The Blue-Eyed Indians
The Story of
Adam Crysler
and His Brothers
in the Revolutionary War

By Don Chrysler - 1999
Chrysler Books
36920 Lakewood
Zephyrhills, FL 33541

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PREFACE

Schoharie historians and Adam Crysler's journal differ on some of the dates of the Revolutionary War. We have used our best judgment on the dates assigned to this biography. Also, we have made no attempt to change the spelling of names and places which are quoted directly from Adam's journal.

Adam Crysler and his brothers have stirred the passions of historical writers like few others. Early writers like Simms and Roscoe have painted them as downright demons in the flesh. Later American writers had a less critical view. It should be understood that war is inherently evil and that atrocities were carried out on both sides, not just by the Loyalists.

To those who read these pages who have ancestors that were victims of the Schoharie raids we extend our sincere condolences. We, too, lost one of the Crysler family. Our purpose now is to present the Loyalists side of the story through the harrowing adventures of Adam Crysler and his brothers. Hopefully it will help heal the rift between the descendants of the once friendly neighbors of that idyllic Schoharie community.

FOREWORD

ADAM CRYSLER'S ANCESTORS

In 1709, Johann Philipp Greisler (39) with his wife, Anna Catharina (39) and two sons, Johann George (8), and Johannes (7) left their home in
Guntersblum, Germany to seek a new life in America. (Johann Philip's father was Johannes Kreussler and his grandfather was Leonard Kreussler.) The British Government promised Johann Philipp and Anna Catharina free transportation, forty acres of land, money, clothes, utensils and tools if they would establish a farm in the new colonies.

A total of 3,200 Palatine Germans left England in the spring of 1710 on 12 small ships. The "Lion of Leith" was the first to arrive on June 13, 1710. It was followed the next day by the "Lowestoffe," carrying the British magistrate, Governor Hunter. On July 7, the frigate "Herbert" wrecked off Block Island. Seven more ships arrived prior to July 10. They were the "Fame," "Mary," "Hartwell," "Baltimore," "James and Elizabeth," "Sarah," and the frigate, "Tower." The "Midford" arrived after July 12 and the "Berkley Castle" arrived on August 12, 1710. Sickness and disease caused the death of 470 passengers along the way.

The Greislers (Chryslers) remained in New Amsterdam (New York City) during the winter of 1710 where another son, Johann Henrich Valentin, was born. He was baptized on Sept. 13, 1710 but died as an infant. In 1711 they proceeded up the Hudson River about 90 miles to the settlement at West Camp, NY.

Johann Philipp and Anna Catharina helped establish the West Camp Lutheran Church. According to the Church records written by Rev. Joshua Kocherthal, another son, Johann Hieronymus (Jeronimus) Greisler, was born March 6, 1713 and baptized March 8, 1713 at the West Camp Lutheran Church. He was sponsored by Hieronymus Klein and Johann Planck. Another child, Anna Catharina Greisler, was born October 13, 1714 and baptized October 17, 1714. Her sponsors were Catharina Elisabetha Rau, Appolonia Froelich and Johan Philipp Heller. On December 11, 1733, she married Gabriel Graad at the Catskill Dutch Reformed Church. Johann Philipp and Anna Catharina's last child, Anna Elizabeth, was born about 1716 in West Camp.

Johann Philipp and Anna Catharina remained on the west side of the Hudson at West Camp, Kisketamenesy or Loonenburg until 1733 when Anna Catharina died. She was buried at Loonenburg (now Athens) about 11 miles north of West Camp.

It appears that Johann Philipp remained on the west side of the Hudson for the remainder of his life with his oldest son, Johann George, although one report has him going to Schoharie with his youngest son, Jeronimus, around
1740. At that time, Adam was about eight years old and so accompanied his father, Jeronimus, and family to the wilds of Schoharie.

