

Origins of the Mumma family – Facts, Evidence & Ramblings

Doug Mumma - 7 August 2002

Much effort has been expended to try and locate where the Mumma family of America lived in Europe prior to their immigration to America. Attempts have been made to make a direct link of the family with the known Momma family of Aachen and in particular, Johann Leonard Momma bapt. Stolberg in 1694. There is some speculative evidence, but no conclusive evidence to support such a claim.

Any study of the European origins of the Mumma families must first start with the known facts about their arrival in America. Fortunately they arrived during a time period that required all persons of German citizenship to register at the Philadelphia Court House and pledge an oath of allegiance to the King of England. This requirement was placed upon the German immigrants because of the English concerns for the large influx of German immigrants. The Germans were outnumbering the English in many town and cities, especially in the state of Pennsylvania.

SHIP ARRIVALS

Known Mumma immigrants arriving on ships in the port at Philadelphia:

10 Sept 1731 - *Pennsylvania Merchant*, John Stedman, Commander from Rotterdam. Passengers include Jacob Mumma and family qualified on 11 Sept 1731. No Mumma women listed above the age of 16 years. Children under the age of 16 include Jacob Mumma, Margaret Mumma, and Frederick Mumma.

18 Sept 1732 - *Johnson* of London England, David Crocket, Master. From Rotterdam, last from Deal. Passengers included Leonard Mumma and family qualified on 19 Sept 1732. He arrived with a wife named Julian. The children with him were - Boys under the age of 16, Anthony, David, Christian - Girls under the age of 14, Julian and Katharina.

Oct 9, 1747 - *Restauration*, James Hall, Captain from Rotterdam and last from Leith. Passengers include Hermanus Neuman (Mumau). It has been generally accepted that this entry is not Mumau, but is correctly transcribed as Neuman. The book "Pennsylvania German Pioneers" by Ralph B. Strassburger and William J. Hinke, does not suggest that this is a Mumma, however I list it here for completeness.

Oct. 13 1747 - *Two Brothers*, Thomas Arnott, Master from Rotterdam, last from Leith. Passengers include Johan Conrad Momma

16 Sept. 1748 - *Patience*, John Brown, master from Rotterdam, last from Cowes. Passengers include Peter Mumma, age 27 and single. Peter was not literate and could not sign his name. The clerk spelled his name as "Mumma". Was this because Peter had a paper with this spelling written on it or was the clerk familiar with that name spelling? No one would ever write Mumma when hearing the word spoken for the first time.

All of their signatures can be viewed by going to <http://www.mumma.org/archives/signatures.htm>.

EVIDENCE ABOUT DAVID MUMMA SUGGESTING A GROSSCARLBACH ORIGIN

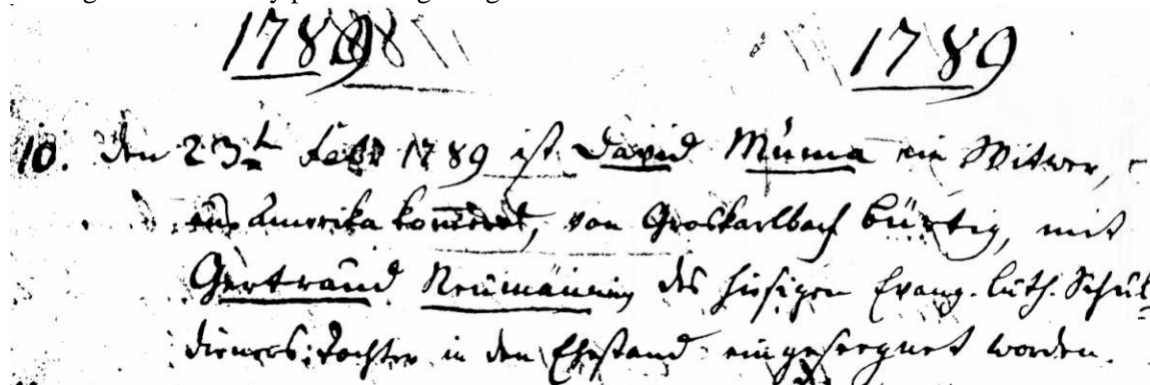
The question, of course, is who and from whence did the Mumma immigrants come? Much of the speculation revolves around information about David Mumma, [25] the 5th child of Leonard Mumma. The following information was provided to me by Bob Moomaw, from Mormon Church microfilms of German church records, from the Moomaw Newsletter, Vol III #4 written by Margaret Dieringer

(<http://www.mumma.org/archives/NewsV3N4.pdf> - 599 kb) and a write-up by Dick Hirtzel (<http://www.mumma.org/archives/DickHirtzel.pdf> - 1034 kb). Dick Hirtzel, through the assistance of a college student, was the person who supplied much information in the Ancestral file regarding the Momma family.

