

**A Study of Two Men
Named Peter Mann
in Sussex County, New Jersey
1780-1840**

by Mary Ann Schaefer
8 Jun 2015
Boulder, CO

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Introduction

In one maternal branch of my family, two original immigrants to America were Ernst Christian Menge (later Mann) and Maria Magdalena Sommer (later Summers). Both of these ancestors were born in Germany and arrived in Philadelphia in the 1750s. The will of Ernest Mann, written in 1804 in Oxford New Jersey, names his heirs as Sarah (Oliver), Ernest Jr., Mary Jane (Kitchen), John, Anna (Picker), Peter, and David – his children – and two grandchildren from his deceased daughter Catherine, namely Jacob and Mary Wandling.

I descend from Ernest Mann Jr., but I have also been interested in knowing what became of the other first-generation Mann children. This paper focuses on the child named Peter Mann.

The things I know for certain about Peter Mann, son of Ernst and Maria, are few. Besides being named in his father's will, Peter Mann subsequently appeared in two deeds (1816 and 1822) having to do with the sale of his father's property after his father's death in 1816. The first deed does not mention a wife,¹ but the later deed does name his wife as Mary.

This Peter Mann may have served in the New Jersey militia in 1814. There was a Peter Mann enumerated in the 1830 census of Oxford, New Jersey, which is the place where Ernest Mann had settled. I have not found any records that date after 1830 that I can clearly link from a man named Peter Mann to German-American parents named Ernest and Maria Mann who settled in Oxford, NJ.

Earlier this year, however, something I did find was an autosomal DNA match that was “Extremely High” in confidence of a match, in the range of 4th-6th cousin. When I looked at the family tree for that person, five surnames matched between our two trees, and of those surnames, the only one that looked even remotely familiar to me was MANN, and specifically Peter Mann, born 1783, died 1857 in Lawrence, Illinois. Could this be the Peter Mann I've been looking for? This paper will discuss the possibilities.

Comparing Two Men Named Peter Mann

My research blog tells about my finding two Mann families in Sussex county, New Jersey around the same time.² One Mann family – the Phillip Mann family – had first-generation sons who settled in Hardwick township. The other Mann family – the Ernest Mann family - were original immigrants to America who settled in Oxford township. Both families were German. Both families were Lutheran. Hardwick and Oxford townships are about 20 miles apart, and both families apparently also owned property in Knowlton, which is about half-way between Hardwick and Oxford. And both families had a son named Peter Mann. To my knowledge, the two Mann families were not related.

What do we know about the birth dates of each Peter Mann?

- The Peter Mann who died in 1857 in Lawrence, IL was reportedly 74 years old. That puts his birth year at or about 1783.
- I have christening records for some of the children born to Ernest and Maria Mann, but not one for Peter. The last christening I have is for Anna Mann, who was christened at the St. James

1 The 1816 deed mentions that Peter was living on the property in question with one William Harris; I still have no idea who that was or if that name is relevant to the story of Peter's life.

2 Schaefer, Mary Ann; *Mann Families in New Jersey*, <http://mann-genealogist.blogspot.com/2013/02/mann-families-in-new-jersey.html>.

“Straw” Lutheran Church in Greenwich, New Jersey in 1781. The graveyard records for David Mann, who I believe was the youngest son in this family, say that David Mann was born in 1791, 10 years after Anna. I have always presumed that Peter's birth must have been between 1781 and 1791.

- Peter Mann, son of George and Anna Mann of Hardwick was born 30 Aug 1793 and christened shortly after by the Lutheran congregation of Hardwick.

What do we know about the marriages of each Peter Mann?

- One Peter Mann married Mary Hummer on 15 Apr 1810 by William Ribble, Justice. It should be noted that property owned by Ernest Mann were bordered by someone of the name Jacob Hummer – they were essentially, neighbors.
- One Peter Mann married Mary Kerr. Familysearch lists two different records and dates: 19 Apr 1813, and 12 May 1813. The first record was by Thomas Hazen, Justice. The second record, also signed by Thomas Hazen, Justice, mentions these other details:
 - I'm not 100% certain, but it looks to me like the word after the name of Peter Mann is “Jun” - meaning to me, junior. If it does say junior, it means only that this Peter Mann was the younger of two men of that name in the area.
 - Both the bride and groom were from Hardwick.
 - They were married at Philip Wiltbruk's (spelling completely uncertain) in Hardwick
 - On the same slip of paper, above this marriage are other marriage records, including one on 19 Apr 1813 between Isaac Carson (spelling again uncertain) and Anna Mann, both of Hardwick, married at the same place of Philip Wiltbruk in Hardwick. I don't believe this Peter Mann had a sister named Anna, but she might have been a cousin.

What do we know about the New Jersey residences of each Peter Mann?

First we know that early New Jersey federal census records have not survived, which makes New Jersey research in this time period very difficult.

Starting then with 1830, we have these records:

1830 in Knowlton (ancestry), Peter Mann had 2 males and female under 5, adults were 30-39 (familysearch does not match this Knowlton record for some reason)

1830 in Oxford (ancestry), Peter Mann on same sheet with a George Mann; has 9 kids, in 40-49 age group

1 m 10-15	[older sib]
2 m 5-10	jacob, joseph
2 f und 5	matilda, harriet
1 f 10-15	fannie
3 f 15-20	[older sibs b 1810-1820 who married and stayed in NJ?]

