

## Wilhelmina Bernardina Brüning

Wilhelmina Bernardina Brüning married Johan Bernard Schulte in Iowa in 1878. They moved to St. Leo, Kansas around 1911.

Wilhelmina came from Steinfeld in Oldenburg. Her husband Johan came from Tinnen in Niedersachsen (Lower Saxony), about fifty miles away. I doubt that Wilhelmina and Johan knew each other in Germany. Their homes were in two different sovereign states, and fifty miles would have been a difficult and unusual trek, by foot or by wagon.

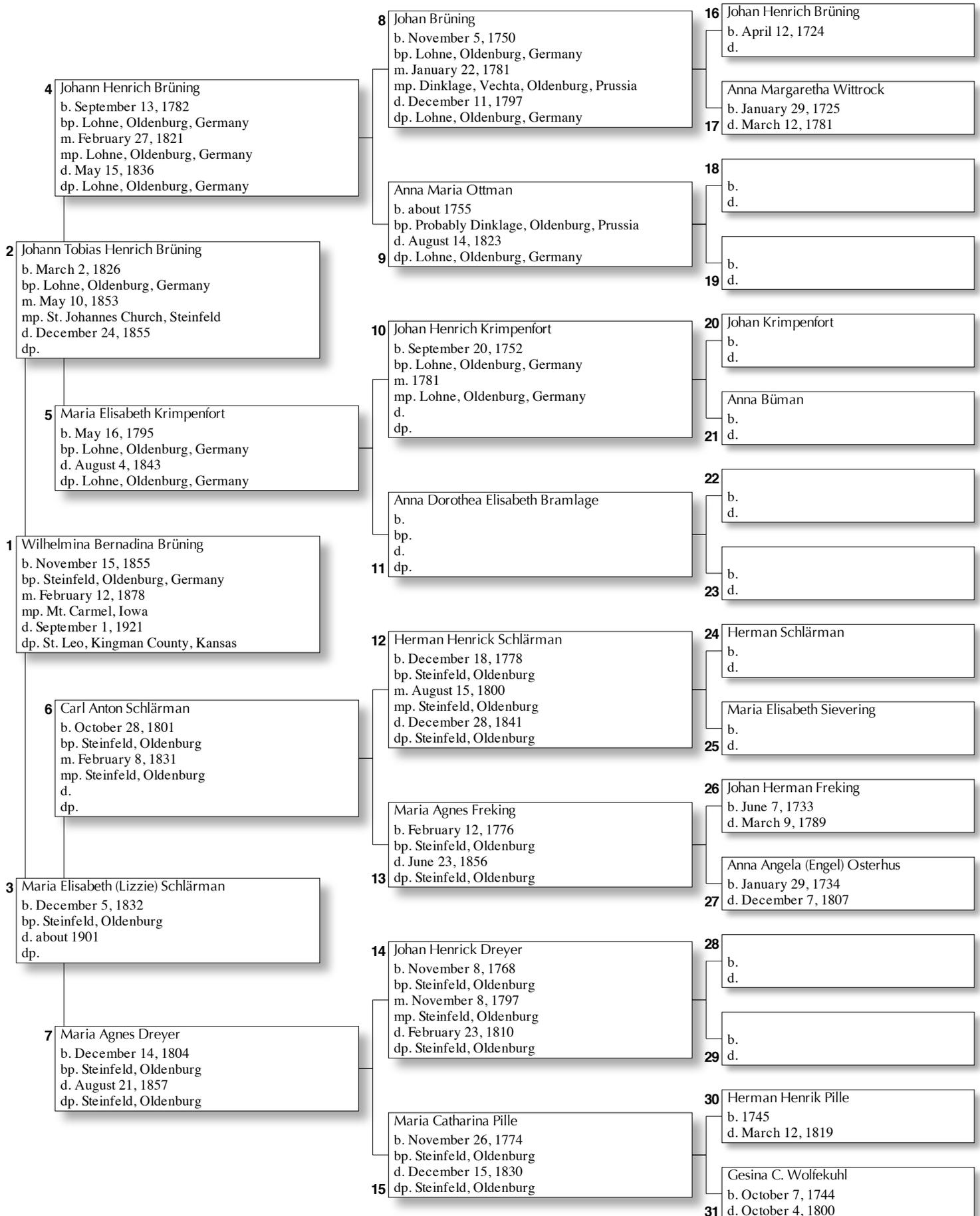
Wilhelmina's parents were Johan Tobias Henrich Brüning and Maria Elisabeth ("Lizzie") Schlärmann, who came from the town of Steinfeld in Oldenburg. Johan Tobias Brüning had been living in the separate parish of St. Gertrud in Lohne, some 5 miles to the north. To secure permission for the marriage, he had to have his baptism in that parish verified, and the couple had to apply for permission to live as *Heuerleute* in Steinfeld. Lizzie was eight months pregnant with Wilhelmina's brother Henrich Anton at the marriage, hardly an unusual happening. (Illegitimate births were not countenanced at all, but as long as the parents got married, even after the fact, the birth became "legitimate.") Johan died early. His brother emigrated to Iowa, however, as did Lizzie and her brother Karl Josef.

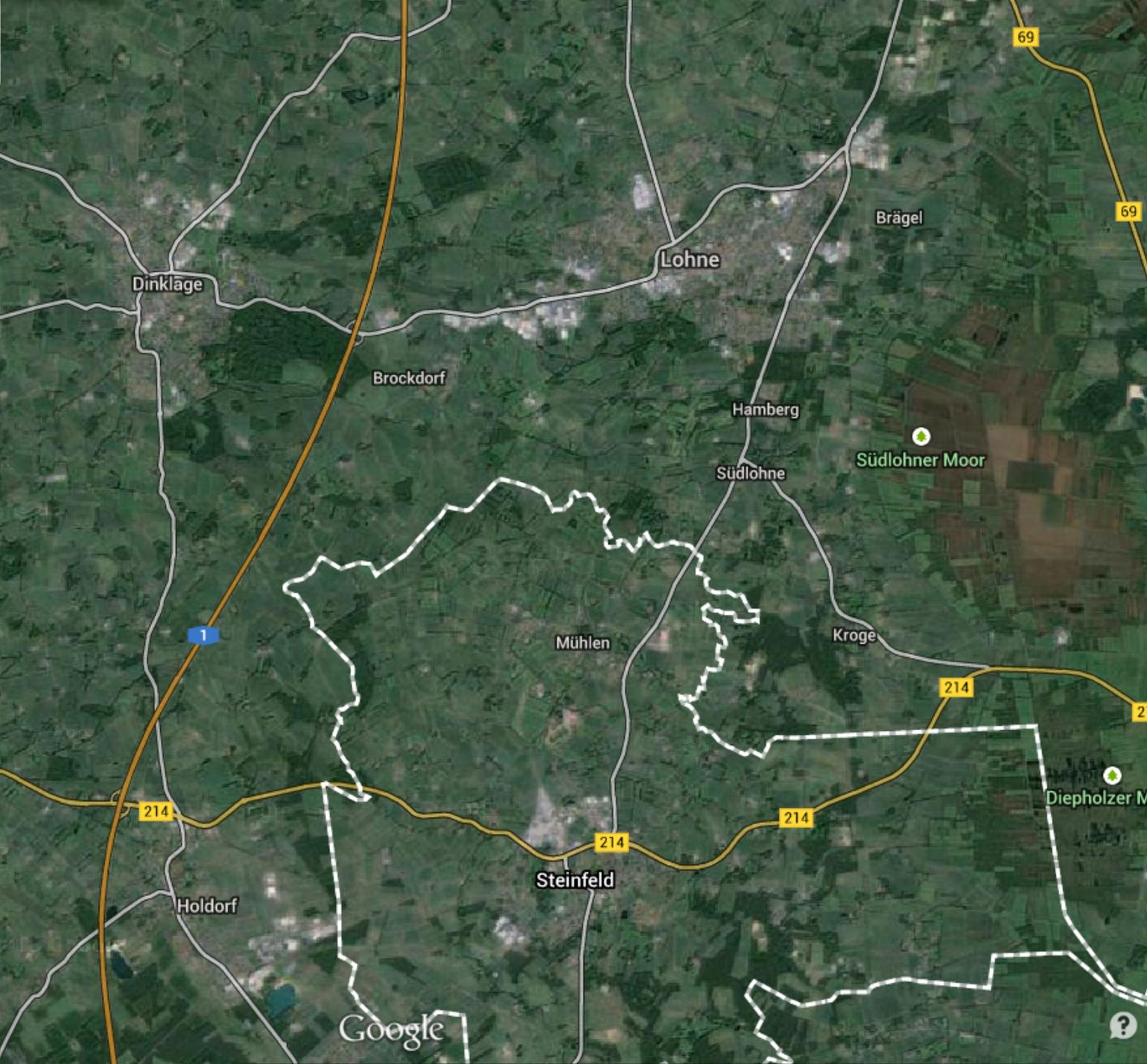
I assembled the history of the Schlärmann branch about ten years ago, with assistance from distant cousins that was beyond kind. Because the St. Johannes Baptist Church records are still extant, that history is reliable and extended. More recently, I have reviewed LDS microfilm records of the Brüning branch from St. Gertrud. These also have supplied a substantial amount of information. Portions have incredibly difficult handwriting, and there is often the confusion of several individuals with the same name at the same time. ("Johan Brüning" is basically "John Brown," in an area where Browns had settled and multiplied for generations.) I've noted uncertainty as I've seen it in the individual records of the family tree.

