

Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania. Genealogy, Family History, Biography, Containing Historical Sketches of Old Families and of Representatives and Prominent Citizens Past and Present. In Two Volumes – Illustrated, Volume II, Chicago, J. H. Beers and Company, 1916

**CHARLES S. KISTLER**, of West Penn Township, holds an enviable place in the regard of his fellow citizens. In twenty-six years of continuous service as justice of the peace he has given them the benefit of his best abilities and good judgment, and he has been equally faithful in other positions of trust, in his business and church relations and all the numerous responsibilities for which he has been chosen by his associates. The confidence he enjoys is their expression of appreciation, and he has earned it by his sincere efforts to do his whole duty wherever it may be. **Mr. Kistler's** home place is one of the finest properties in West Penn Township, its natural value enhanced by systematic care. A very successful farmer, he has now practically given up his active connection with that occupation.

The first of the family to live on his farm was his grandfather, **Jonathan Kistler**, who was reared there, though a native of Berks County and a descendant of one of its early settlers. On the records of the Jerusalem Church in Albany Township, Berks County, known in the eighteenth century as the Allemangel Church, there are recorded hundreds of baptisms of **Kistler** children, while in the cemetery under the shadow of the church are many graves marked with the same name. Near the center of the oldest part of the cemetery lies a slate stone (which is now being replaced by the descendants with a marble slab) bearing the inscription "I. G. K. 1767." This is supposed to be the stone that marked the burial place of the progenitor of the American **Kistlers**, who was legally known as **Johannes**, but was called **Joerg** or **George** by Pastor Schumacher in his record and **Hanjoerg** or **John George**, by his neighbors.

**Johannes Kistler** was a native of the Palatinate, in Germany. On Oct. 5, 1737, he came in the ship "Townshend" from Amsterdam to Philadelphia, and soon after to Falkner Swamp, or Goshenhoppen, in what is now Montgomery County, Pa. It is supposed he was accompanied by his wife, **Anna Dorothea**, and his oldest children. In 1747 he took out a warrant for land and moved to Albany Township, Berks County, where he made his permanent home, although the territory was then wild and barren. The vicinity was named "Allemangel" or "All Wants." **Johannes Kistler** was taxed in 1756 in Albany, and was naturalized in 1761, on Sept. 10th of which year he and his neighbor, **Michael Brobst**, appeared before the Supreme court in Philadelphia, and there received the papers that made them citizens of Pennsylvania. He was a Lutheran and served for a number of years as elder of the Allemangel Church, where his children were baptized and confirmed. His children were: (1) **Jacob** left seven children, **Philip**, **Jacob**, **Michael**, **Solomon**, **Daniel**, **Catharine** and **Magdalene**. **Samuel Kistler Brobst**, a teacher of James A. Garfield, was a grandson of **Philip**; and so was **Michael Kistler**, the tanner, whose son **Stephen** was at one time the most extensive tanner in eastern Pennsylvania. (2) **John** remained on the homestead after his father's death. The name **John** runs through at least five generations, and the trade of blacksmith follows it. **John's** children were: **John William**, born May 29, 1757; and **Abraham**, born Dec. 20, 1761, who is the ancestor of the Perry County **Kistlers** for whom **Kistler** post office was named. A descendant, **Rev. Dr. John Kistler**, has for many years been professor at the oldest Lutheran Theological Seminary in America, located at Hartwick, N. J. (3) **George** remained in Berks County. In 1779 he was the owner of 248 acres of land and a gristmill. In 1778 he was elected elder of the Allemangel Church, and as he was referred to as **George Kistler, Sr.**, he doubtless had a son **George**. The archives of Pennsylvania show that a **George Kistler** served in the Continental army during the Revolution. (4) **Philip**, born Oct. 19,

1745, is next in the line we are tracing. (5) **Michael** moved to Ohio, and is the ancestor of the large **Kistler** settlements in Indiana. His family consisted of **John, Michael, Joseph, Nathan, Monroe, Salome** and **Judith**. (6) **Samuel**, the youngest son of his father, married **Elizabeth Ladich** and **Catharine Brobst**, and had three children by the first marriage and twelve by the second. (7) **Barbara** married (first) a **Brobst** and (second) **Michael Mosser**, of Lowhill. (8) **Dorothea** married **Michael Reinhart**. (9) **Elizabeth** married a **Mr. Keller**, near Hamburg, Pennsylvania.