CHAPTER 1

THE BLUE-EYED INDIANS

Adam Crysler was born in 1732 in the little village of West Camp, about 90 miles north of New York City, on the Hudson River. His Grandfather, Johann Philipp Greisler, and Grandmother, Anna Cathrina Braun Greisler, had settled there when they came from Germany to the Colonies in 1710. Between 1740 and 1742, Adam's father, Jeronimus (sometimes spelled Hieronymus), fourth child of Johann Philipp and Anna Cathrina, left the west side of the Hudson and headed for the "promised land of Schoharie," some forty five miles to the northwest. In 1742, a large patent of land was purchased by "Vrooman, Swartz and Griesler" (Jeronimus) in the southeastern section of New Dorlach (Seward). On April 16, 1744, Jeronimus Crysler, William Bouck and Frederick Lawyer purchased 12,000 acres of land from the Indians for 30 pounds. The property lay southwest of Middleburg along both sides of the Schoharie River. Jeronimus developed 80 acres on the west side of the river where he built his home at Fultonham, ten miles south of the village of Schoharie. Here, in the midst of Indian territory, Adam grew up on the banks of Breakabeen Creek where it enters the Schoharie River.

What a great place that was. The home stood on the south bank of Breakabeen Creek, just above the road that leads north to Middleburg, about five miles away. Across the road from his house was Crysler's Hook, a small bend in the Schoharie River. Near the Hook was Bouck's Island, developed and owned by the Bouck family. The Bouck family was related to the Cryslers by the marriage of Jeronimus' sister, Anna Elizabeth, to William Bouck in 1742 and through the marriage of Adam's sister, Maria, to Johannes Bouck in 1772.

Jeronimus was deeply indebted to the British crown for rescuing his parents out of Germany and delivering them to the Colonies. In 1746, when the Crown requested volunteers from the Germans to fight the French in Quebec, Jeronimus was one of the first to enlist. He was a good soldier and soon became an officer with the rank of Lieutenant.

All of the Cryslers were strong Lutherans and Jeronimus was no exception. After arriving at Fultonham, all his children and grandchildren were baptized in the Lutheran Church of Dominie Peter N. Somers at Schoharie. Jeronimus,
Adam and Baltus became active members of the Church and on May 1, 1749, Jeronimus was appointed an Elder.

Adam was about eight when they arrived at Schoharie and was soon found playing with the young warriors in the Indian village near his house. Historians tell us he became a swift runner and was able to outrun most other white boys. In the course of time he began dressing like the Indians and in time was inducted into their ranks as the blue-eyed Indian. Nor was Adam alone. His younger brothers Philip, John and William also followed in his footsteps and enjoyed an equal fellowship with their red brothers.

In 1750, Adam received the Fultonham property from his father and with the help of his brothers and younger Bouck family members built the gristmill and ran the farm on Breakabeen Creek. He had a barn with utensils and wagon and raised wheat in his fertile fields. Before the war he had 14 cattle to graze in his plush meadows and grasslands. He also had 8 horses, 20 hogs and 5 sheep. Jeronimus, his father, died in 1751. On July 10, 1760, Adam married Anna Maria (Hoover) Braun. Philip, John and William then moved to their father's property in New Dorlach, 16 miles to the northwest, where they built their homes. Another brother, Baltus, married Elizabeth Johnson and built a home for his family just south of Middleburg.

All of the Cryslers prospered and were living peacefully with their neighbors and the red men until the 4th day of July in 1776, when news came that a group in Philadelphia had declared their independence from the Crown. The war was now to reach the Schoharie frontier; it was a time to test men's souls. How could these Germans, who owed everything they had to the Crown, take up arms against the King? It was to become a struggle that divided the Schoharie community right down the middle. And not only the white men but the Indians also were hung in the balance. Was not the King the Great White Father? How could they turn against him whom they had been taught to revere? It was an impossible choice to make and one that split the Six Nations during the whole Revolutionary War.

The decision was not difficult for 44 year-old Adam. His father had been an officer for the Crown and he himself had been appointed an Ensign by the British on October 14, 1768. Nor in 1776 was there a question in the minds of his brothers, 37 year-old Philip, 32 year-old John and 30 year-old William, who also took up arms with the Loyalists. Although Baltus reluctantly joined the Rebel cause, he was not trusted and one day in 1777 he was captured by his neighbors, Martines Vroman and Lawrence Mattice, who bolted into his home when his wife, Elizabeth, opened the door in the morning. Capt. Jacob Hager
and his committee at the Upper Fort sent Baltus to Albany, "a hotbed of Whigs," where the hangman awaited those who "aided and abetted the enemy." Thus the motive for the Crysler brother's many raids upon their Schoharie neighbors may be better understood.