The parishes are very old ones, dating back to the twelfth century. The church buildings are relatively new, though, not the ones our ancestors used. Wars from the Thirty Years' War of the early 1600s through World War II wrought their damage.

As far back as I can tell, this branch of the family were all humble folk. Their formal class of *Heuerleute* was something between our Midwest "hired hands" and "tenant farmers." I'm including a translation of the best material I've been able to identify about the lives of the Heuerleute. The *Heuermann* had to pay the farmowner lease fees, probably in kind by quantities of agricultural products or livestock. He also had to supply labor at the farmowner's beck and call for 150-180 days a year, presumably mostly during the busy seasons. In return he and his family had use of a modest dwelling and a small amount of land. Basically, the *Heuermann* was a peasant. And so were most people at that time, when you think about it.

# Wilhelmina Bernardina Brüning





Dinklage

Brockdorf

Lohne

Brägel

Hamberg

Südlohne

Südlohner Moor

Mühlen

Kroge

1

214

214

214

214

2

69

69

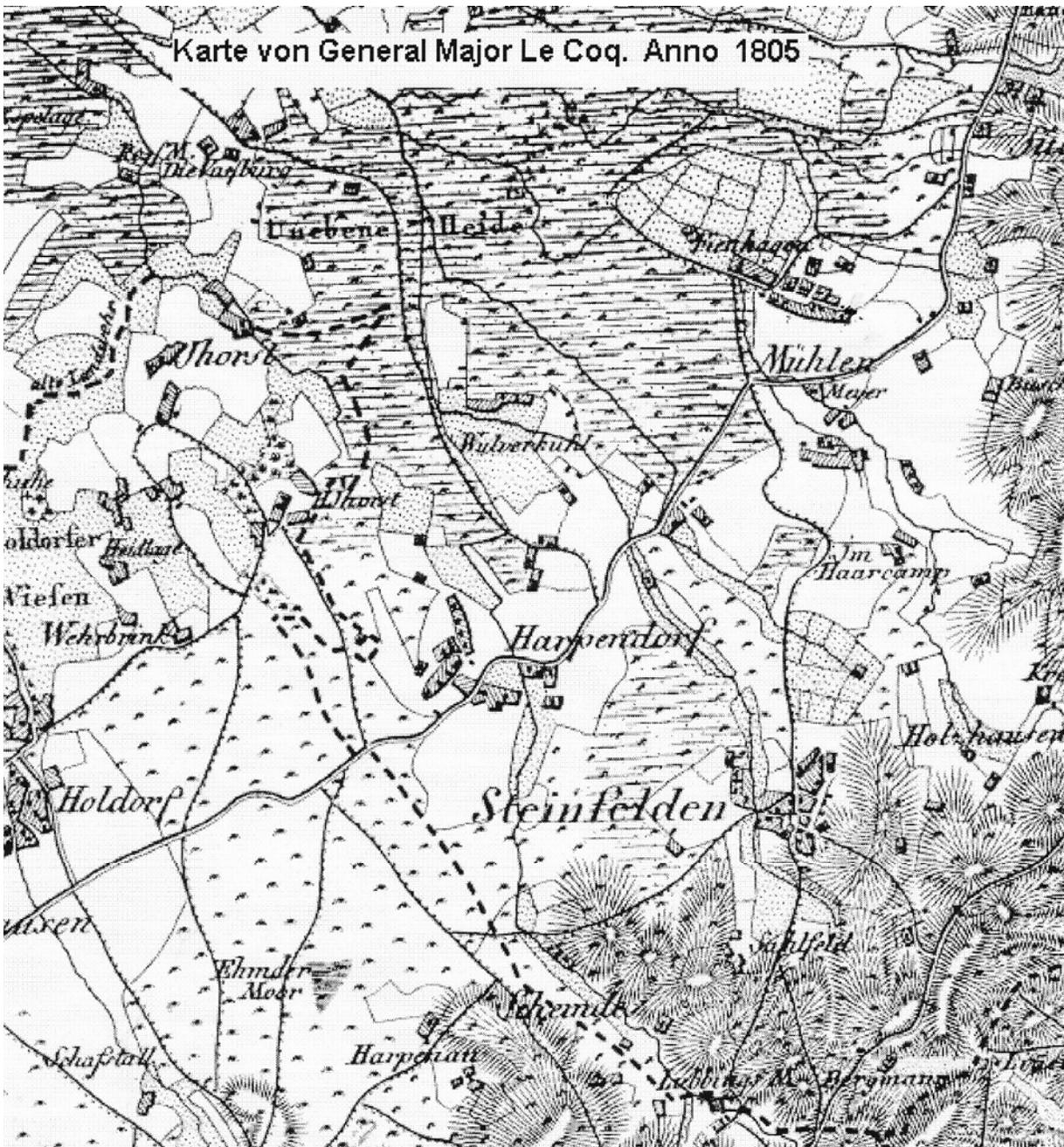
Holdorf

Steinfeld

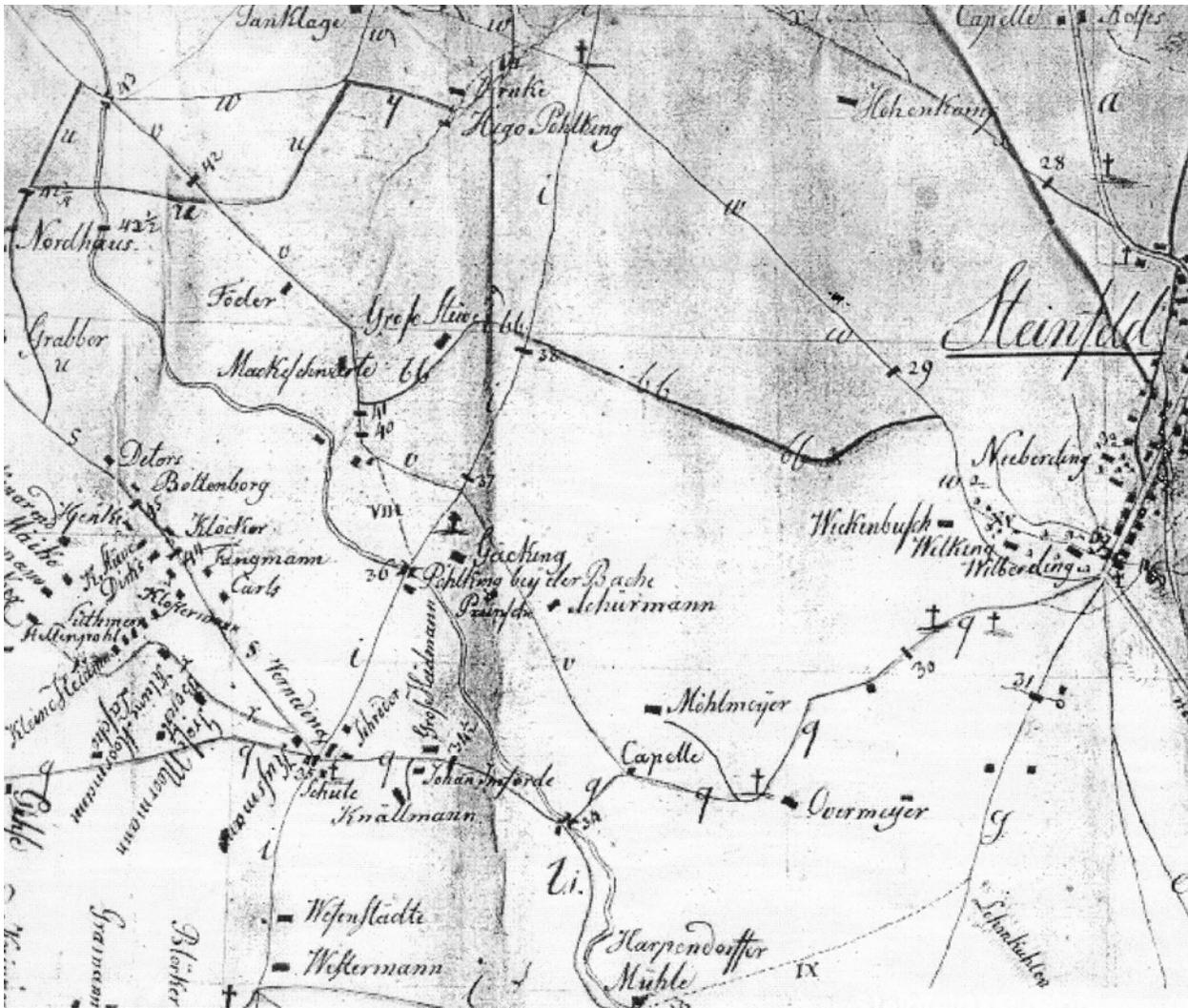
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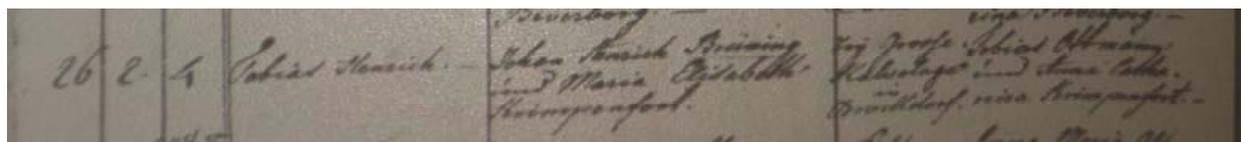
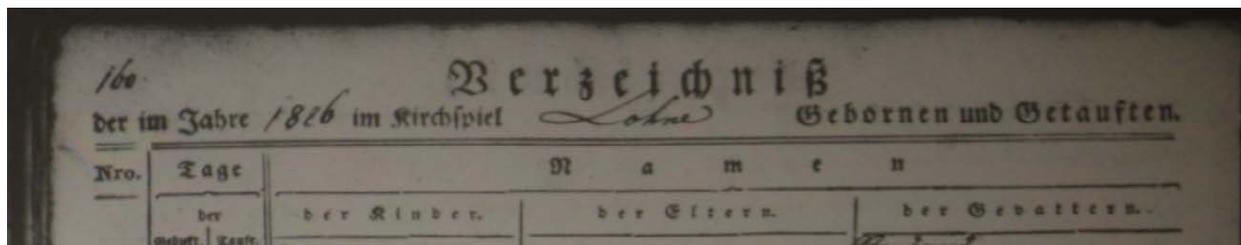
This map was posted by the Heimatverein of Steinfeld in 2004 but does not appear to be online at present (April 2014). Note that much of the area is shown as “moor” or “unebene Heide,” i.e. rough moorland. Oldenburg was part of Napoleonic France from 1810 to 1814. Presumably Major General Le Coq’s map was part of the prelude to that annexation.



This map of 1816 was also posted by the Heimatverein but not currently available. It is of interest because it shows many individual estates with the owners' names. The Brünings mainly came from areas at the top.

Selected Images of Records  
St. Gertrud Church, Lohne

Tobias Henrich Brüning, birth & baptism (1816)



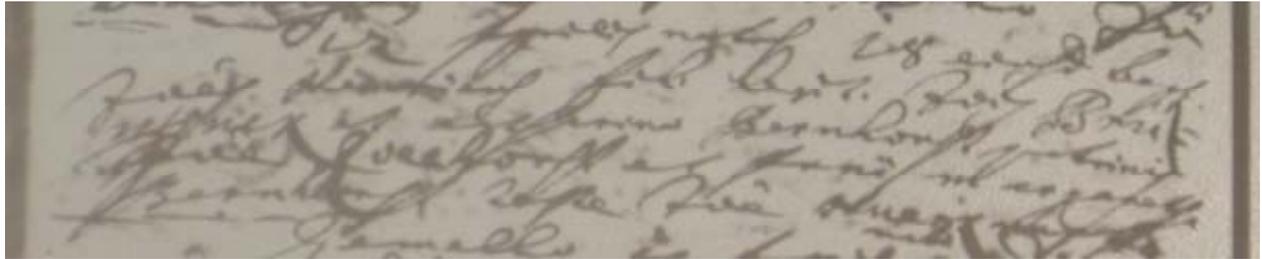
