

*Nancy Jensen*

THE PERSINGER FAMILY  
(PARSCHINGER)  
(PERTACHINGER)

In 1735 in the Southwest section of Germany known as "The Palatinate" Jacob PERTACHINGER and his family lived. They were farmers, but several years of war and drought had left it's mark on the land and the people were starving. Some of the Barons managed to sell their property and set out for the land of promise, "AMERICA".

Jacob had been lucky enough to receive passage for him and his family. They sailed from Rotterdam on the ship, Mercury, out of London. After a long and hard voyage, they landed in Philadelphia on May 29, 1735. They were met by friends and former countrymen. From Philadelphia they set out for the German Settlement in York County, Pennsylvania. It was hoped they might find land to homestead.

Unfortunately, there was no land available. They were welcomed by old friends and given a temporary home, but the only solution seemed to be share-cropping if they stayed here.

Jacob heard of a German Settlement in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. A German by the name of Joist HITE had a large land grant, and German Immigrants were settling there. Jacob made his decision to investigate, since this seemed to be what he was looking for. He was warned that it was a long, dangerous trip through the wilderness lurking with wild animals and Indians. Because of this, he insisted on leaving his wife and daughter, Catherine, behind with friends while he and his three sons, Jacob Jr., Phillip, and Christian made the trip. They were all three in their early twenties and were strong and robust.

They went down the "Long Gray Trail" that led into the mountains of Virginia. They arrived near the present town of Woodstock in the Shenandoah Valley, obtained enough land on which to build a cabin, and made their claim. Two of the boys went back to get their mother and sister, the livestock, and what furnishings they could carry on horseback.

By 1751 all three boys were married and had gone across the Allegheny mountains into Greenbrier county. They acquired land on Spring Lick and started to clear it. Unfortunately, they had the same experience many other frontier settlers knew so well, they were attacked by Indians, and Phillip was killed. The other two boys abandoned the land and returned across the mountains. Jacob Jr. settled on the Cowpasture River near the present town of Clifton Forge.

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Christian settled on the Jackson River in 1753 and in 1754 trouble struck again. The Jackson River Settlement was attacked and Christian was killed and his wife and two children taken prisoners. Mrs. PERSINGER and one of the children managed to escape, but her six year old son, Jacob, was taken off by the Indians.

Now out of this incident, came one of the most interesting stories of the period! Quoting from Mr. William WINTZ, the story follows:

During the raid several other young boys from nearby settlements were also captured. They were all taken to the Shawnee Villages on the Plains of the Ohio where they were adopted into Indian families.

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One of these boys was adopted by an Indian Squaw who already had two sons of her own about the same age. The squaw went to great lengths to teach and train the boys to become strong young warriors. She even tied boards to their backs to make them walk erect. Every morning, winter or summer, she made them take a plunge bath after which they had to run around without any clothes on until they dried off.

When the boys had been with the Indians for nearly eight years, they were forced into a treaty with the whites at the end of the Pontiac war. Part of the terms of the treaty stated that all white prisoners that were held by the Indians must be returned to their homes. The boy, now fourteen, was separated from his adopted family and sent back to the Jackson River Settlement.

The Indians were kind to their captive and only punished him when he insisted on helping the squaws with their work. After he became older, The Shawnees never asked him to join in their war parties against the white settlers.

He stayed around several days in the strange place but it seemed no one remembered him or was anxious to take the young savage into their home. Confused and downcast, he slipped off one day and made the long return trip back to his squaw mother in Ohio. All of the Indians were glad to see him, but the Chief insisted the terms of the treaty must be strictly observed. Therefore, he assigned three braves to escort him back across the mountains to the Jackson River Settlement. Some place along the way, however, he managed to escape and returned once again to his Indian family. This time his squaw mother tried to hide him out, but when the braves returned with their story; the Chief made her bring him forth. Believing he had been forsaken by his Indian family and friends, he felt rejected and made no further effort to escape.

