

Since the Pötter name is rare, it is possible to identify some of the ancestors of the Johann Pötter who emigrated to Molotschna with some degree of likelihood. The 1835 revision lists identifies his father as having also been named Johann.

His grandfather was probably Jacob Pötter, listed in the 1772 Kontributionskataster in Klein Lunau (p. 83) and in contracts with the city of Culm (Kulm) as having rented land in Klein Lunau and adjacent Venedia (later merged with Klein Lunau) in 1772 (p. 97).

A Jacob Böttcher is also shown in Klein Lunau in the 1776 special census on p. 255 in Karl-Heinz Ludwig, *Zur Besiedlung des Weichseldeltas durch die Mennoniten im Territorium der Stadt Elbing und in der Ökonomie Marienburg bis zur Übernahme der Gebiete durch Preußen 1772* (Marburg/Lahn: Johann Gottfried Herder-Institut, 1961). However, I believe this must have been the son of the Jacob listed in 1770, since he is shown as having 1 daughter, but no sons, in 1776. The only other Böttcher in the Kulm lowlands in 1776 (Abraham of Schöneich or Schoeneck) is also shown as having only daughters. (The same list is published in alphabetical order in vol. 1 of Horst Penner, *Die ost- und westpreußische Mennoniten*.)

This poses a puzzle. I have to assume that younger, single brothers are not listed as servants (*Dienstboten*) and therefore not listed at all. There is no indication that they worked as artisans.

Heinrich Pötter is shown as having signed a 30-year rental contract for land in Schöneich in 1730 (Wiebe, p. 97). He was probably the common ancestor of all the Pötters who migrated to Molotschna. It would seem logical, given the dates and other data we have, that he would have been the father of Jacob, presumed father of Johann, known father of emigrant Johann, who was born in 1787, but there could be a missing generation.

All the Pötter heads of households listed in the 1835 Molotschna revision, all their fathers, and all their sons bore one of only 4 names: Heinrich, Jacob, Johann and Gerhard. This convinces me that these inferences as to ancestry are on the right track, although questions remain. None of the other male Pötter names appearing in the Kulm area in the 1700s are present among the families in Molotschna, at least until 1835.

The first reference to someone with this surname in the general area from where the Poetkers emigrated is to Abraham Putger in Montau (Schwetz) in 1605. In 1676 Elder Peter Pottebacker from Harlingen in Friesland visited Montau on the Vistula. Between 1715 and 1772 we see the name in various records of the Kulm area as Pötger, Pöttker, Betcker, Bötter, Böttcher, Petkier and Pytkier, with the first names Dirck, Heinrich, Jacob and Isaac.

Endnote 1736: Most Mennonite Rempels can be traced to 3 Schwenkfelder families who were driven out of Silesia in the early 1700s and then lived in Hamburg for a short time, according to Dr. H. (Horst? or typo for Glenn?) Penner, whose intuitions are