**R e g i s t e r**

for the year 1816 in the parish of Lohne, births and baptisms

No.	Day		N a m e s		
	Born	Bapt.	C h i l d r e n	P a r e n t s	G o d p a r e n t s
	March				
26	2	4	Tobias Henrich	Johan Henrich Brüning und Maria Elisabeth Krimpenfort	Beÿ [on the estate of ] Joseph Kalvelage in Brockdorf Tobias Ottman und Anna Catharina Krimpenfort

## Johan Henrich Brüning, birth & baptism (1724)

*This is an example of one of the most difficult records. I can only partially decipher it after much effort.*



	12 (22?) 12 (22?)	Aprilis April	natus born	28 (18?) 28 (18?)	eadem of the same	bapt[izatus] baptized
					[month]	
Joán Johan	Henricus Henrich	fil[ius] son	legit[imus] legitimate	Joán Johan	Brü- Brü-	
ning ning	et and	Gesina (?) Gesina (?)	Bernhaus Bernhaus	patrini godparents		
[illegible]	[illegible]	et	Anna	Margaretha		
Bernhaus	[illegible]					

# Ancestors of Wilhelmina Bernardina Brüning

## First Generation

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**1 Wilhelmina Bernadina Brüning**.<sup>1,2</sup> Born on November 15, 1855 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg, Germany.<sup>3,4,2</sup> Wilhelmina Bernadina died in St. Leo, Kingman County, Kansas, on September 1, 1921; she was 65.<sup>3</sup> Buried on September 5, 1921 in St. Leo, Kingman County, Kansas.<sup>3</sup> Occupation: Housewife.<sup>3</sup> Cause of death: Chronic myocarditis.<sup>3</sup> Religion: Roman Catholic.

Wilhelmina came with her mother and stepfather to Kniest Township, Iowa, in 1877, marrying Johann Bernard Schulte the next year, when she was 22.

On February 12, 1878 when Wilhelmina Bernadina was 22, she married **John Bernard Schulte**<sup>1,5</sup> in Mt. Carmel, Iowa.<sup>4</sup> I would think that Wilhelmina met her husband in Iowa. Her German home of Steinfeld was some 50 miles from Johan's home in Tinnen, and in a different state. The arduous logistics of travel for such distances kept people much closer to their homes, and obtaining permission to marry someone in a different province would have been far from routine.

