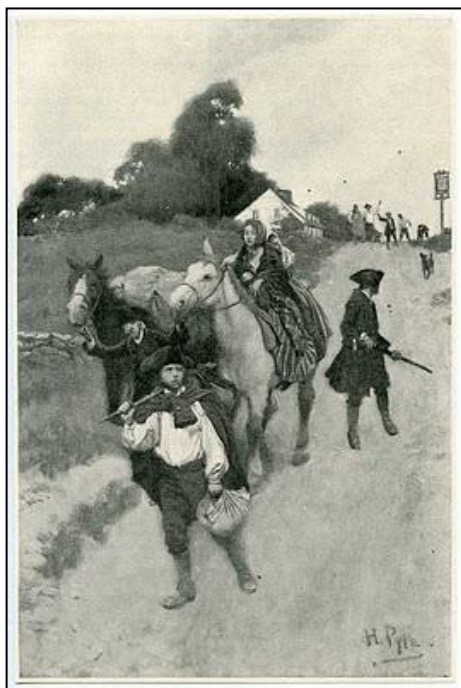


George Philip Wintermute of the Wyoming Valley, Pennsylvania British Loyalist in the American Revolution

Six of his sons served with Butler's Rangers

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"Tory Refugees on the way to Canada" by Howard Pyle. The work appeared in Harper's Monthly in December of 1901. Wiki, PD

Georg Philip Windemuth arrived in America in 1732. He was 25 and had been a passenger on the ship *Samuel*, which sailed from Rotterdam, Holland and arrived, by way of Cowes, England in Philadelphia on August 11 of that year. The ship's captain was Hugh Percy. Of the 279 persons on board (106 men, 89 women, and 84 children), Georg Philip was the only Windemuth (Pennsylvania German Passenger Lists).

George Philip's surname was spelled in a number of ways in the various records and resources, among them: Wintermuth, Windemuth, Windenmuth, Windemoot, Windemoet, Windemoed, Wintemuth, Windemout, Wintermott and Wintermote, as well as Wintermute. George Philip was also known simply as Philip. In the New Jersey baptism records for his children, his Christian name is listed as Jory Philip, or Jory, the Dutch version of Georg, as well as Philip. His wife's name is listed as Maria Julianna Huber," "Mari Hoever," "Maria Houverin" and "Mary Wintermute."

The details of Jory Philip's first dozen years in America remain largely unknown. Other Windemuth/ Wintermutes immigrated to America in the 1730s. Various documents suggest that Jory Philip was related to these individuals. (This will be described in greater detail at the end of this article.) At some point after coming to America, George Philip married a woman named Maria Juliana Huber and the couple started their family. Leonard, George, and Philip are thought to have been born in Pennsylvania, although no baptism records have been found for these three children.

By 1746, Philip and Maria were living in the region of the Upper Delaware River Valley, also known as the Minisink Valley, in Sussex County, New Jersey. Sussex County is in the north-west corner of the state. German immigrant families began arriving there from Philadelphia in the 1730s. More Germans came in the 1740s and 1750s. Then, as now, this rural, heavily forested area was a farming community and it is assumed that George Philip made his livelihood as a farmer.

According to baptism records and other public documents, George Philip Wintermute and Maria Juliana Huber had ten children: eight sons and two daughters. Leonard, George, and Philip are

mentioned above. The children born to the couple and baptized in the Dutch Reformed Churches at Walpack and Machackemeck in the Minisink valley were: Johann Christoffel (April 27, 1746); Johannes (October 25, 1747); Abraham (August 19, 1750); Petrus (August 19, 1753); Elizabeth (November 26, 1756); Elizabeth (January 28, 1759) and Benjamin (December 27, 1761). Presumably the first Elizabeth did not survive infancy. The Dutch Reformed Church in the Walpack Township was located about twenty miles from Port Jervis, NY. Johann Christoffel was baptized there. The next six children were baptized at the Dutch Reformed Church at Machackemeck. The original site of this church was on the Old Mine Road, now in the City of Port Jervis. (Source: *Minisink Valley Reformed Dutch Church Records*) These children are also listed in *The Windemuth Family Heritage*, 1996, on pages 57-60.

Some twenty-five years after settling in Sussex County, New Jersey, Philip and his family, with the exception of his sons Leonard and George, moved to the Wyoming Valley, in the region of the present-day city of “Wilkes-Barré in Northeastern Pennsylvania. In his history of Wilkes-Barré, Harvey reports that on September 14, 1772, Philip Wintermute of Mountain Township [?], Sussex County, New Jersey, purchased from Nicholas Phillips of Wyoming, Pennsylvania certain lands in Kingston and 116 acres north of Kingstown in what subsequently became Exeter Township in Wyoming valley, along with a dwelling house. The selling price was 45 pounds. By 1776, Philip Wintermute was listed in the Wyoming valley, along with his sons Philip, Jr., John, Christopher, Abraham, Peter, and Benjamin. Phillip Wintermute, along with John and Philip Wintermute Jr. are listed on the tax lists of the Exeter District of the Wyoming Valley for August 1776 and again in 1777 (Source: Harvey, 1050; Harvey cites “The Town Book of Wilkes Barre,” for the land purchase record.)