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When he was sent back to the Jackson River Settlement, for the third time, the widow of Christian PERSINGER heard of his return. Believing him to be her son, Jacob, who had been taken prisoner about the same time; she claimed him as her own. He was taken into her home and given the name of Jacob Jr. to distinguish him from the older Jacob, the brother of Christian, and who was living at that time on the Cowpasture River. Young Jacob and his mother made a strange sight when they were seen together. He was a 6'-2"- 200 pound youth while she was less than five feet tall and did not weigh 100 pounds. He was sent to a German school where he presented somewhat of a problem to the strict schoolmaster. How was he going to discipline a 200 pound semi-savage youth who always had a rifle standing nearby in the corner and kept a hunting knife in his belt?

Until his dying day, young Jacob never believed he was a PERSINGER. He seemed to remember different parents and different surroundings at the time of his capture. He also believed his name had been Godfrey. Possibly because of this uncertainty, he did not remain long with his new family. He soon discovered that with his early training he could make a living as a hunter and trapper.

In a short time he had prospered enough to buy a tract of land on Pott's Creek, nine miles above the present town of Covington, VA. Here he built a cabin and spent most of his time hunting and fishing.

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This carefree life soon came to an end, however when Jacob married a girl by name of Mary KIMBERLINE. As soon as he brought her home to his little one room cabin, with only two bearskins on the floor for a bed; she put her foot down. Before long he had built for her one of the finest houses in the Valley. With her help he soon became one of the county's most substantial citizens.

In the march to Point Pleasant before the battle, he served as lead scout and guide with Matthew ARBUCKLE; having been over the same route many times before. One day while he was several miles in front of the main body of troops, he was startled to see an Indian appear on the trail in front of him. However his concern was soon changed to joy as he recognized one of his Indian brothers. They exchanged greetings and spent several hours talking over old times together. After shaking hands, the short truce came to an end and each continued on his way again, concerned with the grim business of war. Jacob later served 18 months in the Revolutionary War as a corporal in the Virginia Regiment under Colonel NEVILLE.

The children of Jacob and Mary KIMBERLINE PERSINGER were:

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1. John, Col in Militia, unmarried.
  2. Mary, married Samuel CARPENTER, Jr
  3. Andrew, married Elizabeth STICKLEMAN
  4. Joseph, went to Missouri
  5. Alexander, went to Missouri, later became a Judge.
  6. Elizabeth, (1780-1846) married Conrad FUDGE
  7. William Rose, married a ROSE
  8. Susannah, married a REED
  9. Nancy, married Charles CALLAGHAN
  10. Sarah, married Peter WRIGHT
  11. Jane, married a KARNES, went to Tazewell County
  12. Granville, married Henry CLARKSON

Jacob PERSINGER<sup>II</sup>, son of Jacob PERSINGER, the Immigrant, lived on the Jackson River near Covington. His home was on the mouth of Pott's Creek, and there he died about 1774. He was the father of four sons. His first wife was Catherine; he married second Catherine PENCE, widow of Jacob PENCE, who died 1750. Sons are probably by first wife.

1. Abraham PERSINGER
2. Phillip PERSINGER
3. Henry PERSINGER, son of Jacob II, married "Grizzy" (Griselda) \_\_\_\_\_, lived on Blue Spring Run, died in 1824. Their children were:

1. John
2. Andrew
3. Jacob, married Elizabeth \_\_\_\_\_. Their children:
  1. Henry, married Annie FRIDLEY
  2. Charlotte, married Henry MYERS
  3. William, married Mary WOLFE
  4. James
  5. Alexander, went to Indiana
  6. John
  7. Andrew
  8. Jeremiah

(Some of his sons went to Greenbrier and Nicholas Cos.