They had the following children:

- i. Gerhard Henry<sup>1</sup> (1878-1880)
- ii. John Bernard<sup>1</sup> (1880-1882)
- iii. Mary Elizabeth<sup>1,4</sup> (1882-1960)
- iv. Annie Josephine<sup>1,4</sup> (1883-1965)
- v. Mary Magdalene<sup>1</sup> (1885-1888)
- vi. Rosa Wilhelmina<sup>1,6</sup> (1886-1980)
- vii. Mary Veronica<sup>1</sup> (1888-1892)
- viii. Catherine "Katie"<sup>1,4</sup> (1891-1930)
- ix. Anna Petronella "Nellie"<sup>1,4</sup> (1893-1982)
- x. Louise Emma<sup>1,4</sup> (1894-1942)
- xi. (John) Joseph<sup>7,4</sup> (1896-1978)
- xii. Pauline Antoinette<sup>1,4</sup> (1900-1959)

## Second Generation

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**2 Johann Tobias Henrich Brüning**.<sup>3,8,2,9,10</sup> Born on March 2, 1826 in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany.<sup>3,8,11</sup> Godparents: Tobias Ottmann, of Grosse Kalvalage; Anna Catharina Krimpenfort, Brockdorf. Johann Tobias Henrich died on December 24, 1855; he was 29. Occupation: Heuermann = hired farm hand.<sup>9</sup> Religion: Roman Catholic.<sup>9</sup>

The marriage register notes that Johann was from Lohne, where he was duly baptized, and that he and his wife wished to live as Heuerleute in Steinfeld. His wife was 8 months pregnant at the time of the wedding, not a particularly unusual situation.

On May 10, 1853 when Johann Tobias Henrich was 27, he married **Maria Elisabeth (Lizzie) Schlärman**<sup>3,12,2,13,14</sup> in St. Johannes Church, Steinfeld.<sup>15,13,9</sup> Witnesses were Herm Henrich Brüning, brother of the bridegroom, and Arnd Henrich Deters, cousin of the bride.

They had the following children:

- i. Henrick Anton<sup>8,2</sup> (1853-1907)
- 1 ii. Wilhelmina Bernadina (1855-1921)

**3 Maria Elisabeth (Lizzie) Schlärman.**<sup>3,12,2,13,14</sup> Born on December 5, 1832 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>3,12</sup> Maria Elisabeth (Lizzie) died about 1901; she was 68.<sup>13</sup> Religion: Roman Catholic.<sup>9</sup>

Maria Elisabeth's younger brother, Carl Joseph, emigrated from Steinfeld to America, arriving in Baltimore on the Bark Union on September 18, 1866. He was the first of the family known to have come to America. His future bride, Anna Vaarman, accompanied him. They settled in Illinois, where they lived for at least fifteen years. In America, he spelled his name Schlerman.

Elisabeth married Johan Henrich Tobias Brüning in 1853 when she was nineteen. They had two children. In December 1855, six weeks after the birth of Wilhelminia, he died. In 1861 Elisabeth married Fred Wuebker, with whom she had at least two children who survived past infancy. The Wuebkers moved in 1877, settling in Kniest Township, Carroll County, Iowa. Elisabeth's brother Carl Joseph and his family moved from Illinois to Iowa. Elisabeth's brother Carl Joseph and his family moved from Illinois to Iowa, where the siblings were next door neighbors, as the pattern often was. Besides the Brüning and Wuebker natural children, Fred and Elisabeth adopted Paul, born in 1885, when Elisabeth was 53.

The name is spelled Elisabeth Schloerman in later family records.<sup>2,12,13</sup>

### Third Generation

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**4 Johann Henrich Brüning.**<sup>9,16</sup> Born on September 13, 1782 in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany.<sup>17,18</sup> Godparents: Herm. Hen. Kalvalage and Elisab. Brüning. Johann Henrich died in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany, on May 15, 1836; he was 53.<sup>17,19</sup> Religion: Roman Catholic.<sup>20</sup>

On February 27, 1821 when Johann Henrich was 38, he married **Maria Elisabeth Krimpenfort**<sup>9</sup> in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany.<sup>17,21</sup>

They had the following children:

- 2 i. Johann Tobias Henrich (1826-1855)
- ii. Herman Henrich<sup>9</sup>

**5 Maria Elisabeth Krimpenfort.**<sup>9</sup> Born on May 16, 1795 in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany.<sup>22</sup> At the age of <1, Maria Elisabeth was baptized in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany, on May 18, 1795.<sup>20</sup> Maria Elisabeth died in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany, on August 4, 1843; she was 48.<sup>17,20</sup> Religion: Roman Catholic.<sup>20</sup>

**6 Carl Anton Schlärman.**<sup>12</sup> Born on October 28, 1801 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>12,23,13</sup> Occupation: Heuermann = hired farm hand.<sup>9</sup> Religion: Roman Catholic.

On February 8, 1831 when Carl Anton was 29, he married **Maria Agnes Dreyer**<sup>12,23</sup> in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>12,23,13</sup>

They had the following children:

- 3 i. Maria Elisabeth (Lizzie) (1832-~1901)
- ii. Maria Catherina<sup>12,13</sup> (1836-1836)

- iii. Bernadine<sup>12,24</sup> (1838-)
- iv. Carl Joseph<sup>12,13</sup> (1842-1918)
- v. Maria Anna<sup>12,13</sup> (1846-1857)
- vi. Baby<sup>12</sup> (1851-1851)

**7 Maria Agnes Dreyer.**<sup>12,23</sup> Born on December 14, 1804 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>12,23</sup> Maria Agnes died in Steinfeld, Oldenburg, on August 21, 1857; she was 52.<sup>12</sup> Religion: Roman Catholic.

## Fourth Generation

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**8 Johan Brüning.**<sup>17</sup> Born on November 5, 1750 in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany.<sup>17</sup> Johan died in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany, on December 11, 1797; he was 47.<sup>17,25</sup> Cause of death: calida febris = virulent fever. Nearly half the deaths on these pages of the parish register are from calida febris. Presumably this reflected an epidemic of infectious disease, perhaps typhus, the child of poor sanitation and crowded living quarters.<sup>20</sup> Religion: Roman Catholic.<sup>20</sup>

On January 22, 1781 when Johan was 30, he married **Anna Maria Ottman**<sup>17</sup> in Dinklage, Vechta, Oldenburg, Prussia.<sup>17,26</sup>

They had the following children:

- 4**
  - i. Johann Henrich (1782-1836)
  - ii. Maria Elisabeth<sup>17</sup> (1788-1788)
  - iii. Anna Elisabeth<sup>17</sup> (1790-1847)
  - iv. Gerhard Henrich<sup>17</sup> (1797-1797)

**9 Anna Maria Ottman.**<sup>17</sup> Born about 1755 in probably Dinklage, Oldenburg, Prussia.<sup>17,20</sup> Anna Maria died in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany, on August 14, 1823; she was 68.<sup>17</sup> Religion: Roman Catholic.<sup>20</sup>

**10 Johan Henrich Krimpenfort.**<sup>27,28</sup> Born on September 20, 1752 in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany.<sup>29</sup> At the age of <1, Johan Henrich was baptized in St. Gertrud Kirche, Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany, on September 22, 1752.<sup>30</sup> Religion: Roman Catholic.<sup>20</sup>

In 1781 when Johan Henrich was 28, he married **Anna Dorothea Elisabeth Bramlage**<sup>31,32</sup> in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany.

