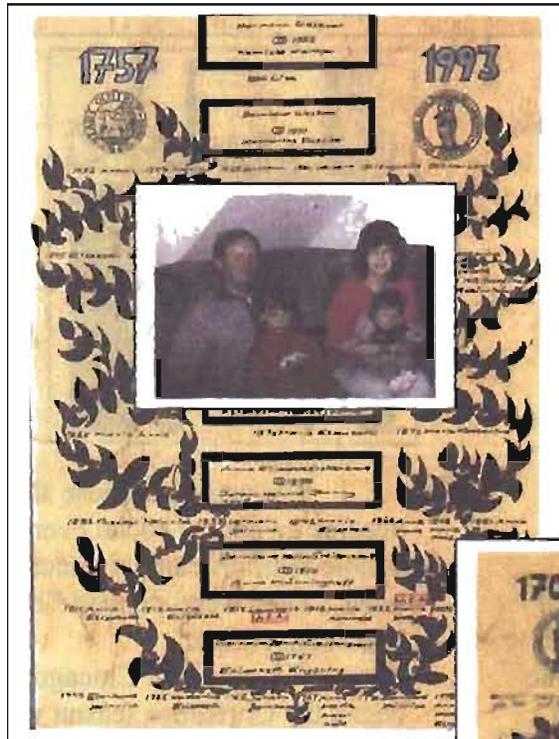




KNOW YOUR ROOTS

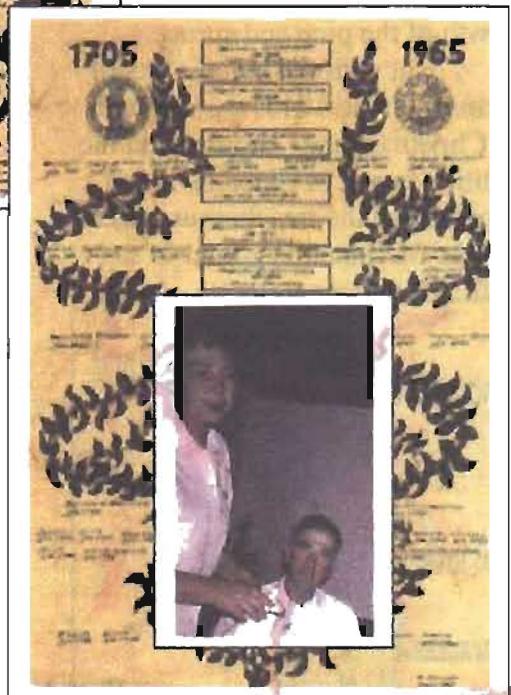
A Family That Doesn't Know Its Past Doesn't Understand Itself

VOLUME IV NUMBER 4 SCHUENEMAN/GREITENEVERT NOVEMBER 199



On the left, the true Greitenevert descendant, Hermann Wesbauer, from the same parents as Maria Catherine. He lives in Ochtrup today but not on the Greitenevert farm. He is descended from a sister of Maria Catherine. Females do not inherit the family farm. The exception is below.*

On the right, Herman Greitenevert who lives on the original Greitenevert farm. He was adopted because there was no male heir. However, he and his sons are not blood Greiteneverts although they have the Greitenevert name. ♣



*These charts were prepared by Hermann Gausler in Ochtrup, Germany



In the late 1800s there was a tradition in Chicago, the beginning of Christmas trees being brought from the north to be sold downtown. The Germans had brought their tradition of having brightly lighted and decorated fir trees to their homes in the new world.

However, Christmas trees were not readily available in the Chicago area because the great glacier that covered the landscape 50,000 years ago had stunted the growth of the pine and spruce.

But with the great influx of Germans in the 1840s the demand for Christmas trees boomed and the tradition began in Chicago. Many ships braved the treacherous waters of Lake Michigan in winter to sail north to cut these trees.



The arrival of these ships became an annual social event. Whole families came to meet the boats. They were dubbed "The Christmas Ships."

