

Addressing Misinformation - Michigan Summers

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I can't believe it's been four years since I first stumbled upon Michigan historical accounts that included how my Summers family got to Michigan and their various familial relationships. The research journey since then has been interesting but frustrating, involving a good deal of chasing my own tail. And why? Because I initially put much too much value on the assumed validity of said sources.

So in hopes that others may benefit from my tail-chasing, I'm going to list here the sources that researchers of Michigan Summers genealogy (Macomb and Oakland counties) should take with a grain of salt, but only where the narratives about Summers ancestry are concerned. I cannot vouch for the veracity of everything printed in these sources, yet I have found much of the historical content has definite research value.

1. *History of Macomb County, Michigan: containing an account of its settlement, growth, development and resources, etc.*, published 1882, pg 738; available on ancestry.com
2. *Early History of Michigan with Biographies of State Officers, Members of Congress, Judges and Legislators*, published Lansing, 1888, pg 623; available on google books

What follows here are various details from these sources with my comments inserted. Realizing that a picture is worth a thousand words, I am also including here a **simplified diagram** of what I believe is true about my Sommer/Summers family (please do not publish or re-use without permission, esp. bcs it is subject to update). To understand better what I'm talking about, compare the diagram to the details given from the listed sources, which include:

- The head of the Summers family was John Summers. [Depends on how you look at it. John Summers Esq. was first-generation born in America, and the father of the five sons repeatedly mentioned, so in that sense, he was the head of his family. But John Summers Esq. was born in America to his original immigrant parents, Joh. Georg Sommer and Anna Barabara Rub. In this sense, Georg Sommer was the head (one of the heads) of original immigrant families to America.]
- John Summers came from Germany in 1752. [Incorrect. As mentioned, John Summers Esq. was born in America. HIS father, Joh. Georg Sommer, was one of three brothers who arrived in PHL in 1752 from Freistett, Germany.]
- John Summers came with five sons, of whom the names Jacob and John are remembered. [Incorrect. John Summers Esq. died in New Jersey, and he had five sons, three

of whom died in New Jersey, and two, Jacob and John, migrated to Michigan (thus they were remembered, at least in Michigan).]

- Jacob was the youngest son of five born to Judge Jacob Sommers and wife Mary Hiles. [Incorrect. We believe Jacob was the youngest of the five sons mentioned, his father having been John Summers Esq. This Jacob, youngest son of John Esq. had three wives, and one was named married Mary Hiles. He became a Michigan state legislator and later in his life, he was an associate judge.]
- The father of Michigan Jacob Summers was a Judge of Records in Philadelphia. [Incorrect. Jacob Sommer of Moreland (PHL), though related, was not connected to the Michigan Summers. Jacob of Moreland was, coincidentally, a PA state legislator and later in his life, he was also an associate judge. His will named only one son, Dr. John Sommer.]