**Philip Kistler**, son of **John George**, above, was born Oct. 19, 1745, and died Aug. 28, 1809. He had nine children; **Jacob, John, Ferdinand, Philip, Jonathan, Barbara, Maria, Catharine** and **Elizabeth**. Of these, **Jacob** was a lieutenant in the war of 1812. **Jonathan Kistler**, son of **Philip**, was born Nov. 10, 1799, in Berks County, and was raised on the place where his grandson **Charles S. Kistler** now lives. He was reared by **Jacob Wehr**, worked among farmers while young, and after he was married started out for himself. In 1829 he built the gristmill which still stands and is still known as the **Kistler Mill**. He also became the owner of about two hundred acres of land, a great deal of which he cleared, and cultivated, following milling and farming on this place until his death, which occurred when he was about seventy-nine years of age. His wife, **Sarah (Shellhammer)**, born Aug. 4, 1800, a daughter of **Simon** and **Catherine (Long) Shellhammer**, died aged eighty-one years. They were the parents of children as follows: **Polly** married **Michael Houser**; **Rebecca** married **Jacob Wertman**; **Hannah** married **Joseph Shaeffer**; **Daniel** married **Rebecca Sechler**; **David**, who resides in West Penn Township, married **Mary Hagenbuch**, now deceased; **John** married **Carolina** and **Cordelia Hagenbuch**, sisters; **William**, who was a school teacher, never married; **Nathan** never married; **Jonathan K.** married **Lydia Shellhammer**; **Elizabeth** married **Timothy Zehner**. The father retired some years before his death. He took an active part in local politics as a member of the Democratic Party, and was a justice of the peace for forty-four years, and a leader in Zion's Lutheran Church, in West Penn Township, serving as elder, deacon and trustee. He and his wife are buried at that church.

**Jonathan K. Kistler** was born June 18, 1834, in West Penn Township, was educated in the district schools there, and assisted his father on the farm and in the mill. After his marriage he bought the mill and farm of his father and stayed there the remainder of his life. Before his marriage he served in the Union army, enlisting in August, 1862, in Company D, 173d Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. He was enrolled at Harrisburg for nine months, assigned to guard duty and reserve work, and discharged at Harrisburg in 1863, returning home. Though he supported the Union he was a Democrat in political opinion, and in religion a Lutheran, belonging to Zion's Church in West Penn Township and assisting faithfully in all its work. He was elder and deacon of the church, and a teacher in the Sunday school. He is buried at Zion's Church.

On Jan. 24, 1864, **Mr. Kistler** was married, by Rev. A. A. Bower, at Lehighton, Pa, to **Lydia Shellhammer**, born Aug. 16, 1842, a daughter of **Jacob** and **Catherine (Houser) Shellhammer**. **Charles S.** is the eldest of the children born to this union, the others being: **Kate A.**, born Sept. 13, 1866, married **Alfred Steigerwalt**, who is a merchant at Snyders, this county, and they have three children: **Oscar Elmer, Stella Irene** and **Clarence**; **Jonathan S.**, born July 24, 1868, married **Ida A. Behler**, and they reside in Mahoning Valley, in West Penn Township (their children are **Claud** and **Verna**): **Sarah**, born Dec. 4, 1869, married **Frank Zettlemoyer**, a farmer of West Penn Township, and has three children, **David, Kate A.** and **Mary Lydia**; **David**