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Children of Jacob PERSINGER II and Catherine

4. Christopher PERSINGER. He settled on Blue Spring Run in Botetourt county, and he is mentioned in the court records of that county. On one day they fined him twenty shillings for insolence and contempt, and the next day it was set aside, "for reasons appearing to this court". Christopher died in 1802 and his will mentions the following children:
  1. Moses PERSINGER. Married Lottie RAYHILL and was the only son to remain in Allegheny County. He lived on his father's homestead. His children:
    1. Allen PERSINGER, went to Illinois. Married a PETERS
    - (page 100)--2. Harvey PERSINGER. Went to Texas, married an ALFORD
    3. Lee PERSINGER. Lived on Pott's Creek. Married first a HAWK: 2nd, a HELMINTULER.
    4. Maria PERSINGER, married Jabez JOHNSON
    5. Soprenia PERSINGER. Married William SOLLENDER
    6. Charlotte PERSINGER. Married George STULL
  2. Jacob PERSINGER. Had the following children:
    1. Henry PERSINGER, Went to Indiana
    2. Charlotte PERSINGER. Went to Indiana
    3. William PERSINGER
    4. James
    5. Alexander PERSINGER
    6. Andrew PERSINGER
    7. Jeremiah PERSINGER
  3. George PERSINGER
  4. Elizabeth PERSINGER, married George KARNES, 1793
  5. Mary PERSINGER, married George FOUGHT, 1789
  6. Catherine PERSINGER, married John WRIGHT, 1785
  7. Rebecca PERSINGER, married John DUDDING (see DUDDING Family for more details)
  8. John PERSINGER was the fourth son of Christopher. He married Elizabeth KIMBERLINE in 1778 and they settled in Greenbrier County the same year. In 1799, after their children were grown, they moved to the Kanawha Valley and settled opposite the mouth of the Coal River where he operated a ferry. Elizabeth died and he married a second time, Catherine \_\_\_\_\_. In 1810 his will was recorded. It named his children:
    1. Jacob PERSINGER. The will stated Jacob was to receive no part of the estate since he had already been paid in full. Possibly he received his share when he married Ursula BLAKE. They were married in 1800, and were the only members of the PERSINGER family to remain in the Valley. They settled on Big Guana Creek. Jacob lived to be 79 years old, and he died of dropsy May 9, 1856. Ursula died at the age of 76, of old age, on July 20, 1859. They had two sons:
      1. Kenneth PERSINGER, born 1803, married Lucinda \_\_\_\_\_. They settled on Poca River at the mouth of Kelly's Creek. He worked for Kanawha Salines at the salt furnaces

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1. Kenneth PERSINGER (son of Jacob & Ursula) cont-  
for several years. Later he returned to Kelly's  
Creek and in addition to farming, he engaged in  
Coopering. Their children:
    1. Margaret, b:1831
    2. Ursula, b:1833
    3. Marym b:1836
    4. Sarah(Sally) b:1840 and married Elisha JONES
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5. Charles, b:1841
  6. Anderson, b: 1844
  7. Rachel, b:1848
  8. Lucinda, b:1852
  9. Millissa

2. Jacob PERSINGER Jr. B: 1809. He married Elizabeth  
PERSINGER, who was born in Greenbrier County. He  
was a blacksmith and worked at the Black Betsey  
and Raymond City Mines. He was also the one who  
reported his mother's death. Possibly she was  
living with him at the time. Their children were:
  1. Henrietta, b1835
  2. John R. b1837, married Sarah MELTON
  3. Mary A. b1839
  4. James A. b1840, married Martha A. PARRISH
  5. Ursula, b1842
  6. Michael, L. b1844
  7. Granville W. 1847
  8. Ola, b:1850
  9. Andrew, b:1853
  10. Benjamin B 1860

2. Luke PERSINGER (2nd son of John and Elizabeth)

3. John PERSINGER Jr.

4. Harmon PERSINGER, He was the first settler on Harmon's  
Creek of the Poca River.

John Sr's will carried the provision that his good friends  
John DUDDING (also a brother-in-law) and Richard McALLISTER  
be appointed executors. After the sale, the heirs were paid  
off in cash. John DUDDING conducted the auction. Many well  
known names were listed as purchasers. One was William DUD-  
DING, Rebecca's son, and ancestor of all the family of the  
Erasmus CHAPMAN line.

After the estate was settled, Luke, John Jr., and Catherine  
PERSINGER all moved to Washington County, Indiana.  
There are still members of this pioneer family living in the  
area of the Kanawha Valley. There are also quite a few PER-  
SINGERS records in the Mason County records, and are probably  
of the same family, although I did not make any effort to  
connect them.

(end of page 101 and this section).