The following facts are known.

1) On 20 Aug 1788, David Mumma, a son of Leonard Mumma writes his Will [**Letzter Wille - Baltimore County Wills Book #5, pg 20**] and states "*Intending with the Grace of God to make a voyage to Holland and for fear of accidents (I) think it necessary to settle my worldly affairs*" He then names his wife, Barbara, and his children. In his Will, he leaves a paltry amount to his wife, the balance to his children. The three girls are married and two of the three sons are likewise married. His age at this time is about 61 years old.

2) The Gerolsheim Evangelical Lutheran Church records [**FHL1457589**] state, "*On February 23, 1789, David Muma, a widower from America, born at Großkarlbach, married Gertraud Neumann, a daughter of the school master of Gerolsheim.*" It has been suggested that this David Muma was the son of Leonard and this record provides the primary evidence that Leonard Mumma came from this region of Germany prior to migrating to America.



The image shows a handwritten church record in German. At the top, the year '1789' is written twice in large, bold letters. Below this, the text reads: '10. Am 23^{ten} Feb^{ruar} 1789 ist David Muma ein Wittwer, ein dummer bürger, von Großkarlbach bürger, mit Gertraud Neumannin die hiesige evang. luth. Kirchl. Gemein: d. d. in den Ehestand eingetraget worden.' The handwriting is cursive and somewhat faded.

3) Barbara Mumma, David's presumed wife, is listed in Baltimore in the 1790 census as the head of a household with several children.

4) A David Mumma dies on 14 Oct, 1791 and this fact is recorded in the First Reformed Church records in Baltimore. There is no comment that he died in Germany [**FHL0013700 or Family Tree Maker CD#178**]

5) On 17 Oct 1791, David's will is recorded in the Baltimore Courthouse. His executor, Peter Albright renounces his executorship. David's wife, Barbara renounces the money David left her in his Will in favor of her 1/3 dower right.

The first 2 facts are often used to "prove" that this David, who wrote his Will in Baltimore, is the one who married Gertraud Neumann and therefore is the link to George Anthony Mumma's son, David, who was born in Grosskarlbach. I am not convinced for the following reasons:

a) I find it very unusual that a man would leave America at age 60 to travel to Gerolsheim, Germany to marry Gertraud, especially if he didn't know her before he left. David was only 5 years old when he left Germany for America, so he would not have remembered very much of his homeland. Why would he take such a perilous journey?

b) Did he know Gertraud? How did he meet her? Was she living in Baltimore and they were returning to Germany together to marry? To me, this marriage would suggest that David was likely in the area for a period of time. Also, he states that he was a widower. Since his wife, Barbara is still alive, we know this statement is not true, if he is the same "David Mumma".

c) The journey time and connections are incredible. From the time he wrote his Will until he marries Gertraud is only 15 weeks. That is not a long time to book passage, sail to Amsterdam (which takes about 6 weeks), book passage on another ship going up the Rhine River, find his way to Grosskarlbach or Gerolsheim and then meet Gertraud and convince her to marry him. His luck to accomplish this in 15 weeks would have been amazing. Something for Ripley's "Believe It Or Not. Ships upon which David could have returned to Holland and then returned to America are listed below. These dates and ship names that arrived in Baltimore, Maryland are from the book **"Pennsylvania German Pioneers" by Ralph B. Strassburger and William J. Hinke, published in 1934 by the Pennsylvania German Society, Norristown, PA.** Of course, David could have gone to Philadelphia to catch a ship to Germany.

29 SEP 1789 Philadelphia
1 OCT 1789 Mary
31 MAR 1790 Philadelphia Packet
4 OCT 1790 Mary
18 JAN 1791 Philadelphia Packet
30 JUN 1791 Mary
10 AUG 1791 Diana
23 AUG 1791 Philadelphia Packet
12 SEP 1791 Fair American
27 SEP 1791 Pallas
22 OCT 1791 Van Stophorst