They had the following children:

- i. Johan Henrich<sup>33</sup> (1785-)
  - ii. Anna Maria<sup>34</sup> (1787-)
  - iii. Johan Herman<sup>35</sup> (1789-)
- 5**
  - iv. Maria Elisabeth (1795-1843)

**11 Anna Dorothea Elisabeth Bramlage.**<sup>31,32</sup> Religion: Roman Catholic.<sup>20</sup>

**12 Herman Henrick Schlärman.**<sup>12,36</sup> Born on December 18, 1778 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>12</sup> Herman Henrick died in Steinfeld, Oldenburg, on December 28, 1841; he was 63.<sup>23</sup>

On August 15, 1800 when Herman Henrick was 21, he married **Maria Agnes Freking**<sup>12,23</sup> in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>23</sup>

They had the following children:

- i. Herman Henrich<sup>23</sup> (1799-1831)
- 6 ii. Carl Anton (1801-)

**13 Maria Agnes Freking.**<sup>12,23</sup> Born on February 12, 1776 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>12,23</sup> Maria Agnes died in Steinfeld, Oldenburg, on June 23, 1856; she was 80.<sup>12,23</sup>

**14 Johan Henrick Dreyer.**<sup>12,23</sup> Born on November 8, 1768 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>12,23</sup> The Grosse Holthaus shows a birthplace of Harpendor within Steinfeld. Johan Henrick died in Steinfeld, Oldenburg, on February 23, 1810; he was 41.<sup>12</sup>

On November 8, 1797 when Johan Henrick was 29, he married **Maria Catharina Pille**<sup>12,23</sup> in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>12</sup>

They had the following children:

- i. Maria Catharia<sup>12</sup>
- ii. Anna Maria<sup>12</sup> (1809-1856)
- iii. Maria Elisabeth<sup>12</sup>
- 7 iv. Maria Agnes (1804-1857)

**15 Maria Catharina Pille.**<sup>12,23</sup> Born on November 26, 1774 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>12,23</sup> Maria Catharina died in Steinfeld, Oldenburg, on December 15, 1830; she was 56.<sup>12,23</sup>

## Fifth Generation

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**16 Johan Henrich Brüning.**<sup>17,37</sup> Born on April 12, 1724 in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany.<sup>17,38</sup> The handwriting of the church register is difficult in the extreme. It could be indicating a birth date of April 22, closer to the baptism. At the age of <1, Johan Henrich was baptized in St. Gertrud Kirche, Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany, on April 28, 1724.<sup>38</sup> Religion: Roman Catholic.<sup>20</sup>

On May 20, 1746 when Johan Henrich was 22, he married **Anna Margaretha Wittrock**<sup>17</sup> in St. Gertrud Kirche, Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany.<sup>39</sup>

They had the following children:

- i. Herman Henrich<sup>17</sup> (1748-)
- 8 ii. Johan (1750-1797)
- iii. Anna Catherine Elisabeth<sup>17</sup> (1753-)
- iv. Gerhard<sup>17</sup> (1755-1810)
- v. Margaretha<sup>17</sup> (1759-1819)
- vi. Anna Elisabeth<sup>17</sup> (1763-)
- vii. Anna Margaretha<sup>17</sup> (1766-)

**17 Anna Margaretha Wittrock.**<sup>17</sup> Born on January 29, 1725 in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany.<sup>17</sup> Anna Margaretha died in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany, on March 12, 1781; she was 56. Religion: Roman Catholic.<sup>20</sup>

**20 Johan Krimpenfort.**<sup>28,40</sup> Religion: Roman Catholic.<sup>20</sup>

In 1745 Johan married **Anna Büman**<sup>40</sup> in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany.<sup>28</sup>

They had one child:

**10** i. Johan Henrich (1752-)

**21 Anna Büman.**<sup>40</sup> Religion: Roman Catholic.<sup>20</sup>

The name Büman is a little unusual. An old map shows a Büme estate on the west side of Dinklage. The name Büman could be associated with that estate, or might be a variant of the more common Bauman(n)

**24 Herman Schlärman.**<sup>23</sup>

Herman married **Maria Elisabeth Sievering**<sup>23</sup>.

They had one child:

**12** i. Herman Henrick (1778-1841)

**25 Maria Elisabeth Sievering.**<sup>23</sup>

**26 Johan Herman Freking.**<sup>23,13</sup> Born on June 7, 1733 in Holthausen, Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>23,13</sup> Jeanne Christensen reports a birth date of October 20, 1736. It looks like maybe there were two people of the same name born about the same date. Johan Herman died in Steinfeld, Oldenburg, on March 9, 1789; he was 55.<sup>23</sup>

On May 15, 1761 when Johan Herman was 27, he married **Anna Angela (Engel) Osterhus**<sup>23,13</sup> in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>23</sup>

They had the following children:

i. Maria Catharina<sup>13</sup> (1762-)  
ii. Johan Henrich<sup>13</sup> (1764-1841)  
iii. Anna Maria<sup>13</sup> (1766-)  
iv. Anna Elisabeth<sup>13</sup> (1770-)  
**13** v. Maria Agnes (1776-1856)  
vi. Herman Henrich<sup>13</sup> (1781-1836)

**27 Anna Angela (Engel) Osterhus.**<sup>23,13</sup> Born on January 29, 1734 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>23,13</sup> Jeanne Christensen reports January 26. Anna Angela (Engel) died in Steinfeld, Oldenburg, on December 7, 1807; she was 73.<sup>23</sup>

**30 Herman Henrik Pille.**<sup>12</sup> Born in 1745 in Harpendorf, Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>23</sup> Herman Henrik died in Harpendorf, Steinfeld, Oldenburg, on March 12, 1819; he was 74.<sup>23</sup>

On November 5, 1771 when Herman Henrik was 26, he married **Gesina C. Wolfekuhl**<sup>12,23</sup> in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>23</sup>

They had one child:

**15** i. Maria Catharina (1774-1830)

**31 Gesina C. Wolfekuhl.**<sup>12,23</sup> Born on October 7, 1744 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>23</sup> Gesina C. died in Steinfeld, Oldenburg, on October 4, 1800; she was 55.<sup>23</sup>

## Sixth Generation

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**32 Joan Brüning**,<sup>41</sup> Born about 1704.<sup>42</sup> He was reported to be 80 years old at his death in 1784. Joan died in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany, in 1784; he was 80.<sup>25</sup> Religion: Roman Catholic.<sup>20</sup>

There were at least three different Johan Brünings born in Lohne around the beginning of the 18th century. The birth register for Johan Henrich, born 1724, is clear that his father was Joan Brüning and that his mother's name was Gesina Bernhaus, or something close to that (the handwriting is very difficult). Taking age 20 as an estimate for Joan's minimum age at Johan Henrich's birth, we would have a birth date of 1704 as earlier. In fact, in 1784 there is a death listing for a Johan Brüning, aged 80. We would also expect to see a marriage record for Joan's parents a while before 1704. Indeed, we find a marriage record for Johan Brüning and Petronella Bording in 1701.

What we don't find, unfortunately, is a birth record for Joan, which should be there sometime around 1704 or earlier. So the ancestry further back remains uncertain.

Joan married **Gesina Bernhaus**<sup>41</sup>.

They had one child:

**16** i. Johan Henrich (1724-)

**33 Gesina Bernhaus**,<sup>41</sup>

**34 Johann Wittrock**.<sup>17</sup> Born on May 22, 1691 in Brockdorf, Lohne, Oldenburg, Prussia.<sup>17</sup> Johann died in Brockdorf, Lohne, Oldenburg, Prussia, on June 13, 1753; he was 62.<sup>17</sup> Occupation: Kötter = cottage farmer.<sup>17</sup>

Johann married **Anna Margarita Lüninghake**<sup>17</sup>.

They had the following children:

i. Johann<sup>17</sup> (1719-1742)  
ii. Kunigunde<sup>17</sup> (1721-1721)  
iii. Maria<sup>17</sup> (1721-1789)  
**17** iv. Anna Margaretha (1725-1781)  
v. Gesina<sup>17</sup> (1727-1782)  
vi. Herman<sup>17</sup> (1730-1730)

**35 Anna Margarita Lüninghake**.<sup>17</sup> Born on June 17, 1689 in Dinklage, Vechta, Oldenburg, Prussia.<sup>17</sup> Anna Margarita died in Brockdorf, Lohne, Oldenburg, Prussia, on November 29, 1765; she was 76.<sup>17</sup>

**40 Werner Krimpenfort**.<sup>28</sup> Born about 1687 in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany.<sup>28</sup>

In 1711 when Werner was 24, he married **Elisabeth Kreinborg**<sup>28</sup> in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany.<sup>28</sup>

They had one child:

**20** i. Johan

**41 Elisabeth Kreinborg**.<sup>28</sup>

**52 Gerhard Heinrich Freking,<sup>13</sup>**

On November 27, 1732 Gerhard Heinrich married **Anna Maria Christina Krey<sup>13</sup>** in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>13</sup>

They had the following children:

- i. Maria Catharina<sup>13</sup>
- 26** ii. Johan Herman (1733-1789)
- iii. Ger[har]d<sup>13</sup>
- iv. Johann Arendt<sup>13</sup>
- v. Anna Catharina<sup>13</sup>

**53 Anna Maria Christina Krey,<sup>13</sup>** Born on August 18, 1709 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>13</sup>

**54 Johan Henrich Osterhus.<sup>43</sup>** Born on April 27, 1704 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>23</sup> Johan Henrich died in Steinfeld, Oldenburg, on April 10, 1783; he was 78.<sup>23</sup>

On November 14, 1731 when Johan Henrich was 27, he married **Anna Maria Hascamp<sup>23</sup>** in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>23</sup>

They had the following children:

- i. Johann Henrich<sup>13</sup> (1732-)
- 27** ii. Anna Angela (Engel) (1734-1807)
- iii. Johann Herman<sup>13</sup> (1735-)
- iv. Anna Maria<sup>13</sup> (1736-)
- v. Anna Maria<sup>44</sup> (1746-)

**55 Anna Maria Hascamp.<sup>23</sup>** Born on May 4, 1718 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>23</sup> Anna Maria died in Steinfeld, Oldenburg, on December 3, 1779; she was 61.<sup>23</sup>

**62 Johan Bernard Wolfekuhl.<sup>23</sup>**

Johan Bernard married **Catharina Elisabeth Oenbring<sup>23</sup>**.