Here are the things I notice between these two Peter Mann households:

- An age difference between the two Peter Mann's that was possibly as far apart 19 years. If Peter Mann of Hardwick was born in 1793, it seems likely he is the younger Peter Mann (junior) enumerated in Knowlton.
- The age difference also tells us one Peter Mann married sooner than the other, and thus had more children, and older children. If the Peter Mann enumerated in Knowlton was the one who married Mary Kerr, he married in 1813 in the middle of the War of 1812, and if he is the Peter Mann who served in the NJ militia in 1814, then it's very likely that he did not start his family until later. Thus we see both fewer and younger children for the younger Peter Mann.
- I believe the Peter Mann in Oxford is the one belonging to my family for these reasons: Ernest Mann Sr. settled in Oxford. George Mann on the same enumeration sheet fits as a nephew of Peter Mann. The names that I have listed above in the 1830 household makeup of Peter Mann in Oxford after the ages of the children are my speculation using the names of children attributed to Peter Mann who died in Lawrence, IL. Assuming there were probably older children in that family, as shown in this 1830 Oxford census, this census could fit for the Peter Mann family who later arrived in Lawrence, IL.³

Now for the 1840 census records of New Jersey:

1840 in Knowlton, Peter A (?) Mann - two old folks, 70-80. I have no ideas about this household, but I believe these people were not enumerated in Knowlton in 1830.

1840 in Hardwick - Peter Man, 40-50, 4 boys and 1 girl, enumerated next to Jacob Main. This is probably the household from 1830 Knowlton. This Peter Mann was known to have a brother named Jacob, and it appears they lived near each other in Hardwick.

What happened to the Peter Mann family that was in Oxford in 1830? That has been my question all along. Were they on their way to Illinois? We know that the Peter Mann who settled in Lawrence, IL had a daughter named Fannie, who married in Lawrence in 1843.

It should be further noted that I find neither Peter Mann family appearing in what had become Warren County, New Jersey by the time of the 1850 census. However, as we know, there was one Peter Mann enumerated in Lawrence, IL in 1850, born around 1783 in New Jersey. The Peter Mann in Lawrence, IL died in 1857.

What Conclusion?

We can't prove (yet) that the Peter Mann from my family is the same Peter Mann who died in Lawrence, IL in 1859. But we have some circumstantial evidence that suggests he could be:

- A close autosomal DNA match between somebody who apparently descends from Peter Mann of Lawrence, IL, and me, who descends from Ernest Mann Jr. suggesting the two men just mentioned were both sons of Ernest and Maria Sommer of Oxford, New Jersey.
- An estimated birth year of 1783 fits within the range of years when Ernst and Maria Mann were having children in Sussex County, New Jersey.

³ Noting that the older children very likely married and stayed in New Jersey or migrated in other directions of their own.

- A New Jersey marriage record between Peter Mann and a woman with a Hummer surname, which matches the surname of a neighbor of my Mann family. This association leads me to select the older Peter Mann (who married Mary Hummer) rather than the younger Peter Mann (who married Mary Kerr) as the more likely candidate to fit with the identity of the Peter Mann who died in Lawrence, IL.
- An 1830 federal census of Oxford showing a Peter Mann with a household makeup that could easily align with the 1850 Peter Mann household in Lawrence, IL. Again, it is significant to note that Oxford is the place where my Mann family settled.

What documentation can we be looking for that might help prove this connection?

- It might be worth it check again the deed indexes in Sussex/Warren county in New Jersey. I've been through them, but maybe there was one for a Peter Mann of Lawrence, IL which I previously passed over. If so, and if that deed involved land previously associated with Ernest Mann Sr., that would probably do it.
- Likewise, perhaps a probate record from somebody in the Hummer family which names Mary Mann of Lawrence, IL – that also would support the case that Peter Mann and Mary Hummer are the same couple who migrated to IL. Again, I have gone through probate records pretty thoroughly, but I was not looking for Hummer. Also it's important to check both Sussex and Warren counties, as the area we care about started as Sussex County and later (1824 I think) became Warren.
- It may or may not help us to understand why the Peter Mann family went to Lawrence in the first place. Were there other family already there or going there? The Hummer family has been a difficult one to research, but perhaps somebody in the Hummer family was headed that direction (family groups often made a major move together, mostly for safety I think!). Maybe one or several of the older children of Peter and Mary were making the move, and the parents decided to go with them? It would be good to study the 1850 census in Lawrence and see if there are any other New Jersey names that can be placed in Oxford area of New Jersey.
- And where were the Peter Mann family in 1840?? If Peter Mann and Mary Kerr were still back in Hardwick, where did Peter Mann and Mary Hummer of Oxford go? Many of the Mann family had migrated to Michigan in the 1830s. When I look at a map now, I see that Lawrence, IL is 450 miles away from Oakland County, Michigan. However, I also notice that Ft. Wayne, Indiana is between the two places, and Ft. Wayne is another place where descendants of another Mann sibling migrated to.⁴ It's hard to know why this Peter Mann decided to settle in IL and if there is indeed any connection between him and other Mann's migrating to other states around the same time. But we can keep all this in mind and watch for any relevant evidence to pop up.

There seems to be lots of evidence of the Mann family in the Lawrence area once they settled there, but so far, I have not seen how that evidence can tie this family to another Mann family from New Jersey. The only hope to find more direct evidence, I think, would be to locate some old letters. If they exist, they are probably located in an archives or historical society in either IL or NJ, if not with family descendants.

⁴ Sarah Mann married Nathaniel Oliver, and my research shows that their son, John Oliver (1798-1869), is probably the one who migrated to Allen County, Indiana. See various posts on this topic on my research blog, *Mann Hunt and Sommer Search*, <http://mann-genealogist.blogspot.com>