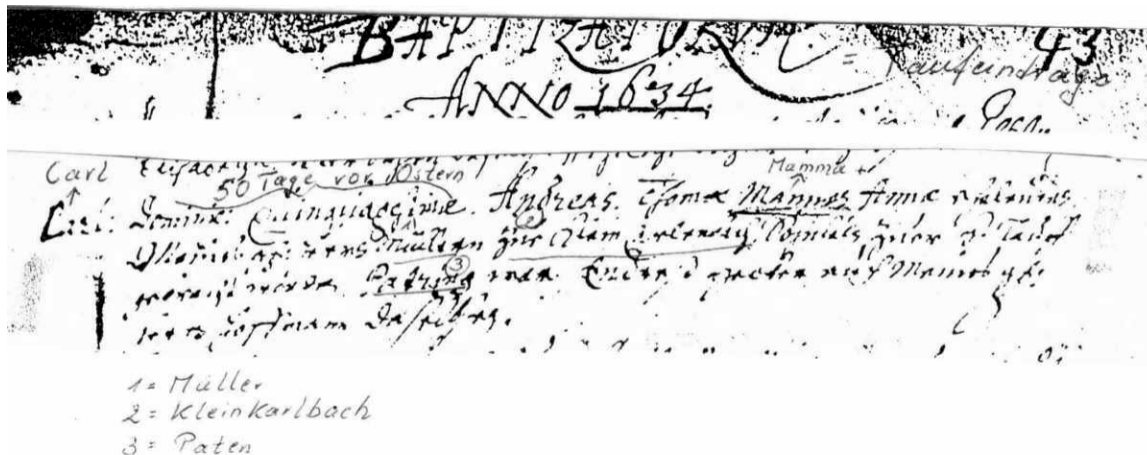
d) The final issue is that David Mumma's death is listed in the First Reformed Church of Baltimore records as October 14, 1791. There is no comment that he died in Germany and in fact, his Will is filed on October 17, 1791, only 3 days after his announced death, which means, in my opinion, that he had to be living in Baltimore at the time of his death. If this is the same David Mumma, then how and when did he return to America? Also, no wife, other than Barbara is mentioned. What happened to Gertraud?

When his Will is recorded, his named executor refuses to serve and David's wife, Barbara, refuses to accept the legacies and bequests made by him in the will and elects her "1/3 dower rights" instead. Obviously it was not a happy marriage!

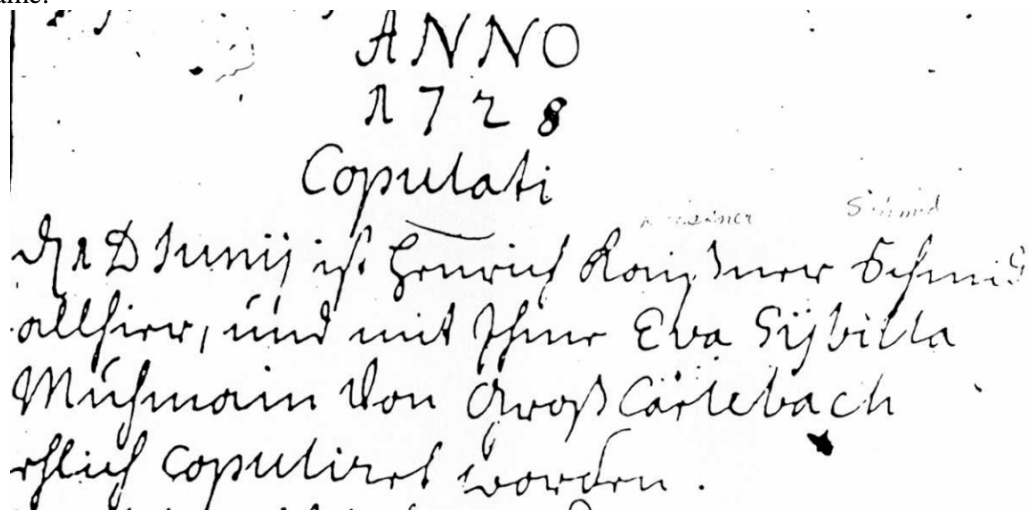
These facts are not consistent and seem to contradict each other. Of course the next question to ask is who else could this David be, and that I can't answer. David had a son named David, but he is married and he and his wife are having children on a regular basis and he was not born in Grosskarlbach. David [25] is the only David who fits that requirement unless there is a later, unknown David Mumma who arrives in America, his wife dies and then he returns to Grosskarkbach. One would expect, however, to find some records of a marriage, etc. in the church records surrounding Grosskarlbach. The possibility does exist that the David listed in the Gerolsheim records was born at a later date in Grosskarlbach, traveled to America either married or unmarried, his wife dies, and he returns to the Grosskarlbach area and marries Gertraud.