They had one child:

- 31** i. Gesina C. (1744-1800)

**63 Catharina Elisabeth Oenbring,<sup>23</sup>**

## Seventh Generation

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**64 Johan Brüning.** Born about 1680 in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany. Religion: Roman Catholic.<sup>20</sup>

On May 5, 1701 when Johan was 21, he married **Petronella Bording** in St. Gertrud Kirche, Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany.

They had one child:

- 32** i. Joan (~1704-1784)

**65 Petronella Bording.** Born about 1666 in Lohne, Oldenburg, Germany. Religion: Roman Catholic.<sup>20</sup>

**68 Johann Wittrock.**<sup>17</sup> Born about 1636 in Prussia.<sup>17</sup> Johann died in Brockdorf, Lohne, Oldenburg, Prussia, on August 13, 1700; he was 64.<sup>17</sup> Occupation: Kötter = cottage farmer.<sup>17</sup>

Johann married **Deborah Pohlmann**<sup>17</sup>.

They had the following children:

- i. Lucia<sup>17</sup> (~1682-1724)
- ii. Henrich<sup>17</sup> (1683-)
- iii. Maria<sup>17</sup> (1684-1724)
- iv. Anna<sup>17</sup> (1686-1727)
- v. Genofeva<sup>17</sup> (1689-)
- 34** vi. Johann (1691-1753)
- vii. Catherina<sup>17</sup> (1693-1724)
- viii. Margaretha<sup>17</sup> (1697-1770)

**69 Deborah Pohlmann.**<sup>17</sup> Born in 1665 in Prussia.<sup>17</sup> Deborah died in Brockdorf, Lohne, Oldenburg, Prussia, on March 3, 1718; she was 53.<sup>17</sup>

**106 Johan Gerard Krey.**<sup>13</sup> Born about 1675 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>13</sup>

On November 23, 1700 when Johan Gerard was 25, he married **Anna Gesche Visbeck**<sup>13</sup> in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>13</sup>

They had the following children:

- i. Margaretha Catharina<sup>13</sup>
- ii. Anna Christina<sup>13</sup>
- iii. Anna Elisabetha<sup>13</sup>
- 53** iv. Anna Maria Christina (1709-)
- v. Henrich Arnold<sup>13</sup>

**107 Anna Gesche Visbeck.**<sup>13</sup> Born about 1680 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>13</sup>

**108 Heinrich Osterhus.**<sup>13</sup> Born in 1663 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>13</sup>

Heinrich married **Lucia Margaretha Osterhus**<sup>45</sup>.

They had the following children:

- i. Christina<sup>13</sup>
- ii. Anna Catharina<sup>13</sup>
- 54** iii. Johan Henrich (1704-1783)
- iv. Lucia Margaretha<sup>13</sup>
- v. Anna Christina<sup>13</sup>

**109 Lucia Margaretha Osterhus.**<sup>45</sup> Born about 1673 in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>13</sup>

**110 Joan Bernard Hascamp.**<sup>46</sup> Born in Steinfeld, Oldenburg.<sup>23</sup>

Joan Bernard married **Aldeid Jurgens**<sup>23</sup>.

They had one child:

**55** i. Anna Maria (1718-1779)

**111 Aldeid Jurgens**.<sup>23</sup>

## Eighth Generation

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**136 Hermann Wittrock**.<sup>17</sup> Born about 1600 in Brockdorf, Lohne, Oldenburg, Prussia.<sup>17</sup>

Child:

**68** i. Johann (~1636-1700)

## Ninth Generation

---

**272 (Unknown) Wittrock**.<sup>17</sup>

According to the source, "The Wittrock name was first mentioned in the village of Brockdorf, Lohne, Landkreis Vechta, Oldenburg, Prussia in the year 1593. His estimated birth year is 1560. Tax records show that here was only one farm in Brockdorf that was held in the Wittrock name. It was inherited by successive generations at least 300 years (and probably much longer), until Anton "Henry" Wittrock sold the farm in 1885."<sup>17</sup>

Child:

**136** i. Hermann (~1600-)

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## Index

### **Bernhaus**

Gesina 33

### **Bording**

Petronella 65

### **Bramlage**

Anna Dorothea Elisabeth 11

### **Brüning**

Anna Catherine Elisabeth child of 16

Anna Elisabeth child of 16

Anna Elisabeth child of 8

Anna Margaretha child of 16

Gerhard child of 16

Gerhard Henrich child of 8

Henrick Anton child of 2

Herman Henrich child of 4

Herman Henrich child of 16

Joan 32

Johan 64

Johan	8
Johan Henrich	16
Johann Henrich	4
Johann Tobias Henrich	2
Margaretha	child of 16
Maria Elisabeth	child of 8
Wilhelmina Bernadina	1
<b>Büman</b>	
Anna	21
<b>Dreyer</b>	
Anna Maria	child of 14
Johan Henrick	14
Maria Agnes	7
Maria Catharia	child of 14
Maria Elisabeth	child of 14
<b>Freking</b>	
Anna Catharina	child of 52
Anna Elisabeth	child of 26
Anna Maria	child of 26
Ger[har]d	child of 52
Gerhard Heinrich	52
Herman Henrich	child of 26
Johan Henrich	child of 26
Johan Herman	26
Johann Arendt	child of 52
Maria Agnes	13
Maria Catharina	child of 52
Maria Catharina	child of 26
<b>Hascamp</b>	
Anna Maria	55
Joan Bernard	110
<b>Jurgens</b>	
Aldeid	111
<b>Kreinborg</b>	
Elisabeth	41
<b>Krey</b>	
Anna Christina	child of 106
Anna Elisabetha	child of 106
Anna Maria Christina	53
Henrich Arnold	child of 106
Johan Gerard	106
Margaretha Catharina	child of 106
<b>Krimpenfort</b>	
Anna Maria	child of 10
Johan	20
Johan Henrich	10
Johan Henrich	child of 10
Johan Herman	child of 10
Maria Elisabeth	5

Werner	40
<b>Lüninghake</b>	
Anna Margarita	35
<b>Oenbring</b>	
Catharina Elisabeth	63
<b>Osterhus</b>	
Anna Angela (Engel)	27
Anna Catharina	child of 108
Anna Christina	child of 108
Anna Maria	child of 54
Anna Maria	child of 54
Christina	child of 108
Heinrich	108
Johan Henrich	54
Johann Henrich	child of 54
Johann Herman	child of 54
Lucia Margaretha	child of 108
Lucia Margaretha	109
<b>Ottman</b>	
Anna Maria	9
<b>Pille</b>	
Herman Henrik	30
Maria Catharina	15
<b>Pohlmann</b>	
Deborah	69
<b>Schlärman</b>	
Baby	child of 6
Bernadine	child of 6
Carl Anton	6
Carl Joseph	child of 6
Herman	24
Herman Henrich	child of 12
Herman Henrick	12
Maria Anna	child of 6
Maria Catherina	child of 6
Maria Elisabeth (Lizzie)	3
<b>Schulte</b>	
Anna Petronella "Nellie"	child of 1
Annie Josephine	child of 1
Catherine "Katie"	child of 1
Gerhard Henry	child of 1
John Bernard	spouse of 1
John Bernard	child of 1
(John) Joseph	child of 1
Louise Emma	child of 1
Mary Elizabeth	child of 1
Mary Magdalene	child of 1
Mary Veronica	child of 1
Pauline Antoinette	child of 1