In the summer of 1777, the British devised a grand strategy by which they intended to defeat the Americans in a three-pronged attack on Albany. General Burgoyne left Crown Point to go down the Hudson and attack from the north. Col. St. Leger left Oswego to attack from the west down the Mohawk, and Sir Henry Clinton was to leave New York and attack from the south. Had they succeeded, the war would have been over and nothing would have ever been known of the escapades of the "notorious Adam Crysler." History informs us, however, that the grand scheme was defeated and so the annals of the blue-eyed Indians were about to unfold.

CHAPTER 2
THE BATTLE OF FLOCKEY

After hearing of the inflammatory writings of Thomas Payne and others, some of the citizens in the Schoharie area felt it was time for them as well to rebel against the King. On July 7, 1777, they began by forming a Defense Committee for their protection. One of their first projects was to build a series of forts on the Schoharie River. The Upper Fort enclosed the home of John Feeck on the west side of the river, about four miles south of Middleburg and about a mile north of Adam's home. It was the strongest of the three forts. The log enclosure consisted of two blockhouses, earthworks, pickets, and barracks for the soldiers and log huts for the citizens. The Middle Fort (Fort Defiance), headquarters of the three forts, enclosed three acres. It included a stone house and had two blockhouses at diagonal corners like the Upper Fort. It had accommodations for both soldiers and citizens and was surrounded by a mote and pickets. It was located on the east side of the Schoharie River at Middleburg. The Lower Fort was downstream about five miles north also on the east side of the river at Schoharie. It enclosed one acre of land including the Dutch Stone Church, which had been built in 1772. The belfry was converted into a sentry box. It had two blockhouses, pickets, barracks and log huts like the others. Each Fort was equipped with two cannons for signaling and battle. Much of the fall and winter of 1777 were used to construct and fortify these forts.

In 1777, Adam Crysler was still an Ensign in the British Indian Affairs Department. In June, his superior, the Indian Captain Joseph Brant, instructed
Adam to remain at his home and recruit as many of his neighbors and Indians as possible for the Crown. He was able to recruit 25 Indians and 70 of his fellow citizens. On August 9, 1777, Captain John McDonald with 28 men arrived at Adam's house and planned a raid down the Schoharie River. On August 13, 1777, Capt. McDonald, Ensign Crysler, about 100 Loyalists and 25 Indians proceeded along the river toward Middleburg. They encamped overnight at the north end of Vrooman's Land, about four miles north of Adam's house. Their presence at the Crysler home, however, had been discovered and by the time they approached Middleburg on August 14 they were informed that a band of Cavalry, drawn from Albany, was advancing toward them. Without a Cavalry of their own, they were forced to retreat toward the Flockey (high ground near a swamp) in front of Adam's house where they set an ambush in the pouring rain. When the Cavalry advanced, Adam's men let go with a volley hitting nine of their light horse. Lieu. David Wirt and Private Rose were killed and another Private was slightly wounded.

These became the first American casualties in the Schoharie region during the Revolution. McDonald, Adam and his newly initiated band of Loyalists and Indians then retreated toward the British Fort at Oswego on Lake Ontario. After four days, however, Adam fell sick and was left at the Indian camp called the "Butternuts." At the end of November, Adam was better and began recruiting Indians once again. He soon was able to take 100 Indians with him to Fort Niagara. He remained at the Fort for a month and then, according to his Journal, was ordered by Col. John Butler of Butler's Rangers, "to proceed to watch the motion of the Rebels and to keep the Indians as much in favor of Government as laid in my power where I continued all winter." Meanwhile, the American forces of Gen. Washington and Gen. Gates languished half-frozen and starving in Valley Forge and Bemis Heights.

In 1778, the British initiated a number of raids on the Schoharie frontier to disrupt the American cause. Their goal was to take prisoners, capture horses and cattle, burn homes and especially destroy crops that may have found their way back to the American army. In May of 1778, Col. Butler appointed Adam a Lieutenant. On May 30, Capt. Joseph Brant, with a band of Loyalists and Indians, fought a battle in Cobleskill where many homes, including that of Nicholas Warner, were burned. On June 4, Adam was engaged in a battle in the valley of Wyoming, Pennsylvania that caused 460 Rebel casualties. Adam was also involved in the destruction of the whole settlement of German Flats in September of 1778.

On November 11, Brant, with Capt. Walter Butler, Adam Crysler, 200 Rangers and 320 Indians attacked the village of Cherry Valley. The clear policy of the
British was to spare women, children and the elderly, but here the policy went terribly wrong. Ignoring the pleas of their officers, the Indians, bent on revenge for losses of their own, attacked everyone who did not reach the safety of the Fort. All property and crops were put to the torch and the cattle returned as a prize to Niagara.