OTHER RECORDS TO EXAMINE

• (April 19th), 1634 From the Lutheran Church records in Battenberg (church records in Freinsheim which is just south of Grosskarlbach). “Andreas was – baptized son of Thomas Momma and his wife, Anna....into 1634, 50 days before Easter millers to Kleinkarlbach. Patern...” This record was supplied to me by Else Mußler. This record came from an archivist in Freinsheim for Battenberg. Every time I look at the record, I have a hard time transcribing Andreas’ surname into Mumma. This record should probably be reviewed in the original book. The photocopy is not the best. I am not holding out much hope for this record. Udo Momma also reviewed the record and also doubted the MOMMA/MUMMA spelling. I would be highly surprised if the Mumma family was living in this region continuously from 1634 to the 1750’s and leave so few church records of their existence. The 1634 record is shown below:

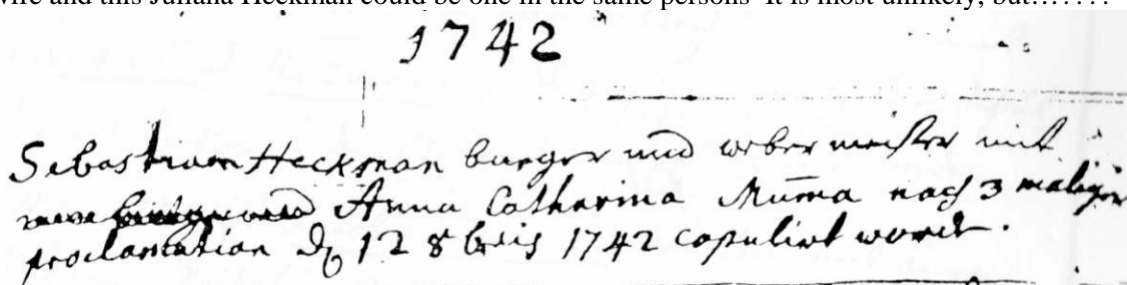


• June 1, 1728 The Heuchelheim Evangelical-Lutheran Church records [FHL0193892] state that Eva Sÿbilla Muhmain of Großkarlbach married Johann Heinrich Kayssners. Dick Hirtzel speculated that “Muhmain” and “Mumma” are one in the same name, just written differently by the church scribes. He suggests that this might be Eva Sibylla Momma who was baptized in Stolberg on 25 August, 1697 as recorded by Macco in his 1907 book about the Momma family. The Heuchelheim Evangelical-Lutheran records show that Eva Sybilla Kaiser died and was buried on 21 Sep 1763 at the age of 66 years, 3 weeks which would put her birth about 30 Aug 1697. [This is very close to the published baptism of 25 Aug 1697 for Eva Sibylla Momma of Aachen]. I suppose it is possible these two ladies are one in the same, but Sibylla / Sÿbilla were very common given names and these similar dates may be a pure coincidence. In all prior cases, the Momma/Mumma name is spelled very clearly and easy to read and transcribe and that is not the case for this record in Heuchelheim. I have never seen this way of spelling the surname.



Another interesting record is that of the Anna Catharina Mumma

• 12 Oct 1742 *Sebastian Heckman, citizen and master weaver married Anna Catharina Mumma after the required three proclamations.* This is the first entry written in the Grosskarlbach Reformed Church records [FHL0191872]. Unfortunately, all church records prior to 1742 are lost. The name is clearly spelled as Mumma (Mu(m with a bar on top)a). Evidence of this record suggests that a family who spelled their name 'Mumma' existed in the region. The births of this family are easily traced in the church records with the first son, David being born a year after they were married. Additional births of children can be found in 1747, 1750, 1753, 1758 and 1760. Of special interest to me is the birth of Juliana Catharina Heckman born 18 March 1753. My ancestor, Henry Mumma (b. ~1760) married a Juliana Heckman in Lancaster Trinity Church on 22 Apr 1780 and it makes me pause to wonder whether his wife and this Juliana Heckman could be one in the same persons. It is most unlikely, but...????



I have searched through the known MOMMA records and can find no evidence for a girl by the name of Anna Catharina Momma of the right age. So now we have some curious facts. Church records for several individuals in the Grosskarlbach area clearly recorded as MUMMA and not MOMMA, the normal spelling for this family in the Aachen/Stolberg area.

SUMMARY

Since both Jacob and Leonard clearly spelled their names as “Mumma” upon arrival in America in 1731/1732, a close link to Grosskarlbach is strongly suggested because it is one of the few places where the MUMMA surname spelling clearly exists and David Mumma’s records seemed like a perfect fit. If one assumes there is a firm connection to Grosskarlbach, then Anna Catharina Mumma Heckman was likely a sister or cousin of Leonard and Jacob. I am not convinced that Leonard Mumma, who arrived in America in 1732, is the same as Johann Leonard Momma who was born in Stolberg in 1696 or that he migrated to Grosskarlbach. Again most of the evidence seems to be circumstantial.

From the recent DNA testing, we do know that the MUMMA and MOMMA family share a common ancestor in the recent past. The question is which one and where?