Rosa Wilhelmina	child of 1
<b>Sievering</b>	
Maria Elisabeth	25
<b>Visbeck</b>	
Anna Gesche	107
<b>Wittrock</b>	
Anna	child of 68
Anna Margaretha	17
Catherina	child of 68
Genofeva	child of 68
Gesina	child of 34
Henrich	child of 68
Herman	child of 34
Hermann	136
Johann	68
Johann	34
Johann	child of 34
Kunigunde	child of 34
Lucia	child of 68
Margaretha	child of 68
Maria	child of 68
Maria	child of 34
(Unknown)	272
<b>Wolfekuhl</b>	
Gesina C.	31
Johan Bernard	62

## **The *Heuerleute*<sup>1</sup>**

### **The Emergence of the *Heuerling* system**

The system of the *Heuerling*<sup>2</sup> saw its beginnings in the 16th and 17th centuries. Its evolution must be viewed against the background of inheritance rights and primogeniture – the inheritance right which in our region of old made the oldest son the sole heir. Junior inheritance rights fell to the younger sons, who occasionally could come into possession of an estate through marriage. It could also happen that *Kötter* (farm cottages) could be built on previously undisturbed property, and neglected estate areas newly turned to cultivation. As a rule, it happened otherwise. Many younger farmowners' sons expected that their lot would be to complete their lives as dependent coworkers on the estate of their brothers. Not all bowed to this fate, however. Some of them took leave of their village to seek work in other places or enlist as soldiers.

The era of religious upheaval and the Thirty Years' War led to deep alterations in village social structures. Possibly as a result of these tumultuous times, the younger sons of farmowners no longer accepted their indicated role unquestioningly. They pressed to be able to have their own independent existence.

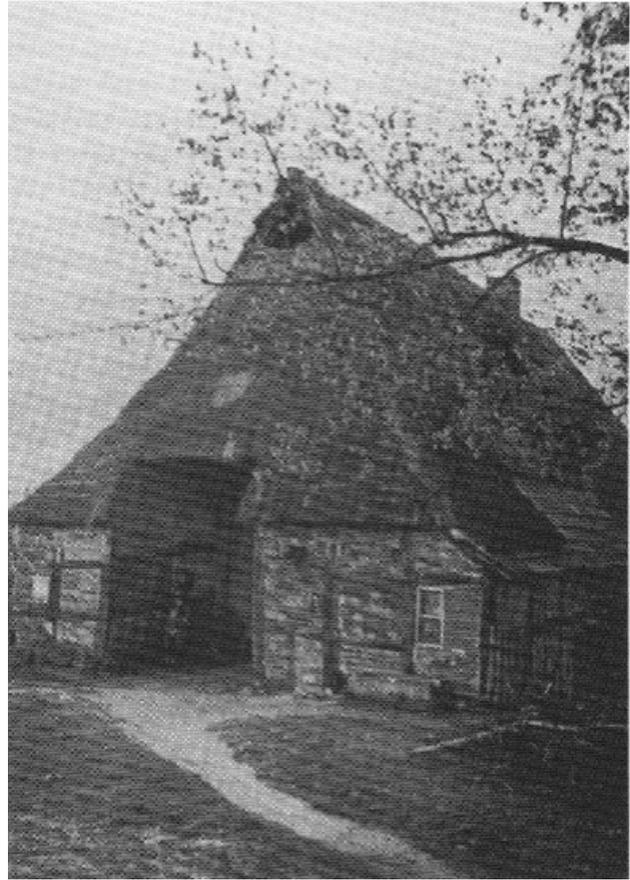
The farmers, for their part, were among those most devastated by the War. Their fields were repeatedly ravaged, their cows stolen, their houses plundered. The tax levies of landlords climbed higher and higher, and with them the obligations of the farmers. In view of this situation, the prospect of fixed rental income and abandonment of children's inheritance fees must have been very enticing. The farmowner put a part of his land at the disposal of the *heuerling*, and in return expected a corresponding rent as well as his labor on the farmowner's estate.<sup>3</sup> The word "Heuer-mann" is a striking expression of the of this relationship, since the low German "Heuer" or "Hür" means "lease" or "rent."

### **The Living Conditions of the *Heuermann***

The *Heuerleute* received from the farmowner a piece of land, grazing rights upon the property, and a dwelling. These dwellings, received from and maintained by the farmowner, were at the start and remained miserable. People simply took utilitarian agricultural structures such as barns, stalls, cookhouses, etc., and did meager modifications to adapt them for human use. Even the later houses for the *Heuerleute*, often built in the form of duplexes for two families, were thoroughly cramped and offered few amenities. An 1845 contemporary report of the Damme administrative office responsible for Holdorf provides a rough picture: "The *Heuerleute* houses are uniformly flimsy and poorly built structures. The clay walls, doors and roof are frequently not thick and provide no protection against drafts and cold, openable windows are often missing,

and so there is a lack of fresh air, which is all the more necessary because the alcoves situated in the rooms (the bed places recessed into the walls) usually are the sleeping quarters for the entire family... Of course, chimneys are unthinkable<sup>4</sup> in these *Heuerleute* houses, and often there is not even a well, so that for their daily water needs, the inhabitants must either draw poor water from a pit, or with extraordinary effort fetch it from a remote well.”<sup>5</sup>

The general living conditions of the *Heuerleute* were as modest as their accommodations. On the small field area of the *Heuermann*, mostly grain was planted. Since the fertility of the soil in Holdorf had long since been depleted, the harvest in good years might just be enough for the nourishment of the family with many members. A surplus for sale could hardly be managed. Cultivation of potatoes began to be added in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and gained in importance. Meals could be enriched with vegetables grown in the home garden. Meat, on the other hand, was an uncommon menu item and even for the farmowners not at all to be taken for granted.



Even if the *Heuerleute* could figure out how through one or another side job how to ensure additional income, their primary means of support was and remained their own small-scale husbandry. As stock they had one or two cows, which also served as draft animals. Until the division of property, the cattle grazed on the common meadow. Since the *Heuerleute* did not share in the subdivision, they had to make do with strips of land along the ditches and roads, where their children did duty as shepherds.

The small set of cows was rounded off with a feeder pig and a few geese and hens, destined for market. The cow was the most important possession of the *Heuermann*. Cows were treated especially carefully and attentively as valuable pieces of property. In the course of caring for sick animals, many *Heuerleute* acquired special skills and understood how to use household remedies, so that even farmowners came to them with illnesses.

Similarly, farming was conducted with great care. The small land area allowed no room for waste. The care of the soil, the combat with weeds, the harvest – these all were performed by

the *Heuermann* and his family with incomparably greater attentiveness than by the farmowner. It should be noted in passing that the *Heuerleute* often were treated as the meanest of farmers. They received first the most unproductive ground in the lease, which they then with the greatest effort transformed into cultivatable land, but then had to see the farmowner take back this land in exchange for other unproductive areas.<sup>6</sup>

A large part of the work of the *Heuerling* role fell on the shoulders of the wife and children, since the man was often pulled to the work of his own land area. Even more burdensome than the dues of this lease was the performance of the obligations to the landowner. Whenever the landowner called, the *Heuermann* had to lay aside and let stand his own work. This happened most often during the seasons of highest work intensity, such as hay and grain harvest, pulling of the flax, and spreading of manure. In these circumstances, his own *Heuerling* work had to suffer. When the needful work had to be displaced into the morning or evening hours, the harvest sometimes would be collected wet or green. The extent of the obligations to the farmowner was unfortunately not clearly delimited and so was governed by his pleasure. As an estimate, one may look at the figures of Heinrich Bockhorst of 160 - 180 days a year for the Dinklage parish.<sup>7,8</sup> This gives us a general idea of the extraordinary extent of the obligations.