In October of 1779, Adam received his official commission as Lieutenant from Col. Guy Johnson and Captain General Frederick Haldimand. That year, Capt. Brant spent his time observing and retreating from the American General John Sullivan who was on a campaign against enemy Indian camps. Adam's Journal explains his own activities in 1779:

"In the spring I went to Canatasago under the command of Col. Butler and in the month of July I went to the west branch of the Suskahannah under the command of Capt. McDonald with Rangers and Indians and took 30 prisoners and 40 killed and destroyed that whole settlement and then we returned to Col. Butler at Canatasago, and from there we went to Shemung where we faced the whole army of Rebels and were forced to retreat to Oyenyanye where we attacked them again, and from there we retreated to Niagara."

"In October 1779, on Col. Johnson's arrival at this place I was ordered by him to attend Capt. Brant with 80 Indians to go to the Three Rivers by land to meet Sir John Johnson, on our arrival there we sent a party to Oswego who returned and brought accounts that nobody was there, upon which we proceeded to Oswego and from that to Niagara."

The year 1780 became very active on the frontier. On July 3, Adam Crysler and seven Indians stopped at the home of the Loyalist, Michael Merkley, in New Dorlach and spent the night. The next day, July 4, in the same town, they captured William Hynds, his wife and six children. They were all taken back to Niagara as prisoners of war. (After the war, Mr. Hynds returned home with three of the children, his wife and the other children having died in captivity.)

During August of 1780, Capt. Brant with his Indian friend, Seth's Henry, five Loyalists and 73 other Indians raided and destroyed the Canajoharie, NY area. On Aug. 9, accompanied by Adam, they burned the homes and barns near the Upper Fort at Fultonham killing five Rebels and taking two prisoners. They then continued south to Adam's house on Breakabeen Creek where, after removing the flour, they burned Adam's gristmill to prevent it being used by the enemy. They then headed for Panther Creek, about 3 miles south of Adam's home. There they traveled west along the creek to the Charlotte and Susquehanna Rivers and then on to Fort Niagara.
CHAPTER 3

COL. JOHNSON'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST SCHOHARIE

In September of 1780, the British thought a major campaign against the frontier was necessary to break the resistance of the settlers and destroy the recently harvested grain before it fell into the hands of the enemy. They summoned their able Col. John Johnson for the task. Equipped with 500 soldiers and Indians, including Capt. Joseph Brant, Seth's Henry, Lieu. Adam Crysler and his brothers, they set out for the Schoharie area.

On the evening of Oct. 1, 1780, while Sir Johnson was en route, seventeen-year-old Margaret "Peggy" Feeck (Feek), whose home was in the Upper Fort, set in motion a plan to elope with the Yankee sharpshooter, Timothy Murphy. Her parents would have nothing to do with the young Irishman so an ingenious plan was devised. As the sun was setting, her cousin chaperoned her to the milking of the cows. After completing the task, her cousin left. Margaret then spilled a little of the milk and told her mother that one of the cows was not with the rest and so was not milked. Her mother immediately sent her back alone saying, "That cow must be milked!" Margaret obliged and leaving her pail in the cow-yard, made her way some three miles down the Schoharie River toward the Middle Fort. Timothy, on horseback, met his beloved at the Middleburg Bridge. She mounted his horse behind him and rode off to the protection of the Fort. A wagon was quickly produced and the young couple set out for Schenectady to be wed. Accompanying them on the trip as witnesses were Adam Crysler's eldest daughter, nineteen-year-old Margaret, and her Uncle, Johannes Bouck. Upon their return to Middleburg, a party was held and there was much dancing and merrymaking. The honeymoon was brief, however, because Col. Johnson was on his way to the Schoharie valley.

On Oct. 16, as Johnson's army approached from the west, Adam's brother, Philip, was dispatched to his home in New Dorlach to remove his wife, Elizabeth Braun Crysler, and family to the safety of Fort Niagara. Col. Johnson had followed the Indian trail along the Susquehanna, Charlotte, and Panther Creeks and that same night arrived near Adam's home on the Schoharie where he spent the evening. The next morning, Oct. 17, Johnson's party headed north, along the Schoharie River. They bypassed the stronger Upper Fort and continued to the Middle Fort where they laid siege. Three times Johnson sent a soldier with a white flag to accept the surrender of the Fort but each time Timothy Murphy sent a bullet whizzing over the head of the emissary who made a hasty retreat.
At three in the afternoon of the 17th in exasperation, Col. Johnson set ablaze the grain and buildings in Middleburg, including the Dutch Reformed Church. It was rumored that the church was torched by William Crysler in revenge for the capture and death of his brother, Baltus, by a few of its members. Johnson then headed north again to the village of Schoharie, about five miles down stream.

