



KNOW YOUR ROOTS

Mary Durland, Author/Researcher

MARCH 2013

VOLUME XIV

ISSUE 3

DANKBAR, AN UNFAMILIAR NAME



To those of you who recognize these tombstones you know they spell out the names of the original Johann Heinrich and Maria Catherine Greitenevert even though their names appear as John and Katharina. However, according to the records of St. John the Baptist Church in Johnsbury IL, there is another person buried there but no visible tombstone. That person is the mother of John Schuenemann who accompanied him, Maria Catherine, and his brother Bernhard when they left Ochtrup, Germany for the United States. She was Anna Elisabeth Dankbar Schuenemann.

I was told that with the permission of the cemetery we could probe for her space and perhaps uncover it, but she died in 1866 and that might entail an unnecessary expense. Anna

Elisabeth was married in Ochtrup 21 April 1819 to Bernard Theodore Schuenemann and they had four children. Two of them I mentioned above, our Johann Heinrich and Bernhard Herman. When she accompanied Johann (John) to the U.S. she left behind a daughter Maria Catherine born in January 1823 and, although I have no record, I believe she was probably married when Anna Elisabeth immigrated.

Her youngest son, Johann Albert, was born in 1831 and would have been seventeen so it is possible he either stayed with his sister in Ochtrup or perhaps he had died because I have no record of the daughter or Johann Albert except for their births.

Anna Elisabeth's father was Alexander Josef Dankbar, born in 1756, and her mother was Anna Margareth Weinfoet born the same year, 1756. I have a note from Germany that they lived on a small farm that was started in the 18th century. So many of our ancestors were farmers. Unfortunately my account of Alexander, her father, does not give his parentage but her mother's Weinfoet heritage can be traced back to the year 1684, all in the same area in Germany.

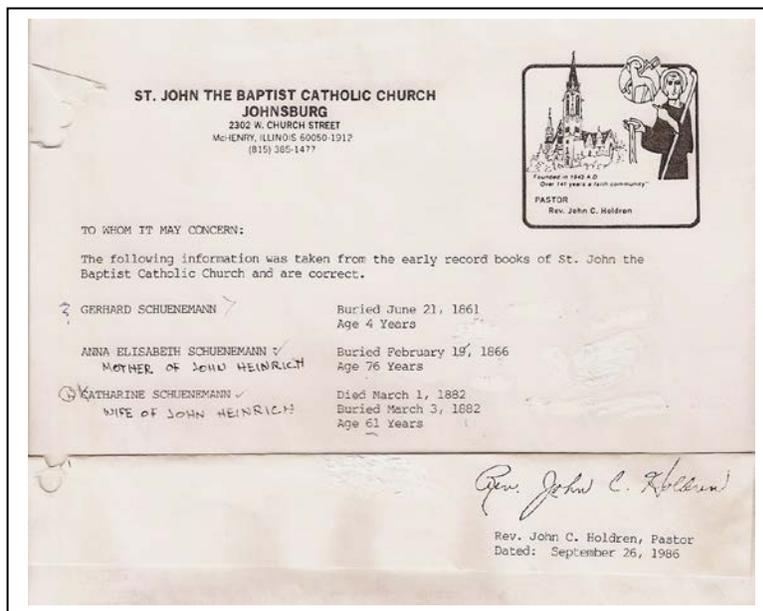
Also, Anna Elisabeth had six siblings and while only two of them were males, there are many Dankbars that have immigrated to the U.S. That includes a brother of her father whom I have just learned about, another Johann – Johann Bernhard. It seems that many Dankbars in the U.S. are checking on their ancestry and I have been in contact with one who is a descendant of Anna Elisabeth's brother Henry.

To me it's amazing that a family has stayed in one place throughout all the turbulent history of Germany but many chose to immigrate to a new land in the nineteenth century. There are Dankbars still there; I know because I contacted one but, unfortunately, because of the language difference, I don't know if they are on the same farmland and communication was difficult.

When I learned through inquiry that Anna Elisabeth was buried at St. John's Church I wrote in 1986 to find her stone, but as I wrote above, there was no stone available on the plot of John who was buried in 1888 and Katharina who was buried in 1882. The Gerhard Schuenemann who is in my records as Johann Gerhard also was buried in St. John's cemetery when he died at age 4 in 1861. This is a child of John and Catherine who

subsequently had another child, named Gerhard Heinrich, born 1863. This Gerhard lived until 1930 and there is a stone in St. John's cemetery for him.

This leads me to believe that Anna Elisabeth, mother of John, and Johann Gerhard, child of 4 of John, are in the same plot someplace. But is it correct? Are they both in the large plot of John Schuenemann and Maria Catherine Greitenevert in the plot pictured on page 1? Due to many circumstances my inquiry to St. John's Parish hasn't given me the answer.



Webmaster & Technical Advisor: Jerry Larkin (Email: larkinstock@yahoo.com)