S., born June 23, 1871, now a building contractor in Weatherly, Carbon Co., Pa., married **Emma Sittler**, and their three children are **Jennie, Helen** and **Mildred; Mary**, born Sept. 21, 1873, is living with her mother on the homestead farm (she has one child, **Clara**); **Lizzie J.**, born March 1, 1875, married **Aaron Ruch**, a farmer on the homestead place in West Penn Township, and has five children, **Elsie Eva, Charles Henry, Elmer Jonas, Beatrice May** and **Helen Dorothy; Rev. Jacob S.**, born Feb. 15, 1877, now pastor of the Lutheran Church at East Stroudsburg, Pa., married **Lula Sittler** and has one child, **Louise Elizabeth; William S.**, born Feb. 26, 1881, a mail clerk in Philadelphia, Pa., married **Carrie Balliet** and has two children, **Gwendolyn** and **Marion; Ellen**, born April 18, 1883, married **Leon Walter**, who is employed as a telegraph operator in Philadelphia, and they have one child, **Lester Kistler; Agnes**, born Dec. 31, 1884, married **Ralph Rubrecht**, who is employed in the freight office at Allentown, Pa., and has one child, **Paul William; Lydia**, born May 4, 1879, died when nine months old; another **child** died young.

**Charles S. Kistler**, son of **Jonathan K. Kistler**, was born April 12, 1865, in West Penn Township, where he was reared and worked with his father in the mill until 1896, after which he married and settled at his present place, then the property of his father-in-law, **John M. Kistler**, from whom he bought it. It consists of 143 acres, about one hundred acres cleared. **Mr. Kistler** has since become the owner of several smaller tracts also, as well as a lime quarry and a timber plot, at Kepner. He has seventeen acres devoted to orchards and still makes a specialty of raising fruit, though he has rented his farm to **Ivan Correll** and is now living practically retired. He erected new buildings on the **Kistler** farms and made numerous other improvements. One of the oldest buildings in the county is located on his property, a stone dwelling house built by **Tobias Ware** in 1749. This building has been kept in a fine state of preservation to the present time, and is quite a landmark in the county.

In politics **Mr. Kistler** has always supported the Democratic Party. He has been chosen to several offices, having served five years as deputy coroner, was district assessor for a time, and in 1890 was elected justice of the peace, an office he has been filling with credit to the present time. He is one of the most influential men in West Penn Township. Like his father and grandfather he has been a prominent member of Zion's Lutheran Church, and he has served the congregation as deacon and secretary; he was superintendent of Sassaman's Sunday school for eighteen years, and was one of its organizers. His wife is a member of Emmanuel United Evangelical Church.

**Mr. Kistler** married **Sarah Alice Kistler**, who was born March 6, 1860, on the place they are now occupying. They have no children. She was educated in West Penn Township and remained at home until her marriage. **Samuel Kistler** and his wife, great-grandparents of **Mrs. Charles S. Kistler**, are buried at the Jerusalem Church, in Berks County, Pa. He was another son of **John George Kistler**, above, born Sept. 20, 1754, and died April 24, 1822. He was an extensive landowner. In 1803 he built a very substantial stone mansion in **Kistler's Valley**, which remained his home to the time of his death, and which has until recently been the property of his descendants. He built the **Kistler** mill near Tripoli. For many years he was an elder of the Jerusalem Church, and it was while he held that office that the present house of worship was erected, 1812-14. All these buildings, erected about a century ago, stand as firmly to-day as though they had been built in recent years. **Samuel Kistler** was twice married. His first wife, **Elizabeth Ladich**, bore him three children, and his second, **Catharine Brobst**, twelve. These were: **Barbara** married **Henry Sunday**, and is buried at Dunkel's Church; **Jacob S.** (father of

**Samuel J.**, who was a delegate to the national convention which nominated Abraham Lincoln for the presidency) is buried at the Jerusalem Church; **Samuel** is buried at New Tripoli Church; **John S.** is buried at Jerusalem Church; **Michael** died in Ohio; **Christian** is buried at New Tripoli; **Daniel** and **David** both died in West Penn, Schuylkill County; **Jesse** died in Ohio; **Levi** is buried at Jacob's Church, Jacksonville, Pa.; **Charles** is buried at Newton Falls, Trumbull Co., Ohio; **Maria Elizabeth** married **Jacob Snyder**, and died in Ohio; **Catharine** married **George Weida**, and died in Lowhill; **Salome** married **Jacob Mosser**, the tanner, and died in Allentown; and **Magdalene** married **Solomon Mosser**, and is probably buried at Lynnville. The descendants of **Samuel Kistler** are scattered all over the United States. Many of them have become successful business and professional men. An unusually large number are physicians and ministers of the Gospel.