Arriving at Schoharie a little after 4 p.m., Johnson and his soldiers circled the Fort to the west while his Indians circled to the east. They met on the north side of the Fort and set up their cannon for a barrage. They exchanged volleys until darkness approached when they ceased fire. Johnson then proceeded north away from Schoharie after burning over 100 buildings. They moved through Kniskern Dorf and put it to the torch before encamping for the night near Sloansville.

The next day, on Oct. 18, Seth's Henry and 18 Indians were dispatched to New Dorlach to aid in removing Philip's family to Niagara. They used the occasion to attack the village, killing Michael Merckley and his niece, Catharine Merckley. Some of the Indians attacked the home of Sebastian France killing one of their children, John. Philip Crysler's wife, Elizabeth, was a close friend of the France family and when she heard the disturbance, told Philip to put on his Indian clothes and go to their aid. He hurried to their home where he rescued the rest of the family. After the Indians burned the grain and barns, the entire party returned down the Charlotte trail to Niagara. Philip's children did some schooling at the Fort and his two oldest boys, Geronomous aged 12 and John aged 10, were enlisted as drummers in Captain McKinnon's Company of Butler's Rangers.

Col. Johnson and his army continued their march north and Oct. 19, 1780 found them at the Mohawk River. Avoiding Fort Hunter, Johnson decided to attack the village of Stone Arabia. The American Gen. Van Rensselaer notified Col. John Brown to leave the Fort at Stone Arabia and attack Johnson from the front. He assured Brown he would attack from the rear and together they would entrap Johnson's army. Col. Brown did as ordered but Gen. Van Rensselaer failed to follow up and the brave Col. Brown was killed in the fight. Col. Johnson continued through Stone Arabia, past the old Palatine Church to the west and returned to Niagara.

On June 7, 1781, Col. Guy Johnson of the Indian Affairs Office at Niagara issued the following order to Adam:
"You will proceed with the party of Aughquagos now going on service to the place of destination, rendering yourself as agreeable as possible to them on the way, and when there encourage them to act with spirit, and firmness, and to destroy any Magazines, Granaries or other places which affords supplies to the Rebels as well as to kill or take any of them who are our Enemies; or in arms, shewing Humanity to Women, Children or aged Persons and endeavoring to obtain all the Intelligence in your power of the State of Affairs, or to bring off any Person well affected to his Majesty's Service sending me an express with a few lines when you have struck a blow, and returning to this place with convenient Expedition."

The destination of Adam's raid was kept secret but we now know that it was Schoharie. Five Rebels were killed, two taken prisoner; eighteen horses were captured and a number of houses and barns were burned before Adam returned to Niagara. On September 28, 1781, Col. Guy Johnson again dispatched Adam for a raid against Schoharie. In addition to the above directions Adam was to instruct the Indians to:

"..... drive and bring away to this Garrison all or as many cattle as they can, and they shall be regularly paid eight Dollars for every head that they may bring safe for the use of this place."

Adam was en route to Schoharie when on October 19, 1781, the English Lord Cornwallis surrendered to the American forces. After hearing of the surrender, Adam decided it was time to remove his wife, Anna Maria, and children out of Schoharie during the raid. On Nov. 13, 1781, accompanied by Capt. Joseph Brant, Seth's Henry, and 25 Indians he arrived at Vrooman's Land just north of Adam's house. The Indians captured 50 head of cattle and burned two houses. Seth's Henry killed Isaac Vrooman, which set off an instant alarm at the Upper and Middle Forts. The raiding party then retreated to Adam's home to pick up his family.

The sharpshooter, Timothy Murphy, led a party of Rebels to Bouck Island across from Adam's home where they commenced firing. It is possible that by this time, Anna Maria and the children were living with Adam's Uncle and Aunt Bouck on the Island. Murphy's raid was repelled and Adam and his family were able to escape. They headed down the Indian trail toward the Susquehanna River to begin the journey to Niagara. The next morning, however, Captain Jacob Hager with 150 Militia from the Upper Fort caught up to them about a mile south of South Jefferson (now on NYS 10) and a battle ensued. Adam's small group was not able to save the cattle but warded off the attack without serious casualties. Adam's wife and children had to struggle
through the rough trail and cold weather to Fort Niagara where they arrived safely on December 11, 1781.

