparently living in 1751 when the "widow" Strickler appears in rent rolls of Frederick County, Virginia. No further record of Anna has ever been found.

Circumstantial evidences suggest that Anna lived many years after the death of her husband and that her son John Strickler lived with her as her caretaker.

The estate division of Abraham Strickler accounts for all but 78 acres of land. This land must have been held in reserve for his widow. In 1750 the land was deeded to Isaac Strickler. John Strickler was last to receive interest in his father's estate getting 208 acres of which he soon sold to his brother Jacob Strickler. In 1754 John Strickler was granted deed to 230 acres of land at Pitt Spring in Augusta County, VA (now southern Page) land first surveyed for Abraham Strickler. However at least thru May 1767 John Strickler remains in Frederick County (now Page Co.) at the Egypt Bend Plantation. In 1767 John was sold 287 acres of land and deeded another 208 acres of land near Egypt Bend. Both times he stated he lived in Frederick Co., VA.

The fact that John Strickler remained on land at Egypt Bend at least thru 1767 suggests that he was there to take care of his aged mother. It was not until John married in 1766 and began his family that he may have removed from the Egypt Bend farm. It is not known when John relocated to his 230 acres of land in present day southern Page Co. First record of him there was in 1782. Did his mother die in 1781?

Brief and Rough Sketch of the Ruffner Family

1. Hans Ruffner, b. c 1610, Ensdorf, Berne, Switzerland. He married Dorothea?
Children:
 2. i Christian Ruffner b. 1642.
 - ii Peter Ruffner, b. 1635, Ensdorf, Bern, Switzerland, d. aft 1661.
 - iii Benedict Ruffner, b. 1638, Ensdorf, Bern, Switzerland. He married Anna Amstutz, 1660, in Ensdorf, Bern, Switzerland.
 - iv Dorothea Ruffner, b. 1640, Ensdorf, Bern, Switzerland. She married (1) Unknown 1st Husband. She married (2) Melchoir Graber, 17 Oct 1695, in Sigriswil, Bern, Switzerland. When she md Melchoir Graber it was mentioned that she was a widow.
 3. v Hans Ruffner b. 1645.

Second Generation

2. Christian Ruffner, (1.Hans1) b. 1642, Ensdorf, Bern, Switzerland. He married Madle Buhler, ___ 1665, in Tsigriswil, Bern, SWI, b. ___ 1642, Bern, SWI.

Many of his descendants moved to Mainfeld, Graubueden, Bern, Switzerland. Others went to Rofels and Chur.

Children:

4. i Hans Ruffner b. 7 Apr 1669.
 - ii Maria Ruffner, b. 13 Aug 1671, Sigriswil, BE, SWI.
 - iii Verena Ruffner, b. 18 May 1673, Sigriswil, BE, SWI.
 - iv Anna Ruffner, b. 10 Aug 1679, Sigriswil, BE, SWI.
 - v Peter Ruffner, b. 16 Jul 1682, Sigriswil, BE, SWI.
3. Hans Ruffner, (1.Hans1) b. 1645, Ensdorf, Bern, Switzerland. He married Margaretha Zeller, 1668.

Hans, his wife and three sons all lived at Sigriswil. The children were not baptized there and may have been born in Ensdorf.

Children:

- i Christian Ruffner, b. c 1670.
- ii Johannes Ruffner b. 20 Apr 1673.
- iii Peter Ruffner, b. c 1675.

iv Hans Ruffner, b. c. 1678.

Third Generation

4. Hans Ruffner, (2.Christian2, 1.Hans1) b. 7 Apr 1669, Ensdorf, Bern, SWI. He married Elisbeth Thommen, b. ____ 1672, Tsigriswil, Bern, SWI, d. aft 1715, near Amsterdam, Netherlands. Hans died aft 1726, near Amsterdam, Netherlands.

In 1711, Hans Ruffner, age 42, and his reformed wife Elsbeth, age 39; along with three sons and four daughters, were all exiled to Holland. Hans established himself there as a renowned wine-maker. His birth is not recorded at Sigriswil. He must have been born at Ensdorf. He must have moved from Sigriswil as his children are not baptized there. Of the children listed below, only Peter and Anna Maria can be confirmed as children of Hans. The others are most his children. This assumption is based on the idea that no other Ruffner families are shown immigrating to Holland before 1711. The names of the other five children were given to me by a researcher in Holland, Jans Illickson, whom I have since not been able to contact. I have not been able to confirm his information as to these names. He said these were the Ruffners who lived at the Ruffner winery in its early years. He never said where this was.

