

HISTORY
OF
WESTMORELAND
COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA

GENEALOGICAL MEMOIRS

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The history of the Huff (originally von Hoof) family, is closely identified with that of Berks county as to its settlement in America. Their ancestry is traced in the following from the European List of Heraldry and Genealogy in the Vienna Library, as translated by Gottlieb Hausser, of Altoona, Pennsylvania.

“ORIGIN OF THE GENEALOGY OF THE VON HOOF FAMILY,
its first historical notoriety, and further circulation from authentic sources.”

The generation of von Hoof is originally traced to have resided in Bavaria, where it did in olden times belong to the Knighthood, free from duties to the Empire. It had its permanent estates near the City of Passau. It is noted in the Vienna tables of genealogy as a generation which was famous amongst the Bavarian Knighthood and nobility and the first ancestor was Baldwin von Hoof, who dwelled in his own castle, so called from the ancient Knights, and he lived in the castle and estate Hoof, situate near Passau. The emblem in his shield consisted of a cross-log, signifying that his ancestors were princes. At his helmet he wore an emblem resembling a flower pot, a lily reaching out from it, which denoted that he was of French extraction. This is the origin of the heraldic emblem of this generation, and the emblem yet existing can be traced to these tokens on shield and helmet. The maiden name of Baldwin's wife was Isabelle von Stolberg. Baldwin came to his death in the first crusade in the month of July, A. D., 1099, whilst taking part in the storming of Jerusalem. He only left one son, whose name was Waldemar, who also took part in the crusade, but escaped with his life and safely arrived in Germany. After fighting for several years as a brave Knight in the Orient, he united himself in the bonds of matrimony with Julia von Helmhorst, and the Duke of Bavaria appointed him governor of the City of Augsburg. Waldemar died A. D. 1154, and left their sons, Julius, Ernst and Wolfgang von Hoof. Julius took possession of the family castle, but his generation died out and ceased to exist already in the fourteenth century. Wolfgang preferred the divine profession, and died as Bishop of Ortia in Italy.

Ernst was a warrior, and served for a long time in the army of the German Emperor, Frederic Barbarossa, who, in consideration of his services, endowed him with an estate in the Valley of the Rems, Lower Suavia, and who also renewed the old title of nobility and emblematical heraldry, confirmed by letter and approved, as can be seen in the record of Heraldry in the City of Vienna, and this document, which has been issued in Mayence in the year 1172, is renewing the above title of privileges. Ernst flourished in Lower

Suavia, and his posterity is found up to the year A. D. 1348, but in that year they fell victims of an epidemic disease which had come from Asia, and was like a pestilence, commonly called the 'black death,' and only one, Rudolph von Hoof, remained alive, but the original estate was already in other hands, and Count Eberhard der Greiner, of Wurtemberg, employed him as woodranger. He was stationed at Aichelberg, and his wife's maiden name was Mechtilde von Stadion. He died in Schorndorf at a very old age in 1394, and left four sons, but only one of them, Elias von Hoof, married, a Christine Junginger. He purchased an estate in the vicinity of Schorndorf, and lived there with his wife a very peaceable life. He did not regard his old title of nobility, and his descendants followed the culture of grapes and husbandry.

In the Peasant's War all the sons of Hoof's lost their lives in the battle at Roeblingen, except Elam, who was subsequently magistrate at Pleidelsheim. He was married to Anna Maria Gessler of Besigheim, and died, well advanced in years, A. D. 1567. His two sons' names were Johann Anton and Jacob Friedrich von Hoof. Johann Anton's descendants removed to Graubundten during the thirty years' War, and from that time no account could be had of them.

Jacob Frederick settled down in Besigheim as merchant and inn-keeper, and married Elizabeth Dieterich. He died in the year 1602. His son Justus von Hoof served in the Spanish Army for a long time and also took an active part in the campaigns in the Netherlands, Italy and Germany, and finally settled down in the City of Lauffen, on the Neckar, where he married Gertrude Loeffler. He died in the year 1652, and left three sons, whose names were Conrad, Wilhelm and George von Hoof. The descendants of these sons have spread over Wurtemberg and Baden and one of them, Wilhelm, owing to a great famine which was prevailing in Wurtemberg in 1771, moved away and emigrated, no doubt to America, but no certain accounts of the further fate of the family could be obtained.