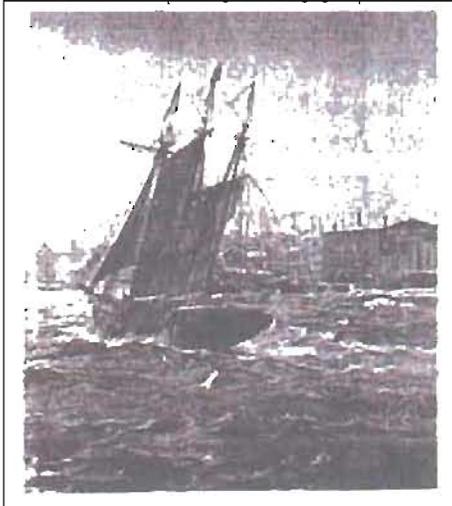
It is said that Chicagoans began the Christmas season when the first Christmas tree ship arrived at the Chicago River Clark St. bridge downtown. The captains proudly displayed their trees that quickly sold for 75 cents to a dollar.

This is the story of one of those ships and its captain, Hermann Schuenemann.

Hermann Schuenemann and his brother August began their enterprise in 1887. However, one year when Hermann did not accompany his brother to the north,

August was caught in a storm and his cargo and boat were lost at sea.

But undaunted, the following year Hermann decided he would continue with the tradition. His ship, known as The Rouse Simmons, would brave the winter weather and sail up north to cut his cargo, trees for the families in Chicago.



So for many years the children and their families would look for Captain Schuenemann. They could always find him at the same place with his ship ablaze with electric lights and his big sign, ***THE CHRISTMAS TREE SHIP. MY PRICES ARE THE LOWEST.***

On November 25, 1913, Captain Schuenemann began his annual Christmas tree journey in his schooner, The Rouse Simmons. It was an easy uneventful trip up the lake to his destination. He cut his trees and headed back to Chicago.

On his return, a massive blizzard drove his ship off course. Weeks passed and the Rouse Simmons hadn't returned to Chicago.

The loss of Captain Hermann and the Rouse Simmons dominated newspaper headlines for days.

"CHRISTMAS TREES LOST-17 GO DOWN ON SANTA CLAUS SHIP." Finally a bottle was washed ashore at Sheboygan, Wisconsin. Inside this bottle was a page from the ship's log explaining the condition of his doomed ship. The note inside the bottle read "Friday-Everybody goodbye. I guess we are all through. Sea washed over our deck load Thursday. During the night, the small boat was washed over. Leaking badly. Ingvlad and Steve fell overboard Thursday. God help us, Herman."

The children were devastated that the Christmas Tree Ship was lost and they wouldn't be able to make their annual visit to see Captain Hermann's festive ship.

No family connection has been found linking Hermann Schuenemann with Johann Heinrich Schuenemann, but the story is forever in the history of Chicago. Two children's books have been written about it and much history of that era is captured in the tales of Lake Michigan. A few years ago, the ship was found off the Wisconsin coast with the Christmas trees still strapped in the hull of the wreckage.

This account was compiled from several stories which appeared in the Chicago Tribune, The Fort Dearborn Magazine, the magazine of the Chicago Historical Society, and the two children's books. A special thanks you to Jeannette Winters, one of the authors, for passing on her research.

BERNHARD, BROTHER OF JOHANN HEINRICH

It gets curiouser and courisier. The file of Bernhard, the brother of Joann Heinrich just grows and grows. Between the descendent in Kentucky and the researcher in Chicago, each day brings new papers to light.



Bernhard

It seems strange that there is an existing picture of Bernhard but not of Johann Heinrich. Frank Suerth who has done extensive research on Bernhard sent this photo.

Frank is very proud of being a sixth generation Chicagoan. He began his research thinking that his family connection was Bernhard. He knew nothing of Johann Heinrich, the brother of Bernhard. He started tracing Bernhard's family when he found Bernhard had a son named, Henry. Suerth's connection comes through the wife of Henry, and this is where, lucky for us, he was on the wrong track.

Through his mother he knew that Henry was married to a Molter. His ancestry is through a sister of Mary Molter, Henry's wife. Mary's sister was Anna.