Children:

6. i Anna Maria Ruffner b. 7 Apr 1696.

ii Verena Ruffner, b. 4 Mar 1697, Tsigriswil, Bern, SWI.

iii Christian Ruffner, b. 16 Jun 1699, Tsigriswil, Bern, SWI, d. went back to Germany.

7. iv Dorothea Ruffner b. 6 Mar 1700.

v Elisapatha Ruffner, b. 11 Jun 1702, Tsigriwil, Bern, SWI.

8. vi Peter Ruffner b. 11 May 1705.

vii Simon Ruffner, b. 27 Oct 1707, Tsigriswil, Bern, SWI, d. Lancaster Co., PA.

Fourth Generation

6. Anna Maria Ruffner, (4.Hans3, 2.Christian2, 1.Hans1) b. 7 Apr 1696, Tsigriswil, Bern, SWI. She married Abraham Strickler, 1st., c Nov 1718, in Holland, b. c 6 Dec 1693, Ibersheim, Germany, (son of Hans Strickler and Elsbeth Löhner) d. c 9 Apr 1746, Ft. Egypt, now in Page Co., VA, buried: Strickler Cemetery, Fort Egypt, Page Co. Anna died aft 1767, Page Co., VA, buried: Strickler Cemetery, Page Co., VA.

7. Dorothea Ruffner, (4.Hans3, 2.Christian2, 1.Hans1) b. 6 Mar 1700, Tsigriswil, Bern, SWI. She married Geryt Illickson, ____ 1722, in Amsterdam, Netherlands, b. 20 Oct 1698, Amsterdam, Netherlands, d. CA ____ 1766, Amsterdam, Netherlands. Dorothea died CA ____ 1776, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Children:

i Geryt Illickson.

ii Konradt Illickson.

iii Jans Illickson.

iv Symond Pieter Illickson.

8. Peter Ruffner, (4.Hans3, 2.Christian2, 1.Hans1) b. 11 May 1705, Tsigriswil, Bern, SWI. He married Mary Stineman, CA Dec 1739, in Lancaster Co., PA, b. 1 Sep 1714, LANCASTER CO. PA, (daughter of JOSEPH STEINMAN and FRANICA UNKNOWN) d. ____ 1798, PAGE COUNTY VA, buried: Ruffner Plantation Cem. Peter died 17 Jan 1778, Page Co., VA, buried: Ruffner Plantation, Page Co., VA.

An Article taken from a book by Brunk on hte Mennonites of Virginia.