In all ages and in all circumstances women seem the same. The day after arriving at Fort Niagara, Anna Maria went shopping. The following were her purchases at Samuel Street and Co.:

Irish 1 piece Linen 25 yds.; 6 small tumblers
Irish 1 piece Linen 25 yds.; 6 glasses
4 pair women's hose; 1 sugar dish
2 pair boy's hose; 1 pair boy's hose
4 pr. Women's pumps; 1 pair brass candle sticks
1 Doz. Cups and Saucers; 2 brass thimbles
1 large white bowl; 2 small bowls
6 Black handled Ebony knives and forks

CHAPTER 4

THE BATTLE OF BECKER'S STONE HOUSE

In July of 1782, Adam, with William Crysler and a small troop of Indians and Loyalists was sent on his last campaign to the Schoharie frontier to burn property and capture as many prisoners as possible. His first goal was to capture the rebel, George Warner Sr., at his log cabin near Cobleskill. George Sr. was not at home when they arrived so they contented themselves by taking his son, George Jr., prisoner.

On the morning of July 26, 1782, Adam captured two more rebels, John Snyder and Peter Mann. They then attacked the home of Jacob Zimmer of Wright, near Foxes Creek. In the battle, Jacob Zimmer Jr. and a Hessian employee were killed. Peter Zimmer, a brother of Jacob Jr., was taken prisoner and the house and barn set afire. Mrs. Zimmer was allowed to remain at home and was able to put out the fire at the house after Adam's party left.

As Adam continued down Foxes Creek toward Schoharie, he came to the stone house of Major Joseph Becker. Major Becker was home at the time with his wife and some others who were able to put up a good defense of their property. One sharpshooter in the house, John Huff, put a bullet through the brim of Adam's hat. Adam attacked for several hours trying to gain entrance. His Indians tried numerous times to set the house on fire but each time the inhabitants were able to extinguish the blaze. As darkness approached, Adam
abandoned his effort to conquer Major Becker and began his journey to Niagara with his numerous prisoners.

The peace treaty between America and the Crown was ratified on September 30, 1783 and quiet once again reigned. All the prisoners were released and allowed to return home. The new American government confiscated the highly valued Crysler property at Breakabeen Creek and New Dorlach. Adam, Philip, John and William were given property in Canada by the British. Adam and William's property is still located on Four-Mile Creek near St. Davids, close to Niagara-on-the-Lake. In 1962 my family and I visited the area and found a descendant, John Crysler, still living on the property. John's father, John Morden Crysler, was the gr. gr. grandson of Adam and was the author of the family history, "Crysler and Other Early Settlers of Niagara." Because I was a cousin, John presented me with one of the few remaining copies of his father's book. John also allowed us to examine another of Anna Maria's purchases: a beautiful cut glass goblet with the name ADAM CRYSLER etched across the front.

Philip and John Crysler with their families were granted property in Williamsburg, Ontario on the St. Lawrence River. Philip's son, John became a Militia Captain and the Battle of Crysler's Farm was fought on his property during the War of 1812.

As was said earlier, Anna Elizabeth Crysler, the sister of Jeronimus, married William Bouck. Their grandson, William C. Bouck, became Governor of the State of New York between 1842 and 1844. He built his mansion on Bouck Island, five miles south of Middleburg, on NYS 30 across the Schoharie River from Adam's old home.

Baltus Crysler, it appears, was executed early in the war. His wife, Elizabeth Johnson Crysler and children, John, Elizabeth, Adam and Richard continued living in Baltus' home after the war. The eldest son, John Crysler, married Maria Hagedorn on July 22, 1787 in the High and Low Reformed Church in Schoharie. In 1788 John is listed with a road crew responsible for maintaining his part of the road between Middleburg and Bouck's Island. At that time that road (NYS 30) went by the farm of Timothy Murphy and his bride, Margaret Feeck. Margaret and her parents had reconciled and she and Timothy set up housekeeping nearby at Fultonham just two miles north of Adam Crysler's old home. Timothy and Margaret had nine children.