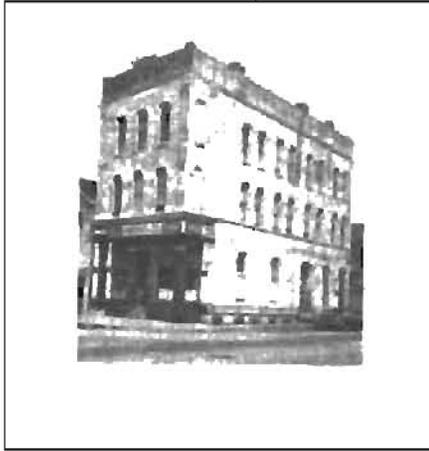
Now, this is where the puzzle begins for Frank. Both Bernhard and Johann Heinrich had wives named Maria Catherine. Both brothers bought land in McHenry County. However, Bernhard sold his land and obviously used the money to buy in Chicago but on Bernhard,s deed of sale, Maria Catherine, his wife was named. This added to the confusion. No one knew both of the wives were named Maria Catherine, or for that matter that Bernhard existed.

Also, both Bernhard and Johann Heinrich had sons named Henry. Both Henry's disappeared from Chicago.

The only record Frank could find of a Henry was the one who married Mary Molter, sister of his ancestor. What luck that he made that mistake because he enjoyed researching in Chicago and therefore we learned all about Johann's brother, Bernhard.

He found the will of Bernhard in Lake County probate records. He found the history of the family in St. Boniface records in the Chicago Public Library. He found the picture you see. He also found that Bernhard was a fairly wealthy man when he died. He owned a building on Nobel and Cornell (now

Chestnut) in which he operated a tavern. This building still stands with the name of Schuenemann visible on the very top.



The Tavern

Bernhard was born in 1826 in Ochtrup and Johann Heinrich was born in 1819. Those seven years made a big difference. Johann Heinrich was married when he arrived but Bernhard was not. Originally, they all lived at 92 Cornell St. It is there that Bernhard in 1870 was listed as a grocer. It is from there Bernhard and family moved to the building shown above.

The address of the Schuenemann building is at the corner now of Chestnut (formerly named Cornell) and Noble. It is across from St. Boniface church.

Many children were born to Bernhard in Chicago. The descendant of one of the children, a daughter Elizabeth is Lorraine Melton, the one who originally wrote me about Bernhard. The picture

below is one she sent me of her ancestor, Elisabeth, Bernhard's daughter.



Life is strange in many ways. First Lorraine called me about Bernhard and then Frank Suerth emailed me about Bernhard. Even though I was able to show him that the Molter that was married to Johann Heinrich's son was his true connection, not Bernhard's son Henry, he kept on searching for more information..

I am eternally grateful to the two of them for clearing up the mystery of Bernhard and of giving me more information about him.

St. Boniface church was also intertwined in Lambert's life as his children all went to school there. It is the same church where their priest, Father Charles Nix in Chicago eventually began his church in ~~North~~ St. Mary's. And life gets curiouser and curiouser!

THE LATEST INFORMATION ON HENRY ELDEST SON OF JOHANN HEINRICH

*This information on the eldest son of
Johann Heinrich came from Frank Suerth in
Chicago.*



Bernard Heinrich (Henry) Schuenemann was married to Mary Molter on May 24, 1877 at St. Joseph Church in Chicago. Mary Molter was born in Chicago on June 20, 1856

Henry and Mary had three children: John, Annie, and Katherine, with Katherine the only one to survive childhood. The 1886 Chicago City Directory has Henry Schuenemann as a saloonkeeper on Cornell, now Chestnut, Street. Probably he and Mary lived upstairs of the tavern. (This would be the same tavern as mentioned in the story on Bernard who would be his Henry's uncle.)

Later he moved to Waukegan, Illinois.

Henry died in Waukegan on February 3, 1920. His nephew, Rev. John Peter Suerth and two other priests celebrated High Mass for him at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Waukegan, IL.

The following nephews were pallbearers: Henry Molter, Henry Suerth, Henry Kristan, Henry Schuenemann, Leo Dowe and Albert Schuenemann. Another nephew, Jacob Suerth was the undertaker in charge of his funeral.

Henry was buried in St. Boniface Cemetery in Chicago but later was moved to Ascension Cemetery in Libertyville, IL.

Mary Molter Schuenemann died on September 7, 1929 leaving behind all her world goods to her only surviving child, Katherine Murphy

Katherine and her husband Tom both died in 1952, Tom first. On March 26, 1952, Katherine's cousin, Jacob Suerth, petitioned Lake County Court to find Katherine mentally and physically ill. He was appointed her conservator and when she died was executor of her will.