PIONEER LIFE AND ABRAHAM STRICKLER'S ESTATE

THE MENNONITE SETTLEMENTS PROSPERED FROM THE START. THERE WAS NO REPETITION OF THE STARVATION AND ILL HEALTH OF COLONIAL VIRGINIA AT JAMESTOWN ISLAND ONE-HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE YEARS EARLIER. WHILE HUNTING, FISHING, AND TRAPPING WERE NO DOUBT ENGAGED IN SOME EXTENT, THIS WAS OF SECONDARY IMPORTANCE TO THE PLOWING, PLANTING, AND TILLING OF CROPS IN THE PRODUCTIVE LAND. ONE OF THE BENDS OF THE SOUTH FORK OF THE SHENANDOAH RIVER IS CALLED EGYPT BEND BECAUSE CROPS HAVE NEVER BEEN KNOWN TO FAIL THERE. STOCK-BREEDING AND -RAISING, AS THE RECORDS SHOW, ALSO FIGURED LARGELY IN THE ECONOMIC LIFE OF THE EARLY MENNONITES OF VIRGINIA. THEY CAME HERE TO ESTABLISH PERMANENT HOMES. ORCHARDS WERE PLANTED AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF EACH FARM OR PLANTATION. MILLS WERE CONSTRUCTED ON THE RIVERS TO TAKE CARE THE MILLINGS NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY. THEY, NOT UNLIKE THEIR NEIGHBORS, BUILT ONE-STORY HOUSES. THE HOUSE, BUILT OVER A CELLAR WITH A CHIMNEY IN THE CENTER WAS DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS; IN THE ONE END THERE WAS A FIREPLACE, IN THE OTHER, A STOVE. THE ATTIC OF THE HOUSE IN A NUMBER OF INSTANCES WAS A PLACE FOR STORING GRAIN. THE MENNONITE PREACHER WHO WAS FIRST SHOT BY THE INDIANS AND WHOSE HOUSE WAS SUBSEQUENTLY BURNED REVEALED THIS FACT. THE GRAIN STORED IN THE ATTIC, BURNED TO CHARCOAL, WAS FOUND AFTER THE FIRE, IN THE CELLAR WHERE ANYONE COULD FINE GRAINS OF WHEAT STILL PERFECTLY FORMED. INVENTORIES AND SALES RECORDS OF THE SETTLERS INDICATE IN PART THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THEIR PROSPERITY. THIS IS WELL ILLUSTRATED BY THE LISTS OF ARTICLES OWNED BY THE ABRAHAM STRICKLER IN 1746, THE YEAR OF HIS DEATH. THERE WERE EIGHTY-ONE SEPARATE ITEMS OF PERSONAL PROPERTY OR COMBINATIONS OF THEM. HAVING A TOTAL VALUE OF 218 POUNDS 17 SHILLINGS AND 3 PENCE. THE LIST INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING LIVESTOCK, SIXTEEN HORSES AND ONE COLT VALUED AT 63 POUNDS, TWENTY COWS AT 20 POUNDS, ONE BULL, TWELVE HEIFERS, AND TEN STEERS AT 19 POUNDS, AND FOURTY-TWO HOGS AND PIGS VALUED AT 6 POUNDS AND 3 SHILLINGS. THE FOLLOWING IS A PARTIAL LIST OF OTHER ARTICLES OF PERSONAL PROPERTY: TWO STILLS AND "PROPER IMPLEMENTS BELONGING, BATH TUB AND RUNLETS" 33 POUNDS, FOUR CAST WHEELS WITH TIRE BELONGING 4 POUNDS, TWO SAWS, ONE WHIP SAW, ONE CROSSCUT SAW AND FIVE FILES 2 POUNDS, 3 SHILLINGS, OXCHAIN, WEDGES, ONE IRON DOG 1 POUND, 11 SHILLINGS, 4 PENCE, OLD STOVE 3 SHILLINGS, A SPADE SHOVEL AND CUTTING IRON 7 SHILLINGS, THREE HAMMERS AND SMALL HOE 5 SHILLINGS, 6 PENCE, SIX OLD AXES AND ONE HATCHET 1 POUND, ONE HAY FORK 1 SHILLING, 6 PENCE, FIVE SICKLES 9 SHILLINGS, TWO BRANDING IRONS 4 SHILLINGS, TWO CHISELS AND FOUR PLAIN IRONS 4 SHILLINGS,, TWO AUGERS AND A RASP 10 SHILLINGS, TURNER TOOLS 18 SHILLINGS A PAIR OF