This valley was a twenty-five mile stretch of fertile country along the north branch of the Susquehanna River. In the eighteenth century, it was claimed by both Pennsylvania and Connecticut, as well as by Native Americans, who strongly protested the incursion by European colonists. The settlers sought to protect themselves against the natives by erecting a number of forts. One of these forts was the fortified home (a stockade built around the house) of the Wintermute family. (*The Windemuth Family Heritage* 57-60; Trussell, Jr.)

American Revolution, Battle of Wyoming.

The times leading up to the American Revolution were difficult for settlers in the thirteen colonies. There were both Loyalists and Patriots in the Wyoming Valley. Many German immigrants sided with the British, perhaps out of loyalty to the country that had welcomed them to America. Georg Philip Wintermute and his family were among those loyal to Great Britain. (*The Windemuth Family Heritage* 57-60; Trussell, Jr.)

In 1777, John Butler, a Loyalist from New York serving with the British army, was charged with enlisting eight companies in the war effort on the colonial frontier. Two of the companies were to consist of “people speaking the Indian language and acquainted with their customs and manner of making war.” The remaining companies were to be composed of people loyal to Britain and well acquainted with the woods. “Many of his best recruits were drawn from the east branch of the Susquehannah, where all persons suspected of loyalist leanings were keenly persecuted.” (Van Deusen, 12)

The Wintermutes were relative newcomers to the Wyoming Valley. It has been reported in some historical sources that, even before the events of 1778, there was suspicion among their neighbors as to where their sympathies lay in the Revolutionary War.



Oil on canvas painting by Alonzo Chappell depicting the Wyoming massacre of July 3, 1778. Painting dated 1858. PD

neared Fort Wintermute, they were ambushed by Butler's forces. Between 200 and 300 American Patriots lost their lives in the ambush. (Harvey, 991-92)

The Wintermutes and their fortified home would play a significant role in the events of July 1778. Major John Butler and his Rangers, with their Native American allies, raided the Wyoming Valley on the last day of June. The Patriot militia that had gathered at Wintermute's fort quickly surrendered to Butler. Meanwhile, the Tory commander was informed that a large number of Patriots had gathered at Fort Forty, also in the Wyoming Valley. On July 3rd, Major Butler ordered Fort Wintermute to be set ablaze in an effort to

mislead the Patriots into thinking that he was on the retreat. As the men from Fort Forty

After the Battle of Wyoming, Butler's Rangers returned to their winter quarters on the west bank of the Niagara River in Ontario, Canada (now Niagara-on-the-Lake). The Wintermutes and the other Loyalist (Tory) families of the area went with them. For their allegiance to the British Crown, their lands and property were later confiscated. At the close of the War, Colonel Butler and a majority of his men settled in Upper Canada, now the province of Ontario." (Van Deusen)

Philip, Abraham, John, Peter, and Benjamin Wintermute are included in the roster of Butler's Rangers (Van Deusen). It isn't known when the Wintermute men enlisted in Butler's Rangers, whether it was before or after what has been termed the Wyoming massacre. Philip Wintermute, the father, is not listed; he was 73 in 1778, too old to do much fighting. Christopher is not on the roster of Butler's Rangers. Nor is he on the list of petitioners for land in Upper Canada. Presumably, he was the one that his mother Maria Huber (Mary Wintermute) later noted was "killed in the service."

The Wintermute family was among those who stayed in Canada after the Revolution. This is confirmed by a number of land petitions filed by the family in Niagara, in Upper Canada. One was that of Mary Wintermute, a widow living in the Township of Bertie. It was dated February 22, 1797:

"Humbly shews – That your Petitioner came into the Province in the year 1778 – with her Husband and Seven Children & that her Husband died the year following—That six of her said children being Sons, Served His Majesty, But your Petitioner having never received any Land on her own or familys account, prays your Honor would be pleased to grant her such a Portion of the Vacant Lands of the Crown as to your Honor may seem meet, and in duty bound Your Petitioner will ever pray—" Mary Wintermute made her

mark. Received at the Executive Council Office on 24 Feb 1797 and read in Council on 7 Apr 1797. Recommended for 100 acres family lands. The Sons who served must be considered compensated. [Upper Canada Land Petitions LAC "W" Bundle 2, Petition Number 87] (Upper Canada Land Petitions of the Niagara Settlers)

Attached to this petition of Mary Wintermute is the following certificate of Peter Ball, J. P. dated at Newark 25 Feb 1797:

"I do hereby Certify that Phillip Wintermute deceased came to Niagara in the year 1778 with a Family Consisting of a Wife and Seven children Six of them Sons who all served in Butlers Rangers one killed in the service that the said Phillip died in the year 1779 the widow and Six Children are yet Living and in this Province [Signed] P. Ball J. P. & Lieu^t late Rangers" [Upper Canada Land Petitions LAC "W" Bundle 2, Petition Number 87b] (Upper Land Petitions of the Niagara Settlers)

Philip, John, Abraham, Peter and Benjamin Wintermute are also represented in the Land Petitions of Upper Canada. These men are the same as listed on the reconstructed roster for Butler's Rangers, compiled by A.H. Van Deusen.