**Daniel Kistler**, grandfather of **Mrs. Charles S. Kistler**, was born in Lynn Township, Lehigh Co., Pa., Feb. 21, 1800, and died in Schuylkill County June 28, 1866. He was reared and educated in Lehigh County, and married there. He and his brother **Christian** were in partnership at New Tripoli, Lehigh County, until the fall of 1829, when he moved to Lizard Creek Valley, in West Penn Township, Schuylkill County, and bought the gristmill situated some distance from the present home of **Squire Kistler**. He operated the mill until his eldest son married, when he gave him the mill and came to the place where **Squire Kistler** now lives, buying the old hotel property there from **David Sechler**, and also the farm adjoining it. He operated that place until his son **John M.** was married, when he sold it to him and built himself the new hotel across the way, living there and conducting that place until his youngest son was married. Then he sold him the hotel and built a brick house close by, to which he moved and lived retired. His death occurred there. By his marriage to **Magdalena Moser**, born July 12, 1804, died April 1, 1861, he had children as follows: **Charles** married **Elizabeth Peters**; **Daniel** married **Catherine Whetstone**; **John M.** married **Mary Moser**; **David** married **Mary Mantz**; **Noah** married **Sarah Moser**; **Hettie** married **David Zehner**; **Fianna** married **Rev. Daniel Yingst**; **Kate** married **Rev. Benjamin Bohner**. **Mr. Kistler** became a Republican in political faith. In religion he was first a Lutheran, but later became a member of the United Evangelical Church. He and his wife are buried at that church in West Penn Township.

**John M. Kistler**, father of **Mrs. Charles S. Kistler**, was born at **Kistler's** mill, in Lizard Creek Valley, West Penn Township, and assisted his father in the mill and on the farm until he was married, when he bought the place where **Squire Kistler** lives from his father. He farmed there very successfully, and in time owned four farms, aggregating about five hundred acres. In connection with his agricultural operations he carried produce to the towns of Tamaqua, Summit Hill and Lansford.

**Mr. Kistler** married **Mary Moser**, who was born Aug. 20, 1829, and died July 6, 1907, a daughter of **Jacob** and **Susanna (Peter) Moser**, and children as follows were born to them: **Mary Emma Alice**, **Louisa** and **Owen** died young; **Wilson Alfred**, of West Penn Township, married **Savannah Sittler**, and they have one child, **Jennie L.**; **Sarah Alice** is **Mrs. Charles S. Kistler**; **Ada Moser** is unmarried and resides with her sister, **Mrs. Charles S. Kistler**; **John Wesley**, of West Penn Township, married **Savina Gerber**, and their children are **George C.** and **Hattie**; **Dr. Grant Moser**, now settled at Lansford, Pa., married **Rosie Heintzleman**, and they have three children, **Mary Grace**, **Helen Carolina** and **John Clayton**; **Jennie** died when three years old; **Edward Daniel**, who was killed in a hunting accident when but twenty-one years old, married **Clara Behler**, and they had two children, **Mary Sabina** and **Alice**. Though not directly

active in public affairs **Mr. Kistler** did his duty as a good citizen. Politically he was a Republican, in religious connection a member of Emmanuel United Evangelical Church in West Penn Township, in whose interests he labored zealously. He held all the offices in the church, gave the land on which the present house of worship stands, was a member of the building committee and contributed generously towards the work. The church is situated close to the residence of **Squire Kistler**. **John M. Kistler** and his wife are buried in the churchyard.

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