SPOON MOLES 5 SHILLINGS, A PAIR OF OLD SCALES AND WEIGHTS 6 SHILLINGS, A PAIR OF PISTOLS AND HOLSTERS 18 SHILLINGS, RAW HIDES AND TWO CALF SKINS 12 SHILLINGS, TWO PAIRS OF STEELYARDS 18 SHILLINGS, AND DUNG HOOK, ONE AX AND BROAD AX 8 SHILLINGS, TWO PLOWS, HOOK AND SHOVEL PLOWS 12 SHILLINGS, TWO ENGLISH PLOWS WITH ALL THE TACKLING BELONGING 3 POUNDS, THREE SADDLES AND PAD, TWO COLLARS AND QUILLERS 1 POUND, ALL THE IMPLEMENTS FOR ROPE MAKING 10 SHILLINGS, A JOINTER, BOX FOUR PLAIN AND SAW 6 SHILLINGS, TWO FLAX HACKLES 10 SHILLINGS, TWENTY-FIVE DEER SKINS 3 POUNDS, 15 SHILLINGS, LEATHER SOLE, UPPER LEATHER AND NEW BOOTS 1 POUND, 13 SHILLINGS, THREE HIVES OF BEES 15 SHILLINGS, ONE HEMP BRAKE 2 SHILLINGS, SIX GALLONS OF "LICKQUER" AT 2 SHILLINGS, 6 PENCE PER GALLON 7 POUNDS, 10 SHILLINGS, ALL THE DISHES, PLATES, BASINS AND A PEWTER QUART POT 1 POUND 10 SHILLINGS, ALL THE IRON POTS, BASINS. TWO FRYING PANS, SKIMMER 1 POUND, ALL ABRAHAM'S WEARING CLOTHES 2 POUNDS, LARGE CHEST 5 SHILLINGS, SAFE 5 SHILLINGS, ONE HUNDRED FOURTY-NINE "tt" OF LINEN YARN 7 POUNDS, 9 SHILLINGS, A STRAW KNIFE AND BOX 15 SHILLINGS, ONE BED IN STILLHOUSE LOFT AND FURNITURE IN THE OLD HOUSE 2 POUNDS, EIGHT SMALL DUTCH BOOKS, A LARGE DUTCH BIBLE AND SOME OLD BOOKS 2 POUNDS, 2 SHILLINGS, PAIR OF NEW AND ONE PAIR OF OLD MONEY SCALES 5 SHILLINGS, TWO STONE GALLON JUGS 2 SHILLINGS, ONE LIFTER AND TWO "KIDLES: 4 SHILLINGS, TWO LINEN WHEELS 5 SHILLINGS, ONE BRASS COCK AND TWO OLD RAZORS 2, SHILLINGS 6 PENCE, AND ONE HONE 1 SHILLING, SIX PENCE.

Abstracts of an article taken from an article in the Staunton News Leader ca 1995

Among the valleys earliest settlers was Abraham Strickler a well known Indian Trader. He would travel several times a year to meet the Indians traveling the Indian Road through Virginia. He was traveling this road as early as 1725 as might be evidenced by an old passport giving Abraham permission to travel the lands south of the Potomac and west of the Blue Ridge for the purposes of commerce. Legend is that Abraham had a trading post somewhere in the Page Valley near the mouth of Mill Creek. This would have been the first permanent construction west of the Blue Ridge. It is believed that Abraham Strickler took up permanent residence in the state prior to 1735, evidenced by the transfer of his property in Lancaster Co. in 1733. It was not until 12 December 1733 that he was conveyed 1,033 acres from Jacob Stover which was part of a 5,000 acre tract granted to Stover by Lord Fairfax. Along with the Adam Mueller and Joist Heit families, the Strickler's became among the first permanent settlers of the Shenandoah Valley. Adam Mueller is generally accepted as the first permanent settler in 1726 and Abraham Strickler the second in or about 1729-1734 (probably 1733). The Strickler Plantation came to be known as Fort Egypt and the bend of the Shenandoah which it was located was known as Egypt Bend. The name Egypt is a metaphor likening the Swiss and German's flight from religious persecution to the biblical flight of the Israelites from Egypt. Fort Egypt was actually a house. It was heavily fortified and was of massive construct and lies west of the Shenandoah River off of Rt. 615 north of U.S. Rt 211, four miles west of Luray. The oldest construct was no doubt an enlargement of Abraham's trading post. It was in 1758 that Abraham's son, Jacob would renovate and build the Fort as it is today. The majority of the Fort is constructed of large Maple logs. A number of rooms are lined with Oak, Pine and Walnut paneling. A huge limestone central chimney measures 15 feet wide at its base and five feet wide in the second floor. It is accessed by several fireplaces, the one in the kitchen measuring 11 feet wide. The original peaked Swiss style roof was lowered. Another wing and a porch have been added to the house since 1758. The cellar is well preserved with loopholes for rifles, a spring for water and hooks to hang food. The cellar is made primarily of old logs sealed with straw and mud. Strickler descendants have owned the Fort now for nearly 270 years. Samuel B. Hoover bought the land in 1941 and carefully restored the home to an excellent state of condition. Samuel died in 1968 and his son James Hoover and daughter Janice (Hoover) Nashold inherited the property. The property is currently unoccupied. One interesting note about the property is that a hill overlooking the home is an old Indian Burial Mound which has been excavated by the Smithsonian Institute. They found pipes, arrowheads and numerous other relics. A cemetery is located not far from the house. This is the burial site of Abraham Strickler and others of the old stock. A monument has been erected in the memory of our Strickler forefathers.kler.