George Wintermute was one of the two sons of Philip who remained in Sussex County, New Jersey in 1772 when the majority of his family moved to the Wyoming valley of Pennsylvania. He later joined his family in Canada and also appears in the Land Petitions of Upper Canada. The following petition is dated January 4, 1797 at Newark (Niagara-on-the-Lake):

"The Petition of Geo. Wintermute who had Six Brothers in the late Colonel Butlers Corps last War—Respectfully Shews—That he brought a wife and four Children in to the Province before the year 1788, and that he has only received 150 Acres, Prays Your Honor for family Lands & such further Quantity for himself as y^r Honor may think proper & y^r Petitioner will be ever bound to Pray."

Leonard Wintermute, who had also remained in Sussex County in 1772, was the only child of George Philip Wintermute and Maria Juliana Huber to remain in what became the United States of America. Leonard (married to Phoebe Comstock about 1763) was originally thought to be a brother of the immigrants Johann George and George Philip, but it was decided later that he was the son of Georg Philip. In his will, dated June 17, 1809, Philip Wintermute, Jr, who settled in Bertie Township, Ontario, Canada after the American Revolution, mentioned "my nephew Philip Wintermute, eldest son of my brother Leonard Wintermute" (*The Windemuth Family Heritage*, 1996, 61.)

Leonard's sympathies in the American Revolution are unknown; however, if he sympathized with the Tories, he must have kept his feelings to himself.

George Philip Wintermute's Origins

There were three Wintermute men who immigrated to Philadelphia in the first half of the eighteenth century. On September 1, 1736, four years after George Philip's arrival in Philadelphia, Johann Jorg (George) Windemuth (25) and Christoph Windmuth (60) arrived on the ship *The Harle*. It had also sailed from Rotterdam, and arrived in Philadelphia by way of Cowes (Source: German Pioneers to Pennsylvania Passenger Ships' Lists available online). Family researchers have long believed the men were related. German baptism, marriage, and death records, now available online, support the conclusion that George Philip and Johann George were brothers and Christoph Wintermute was their father.

German records reveal that a Johann Christoph "Windermuth" and Maria Margretha Kleppinger married in the Evangelische Kirke in Pfungstadt, Hessen, Germany on January 4, 1702. Johann Windermuth and Johann Kleppinger were listed as the fathers of the groom and bride, respectively. Johann Christoph Wintermuth and Maria Margretha were the parents of at least four children, born and baptized in Pfungstadt: Georg Philip (born May 21, 1705 & baptised on May 24); Anna Maria (born September 16, 1707 & baptized on Sept. 18); Johann Henerich (born on Nov. 12, 1709 and baptized on Nov. 17); "Wintermuth" (born on May 12, 1711 & baptized on May 14). (There is no Christian name listed; however, this is undoubtedly Johann Jorg who came to America in 1736 and listed his age as 25). Two of the children died in early childhood. Johann Henerich died on July 10, 1710. Anna Maria died and was buried on May 20, 1711. Maria Margretha Kleppinger (listed on the death record as "Mariam Margrethanus, wife of Christoph Wintermuth") died and was buried in Pfungstadt on Feb. 14, 1718. Sources for the above records: *Deutschland Geburten und Taufen (German Births and Baptisms), 1558-1898*; *Deutschland Tote und Beerdigungen (German Deaths and Burials) 1582-1958*; *Deutschland Heiraten (German Marriages), 1558-1929*. Citing records on FHL film number 1195494; Accessed through FamilySearch.org on July 2, 2015.

Apparently the Windemuth surname was uncommon in Germany in the early 18th century. There are only a few individuals with that name or one of its variations listed in the collection of early German records available online at FamilySearch.

Johann Christoph Windemuth is listed as a resident of Philadelphia in 1736, according to a Compiled Census and Census Substitutes Index for Pennsylvania for the years 1772-1890 (Accessed at Ancestry.com on July 2, 2015). Christoph doesn't appear in any other American records. More than likely, he died fairly soon after immigrating to America.

Both George and Philip, as they came to be known, settled in Sussex County, New Jersey. In the baptism records of the Minisink Valley Reformed Dutch Church, Jory (George) Philip "Windenmuth" and Maria Julianna Huber, "his wife," are listed as the witnesses at the baptism of Maria Margreta and Maria Juliana, daughters of Johann George Windemuth and Johanna Margreta Elisabetha Bernardin on Sept. 11, 1746. Also listed as witnesses on this record are

“Johannes Snauber and wife, Anna Elisabetha Windemoedin. Anna Elisabetha was not found in the baptism records of Pfungstadt, Germany. However, this suggests that she, too, was related to the brothers. More information on George Wintermute is found in *Memoirs and Reminiscences together with Sketches of the Early History of Sussex County, New Jersey*.

The Windemuth Family Heritage, originally published in 1900 and updated in 1996, is a good source of information on the Wintermute family, although there are errors in the book. It covers George Philip, our immigrant ancestor, and the first couple of generations that followed. Philip’s story is also told in the January 2011 edition of the Windemuth Family Newsletter.

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