The court found that her father's sister, Katherine Dowe, was still living which made her aunt the only heir. Katherine Dowe inherited her estate valued at approximately \$20,000.

MARY'S MESSAGES



So many things happened on the Schueneman front that it was hard to write about them all. Lorraine Melton who first wrote me about Bernhard, and I have been in contact since her original call. Then the miracle of the Internet took hold and Frank Suerth found me through a Wisconsin Schueneman. Frank lives in Chicago and has been researching Bernhard's family thinking he was a part of Bernhard's son, Henry.

Many emails and much information was passed around and I discovered he was wrong about his relative being a part of Bernhard's family but that he belonged instead to Johann's son Henry

Frank is a very personable young man in his late 40s and was following up everything I reported on in Bernhard's story. He had gone to the Chicago Library and the courthouse to search for history and the wills. He found a book on St. Boniface parish which had a lot of information on Bernhard. Of course by this time, Johann had already moved to Johnsburg. However in later years, the children of Lambert John were members of St. Boniface at the same time Bernhards children were. They would have been first cousins. How strange we never knew about them!

He still is continuing researching the name and hardly a day passes that he doesn't send me more information. This helps me a lot because searching in the Chicago records is very difficult for me besides being very painstaking. It seems he has formed friendships with personnel in the many places he frequents so it is easier for him to get the records.

So this issue contains stories of that family through the courtesy of Frank Suerth. Other stories in all probability are not related to our family but nonetheless, are interesting in their content. This incidental information tells us that others are researching the Schueneman name. However, no one has surfaced researching the Greitenevert name. But let me continue with the Schueneman news and Ochtrup news.

I received a request from a Mr. Maxwell in Oregon asking me for permission to use the Ochtrup article in his research. It seems his ancestors also came from Ochtrup. The article in question had a title I was not familiar with so I asked him to send me a copy. He didn't but I think what happened is that Herman Gausler in Ochtrup rewrote the chapter in the book and is using it when people query him for history. Of course I gave the Oregon man

permission but I would have liked to have seen what he was referring to. I am very curious to see what Gausler is forwarding to others.

Also I received an email from a Shineman saying he had seen our web site. We started corresponding. He is from Ohio and his family was Schünemann from a town close to Ochtrup. He sent me his history but there is no tie up. It is interesting to note how his name was changed through the years.

I had hoped to be able to find a plat of the land Johann Heinrich bought in McHenry County as I had only the physical description. But there is none available so the map with the land superimposed on it shall have to suffice.

I know this newsletter is late but there were several extenuating circumstances, which held it up. It is short because I haven't been able to do any more on the Schueneman branch. I was hoping to have some information on Johann Heinrich's mother, Anna Elisabeth Dankbar. My German contact had given me a Dankbar name who lives in Ochtrup. He said he would like to hear from me so I wrote him, in English and that must have deterred him from answering because he did not write back. It is going to be very difficult to trace the other names connected to the Schuenemann and Greitenevert families.

The cover shows you the only relative I could find that is descendant from Maria Catherine. The Hermann Greitenevert who lives on the farm, as I explained is an adopted son. At first I did not know that.

Herman Gausler prepared those elaborate trees showing that Hermann was a descendant of ours. It was only when I visited Ochtrup that Hermann

Gausler's wife let it slip that Hermann Greitenevert was adopted.

So you see how easily we are misled in genealogy! The Wesbauer family is the true family. Maria Catherine had only one brother so Wesbauer is descendent from one of her sisters. This, I am sure is very confusing to all of you but I wanted you to know the reason for the cover.

Researching in Germany is very difficult. You can remember the recent changes the country went through. In the Schueneman book I go back to the early 1700s but during the last half of the 1600s there were 234 independent countries, 51 free cities and about 1,500 knightly manors governed by nobody but the lords that owned them.

By the time of our records there were many changes and the numbers dwindled to fewer than 50. This was all due to the fragility of political powers and war. If I can locate the families in one of the 50 powers, perhaps the church will have records, but so far the church records I have found do not go beyond the 1690s.

I WISH ALL OF YOU THE
HAPPIEST OF HOLIDAYS.

If I do KNOW YOUR ROOTS in the year 2000 it will be the 5th year. I hope I have accomplished something in the years past. At least you know who we are and where we came from.

Technical Advisor: George Kauss