In June of 1998, my wife and I spent two weeks visiting the Schoharie frontier. We visited Cherry Valley where the terrible massacre took place. We drove
along NYS 165 past New Dorlach (now Seward) and saw the property once owned by Jeronimus and his sons, Philip, John and William. On an 1866 map of New Dorlach, this huge property was still identified as the "Borst and Greisler (Crysler) Patent."

We drove down NYS 10 to Cobleskill and then down NYS 145 to Middleburg. Heading south on NYS 30, we came to the location of Fultonham and the Upper Fort. We then stopped where the Breakabeeen Creek flows into the Schoharie River and viewed the site of Adam's home and gristmill between the Creek and teeter Bark Road. We stood where the Battle of Flockey took place and the first casualties of the frontier occurred. We then returned north to Middleburg, the site of the Middle Fort and the home of Baltus Crysler. Five more miles north on NYS 30 took us to the Old Stone Fort at Schoharie where we spent many hours searching their marvelous museum and library.

From Schoharie we crossed Foxes Creek and headed east about three miles where we found the old Becker Stone House much the same as it was when Adam tried to capture it. The State of NY has erected an historical marker at the site, which reads:

BECKER STONE HOUSE

Built 1772

THE TORY, CRYSLER, WITH A BAND OF INDIANS GAVE BATTLE ON JULY 26, 1782

CHAPTER 5

THE BATTLE OF CRYSLER'S FARM

As we have seen, one of Adam Crysler's younger brothers was named Philip. He, too, was brought up with the Indians and served in the Indian Department with Butler's Rangers during the Revolutionary War. Following the war Philip and his two drummer sons, Geronomous and John, were granted hundreds of acres of land along the St. Lawrence River near Williamsburg and Morrisburg, Ontario, Canada. Here John built a General Store and became a very successful businessman. He kept his ties with the British military and when the War of 1812 began he was commissioned a Captain in the Canadian
Militia. The decisive battle of the War of 1812 was fought on his farm. (Later in the war of 1838 he fought in the Battle of the Windmill at Prescott and was promoted to a Lieu. Colonel)

The American plan for the War of 1812 was to descend the St. Lawrence and capture Montreal. They hoped thus to isolate Upper Canada and then conquer the whole country. The American, Major General James Wilkinson, prepared to set out from Sacket's Harbor, New York in October, 1713 with 300 boats carrying artillery and infantry. Gen. Wilkinson fell sick and Gen. John P. Boyd took charge. On November 5, the boats began their trip down the St. Lawrence with 500 cavalry, under Jacob J. Brown, following along the bank. Their estimated total strength was between 2,000 and 4,000, depending on who is telling the story.

By November 10, the Americans were within 90 miles of Montreal. They encamped that night just east of the farm of John Crysler. The British Lt. Col. Joseph Wanton Morrison and his staff spent that evening in the home of Capt. John and Nancy Crysler planning an attack on the Americans at Crysler's Farm. The following morning, November 11, 1813, the Americans engaged 800 British regulars, Canadian Militia and a few Indians all under the command of Col. Morrison.

General Boyd proved to be ineffective and within two hours the Americans began retreating to the boats. The British losses were 22 killed, 48 wounded and 12 missing. The Americans totaled 102 killed and 237 wounded. It proved to be one of the most important battles of the war and virtually ended America's attempt to conquer Canada.

The "Crysler Farm Battlefield Park" is attached to the "Upper Canada Village." Both are located on John Crysler's farm on the St. Lawrence Seaway today. My family and I have visited there numerous times. We have been able to handle the sword that John Crysler used in the battle and hold the medals that he won.

John's store has been restored and is located in the "Upper Canada Village." The beautiful mansion of his son, John Pliny Crysler looks like new and is the centerpiece of the Village. The huge monument that has been erected to commemorate the battle of Crysler's farm stands on a large mound overlooking the St. Lawrence. It's inscription reads:
IN HONOR OF THE MEN WHO FOUGHT AND FELL IN THE VICTORY OF CHRYSLER FARM ON THE 11th OF NOV. 1813

ERECTED 1895

BATTLE OF CRYSLER'S FARM

IN MEMORY OF CAPT. JOHN NAIR, ST CHAS. DE LORING, THE CANADIAN FENSIBLE REGIMENT AND THE NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE 49th REGIMENT AND THE 89th CANADIAN REGIMENT AND CANADIAN VOLTIGUERS KILLED IN ACTION.