Still, it also happened that the farmowner, on his side, came to the aid of the *Heuermann* in harvest time, giving him draft animals and wagons to use. Often farmowner and *Heuerling* families were bound together for generations, and a relationship of reciprocal consideration evolved. Still, many were dependent upon the character of the farmowner at that time, on his attitude toward the *Heuerleuten* and the extent of his goodwill.

### **The Development of the *Heuerling* System**

From small beginnings, the *Heuerling* grew and grew, with remarkably dynamic of growth unfolding especially in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It is to be gathered from a listing in the year 1835 that the parish of Holdorf counted 98 farmers (38 *Colonen*, 33 *Kötter*, 27 *Häusler*), along with 287 *Heuerling* families. There were 44 who carried on their trades along with their farming, suggesting altogether to about one farmowner for every two *Heuerleute*.<sup>9</sup>

The community owed its census growth to the astonishing increase in the *Heuerling* populations. At the end of the Thirty Years' War (1649), Holdorf at first counted 470 heads; 180 years later (1828) the number had nearly quintupled, climbing to 2,334 souls. For many people, the *Heuerling* system enabled the pursuit of an independent existence, while the capacity for feeding so many people grew more tenuous. For this reason it was fortunate that in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries various forms of side work appeared that could provide badly needed supplementary income. The first to mention is linen weaving,<sup>10,11</sup> which provided roles for all the family. The second significant source of supplemental income was going to Holland for work in

Dutch agriculture and peat-cutting. With money earned in Holland, the *Heuerleute* could create the basis for taking over a *Heuerling* place of their own. At the same time, the farmowners profited from the incoming money, because with growing demand for *Heuerling* places the rental price climbed. The farmowner readily went from one *Heuerleute* position to later on five or seven. At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the *Heuerling* system ran into a difficult crisis with the dropping off of supplementary income sources. The trip to Holland played a certain role even until the end of the previous century, but it fell off somewhat. The *Heuerleute* made out poorly with the drying up of this source of income, the more so because linen trade rapidly fell with the growing English cotton goods industry. This all occurred in the context of an agriculture previously sheltered from crises, leading many farmowners to lay their problems on the backs of the *Heuerleute*, confronting them with excessive demands. In this hopeless situation, many *Heuerleute* could find no escape other than emigration to America.<sup>12</sup>

In the latter part of the century, the situation once more began to be more bearable. The rental amounts showed reversing trends, since the farmowners feared the departure of their *Heuerleute*. “The emptier the *Heuerhäuser* became, the more of them left, the greater became the area of land that the farmowner could and had to rent, in order to ensure the necessary work force for his own business.”<sup>13</sup>

The *Heuerleute* understood how to increase the yield of their own cultivated areas. Besides increasing the extent of the farmed land, they successfully conducted intensive cattle raising, along with keeping feeder pigs and oxen. They found one or another supplemental income in undertaking field work in northern Germany. The great moors were developed, woods reforested, roads laid down and widened.

Local crafts and trades also were attractive, with good prospects for income. At first conducted alongside the regular work for the *Heuerling*, these became more and more principal rather than side jobs. The liberalization process occurred more rapidly between the World Wars, as northern (Emsland, Saterland) and eastern Germany were more intensively developed. Not a few of the *Heuerleute* took the prospect of their own land and ground very seriously and abandoned their *Heuerling* places at home.<sup>14</sup>

At the same time, the *Heuerling* system continued to survive as an institution until well after the Second World War. While in the year 1960 the *Heuermann* earned 2.50 deutschmarks as a daily wage, the manual laborer earned a salary of 20 deutschmarks per hour, making it clear how out of date this model was becoming. A particular anachronism was the continuing legal distinction between farmowners and *Heuerleute*. All of this was incompatible with the principles of modern social and agricultural politics, as were being promoted by the EWG<sup>15</sup> of that time. And so in the 1960s the *Heuerling* system was rapidly and finally extinguished. Today it has already become part of our village history, which still survives in the living memories of those involved.

## **Linen Weaving as Supplementary Work for the *Heuerleute***

Flax and the linen produced from it were long known in farmowners' and *Heuerling* homes. Linen protected in a chest was a sign of farmers' wellbeing. It did not go to sale; rather, the farmers used it to enhance their social standing and to give to their daughters as a marriage gift. Not so for the *Heuermann*: linen products were overwhelmingly destined for market, because the income from the sale was pressing for their lives. The whole family was conscripted during the long winter months: the father operated the loom, while the wife, the older members, and the children sat at the spinning wheel. The cultivation of the flax needed for this occupation happened at opportunity on the family's own fields. The small plots of the *Heuerling* were not generally extensive, and not all grounds lent themselves equally well to flax production. We find this confirmed in the records of Johann Theodor Moorman of Fladderlohausen. In Fladderlohausen there was evidently little or no flax. People had to get it from Ihorst and Landwege, where nearly all the *Heuerleute* and a few *Kötter* paid to have linseed sown.<sup>16</sup> Just as growing of flax, so also the sale of the finished linen became a more important component of the linen trade. Then it was established what remuneration was appropriate for this work. The products destined for sale were taken to the linen market, the so-called "Legge" brought and sold there. For linen finished in Holdorf, the Damme and Neuenkirche Legge were the most important exchange places. Many loaded their wares and pushed them on wheelbarrows to Bramsche, since the number of purchasers there was greater and the expected proceeds higher. First, the linen needed to be placed before the Leggemeister, who weighed and classified it, and finally provided it with a stamp. Only then could the sale proceed. The linen of Osnabrück, which included the wares of Damme, Neuenkirchen, and Bramsche, had a world reputation in earlier centuries. Because of its extraordinary quality, it was an export commodity, which was traded as far as the overseas colonies of Holland, Spain, and England, and the diocese of Osnabrück was fortunate to be able to be the center of the trade.

## **The *Heuerling* System in Holdorf According to Early Sources**

The first indications of the growth of *Heuerleute* in Holdorf are shown in the census of the Vörden office in the year 1601<sup>17</sup> and of the census of the same office in 1649.<sup>18</sup> The latter shows 49 estates for Osnabrück. These are not listed by name, rather merely entered under the name of the estate,<sup>19</sup> then sometimes with the occupational title "*Hür*" Common sorts of entries are, "in the barn, a man, a woman," "in the *Leibzucht*<sup>20</sup> a man, his wife."

We may take the lack of more specific information as an indication that the *Heuerling* system was in its early days, not no single model for its form.

Two examples from the 1649 register will be enlightening:

Johanningk	vidua ( <i>widow</i> ) Sohn, Tochter ( <i>son, daughter</i> )
Leibzucht	2 Manß ( <i>2 men</i> ) 2 Frauenß ( <i>2 women</i> ) 1 Tochter ( <i>1 daughter</i> )
Lampe-Gößlingk	Lampe-Gößlingk ( <i>the farmowner</i> ) uxor ( <i>wife</i> ) Knecht ( <i>servant</i> )
Leibzucht	Cinder vom Erbe ( <i>children of the estate</i> ) ein Tochter soror ( <i>a daughter sister</i> )
In der Scheune ( <i>in the barn</i> )	ein Man ( <i>a man</i> ) uxor ( <i>wife</i> )

The *Leibzucht* building of the Lampe-Gößlingk was at this point in time occupied by members of the estate. A daughter and a sister of the farmowner lived here. Thus the *Heuermann* and his wife were displaced into the barn. On the Johanningk estate, the *Leibzucht* was no longer occupied by family members. It could therefore accommodate other persons, presumably two *Heuerling* families, as their dwelling. The practice of converting the *Leibzucht* into *Heuerling* housing was thus very widespread. Less often other descriptions appeared, such as, “in the little house,” “in the sheep stalls,” “on the ground,” “also in the house.” This changed with the increasing *Heuerling* population.

The catalog of communicants for 1705,<sup>21</sup> which already showed 133 *Heuerling* families, pointed toward a sharp lack of living space. The dwellings already in place had to be packed more densely, and other structures converted to living quarters.

The two estates cited above showed as the following list:

<u>Johanningk</u>	5 Kommunikanten, 3 Kinder
dessen Leibzucht ( <i>its Leibzucht</i> )	5 Kommunikanten, 4 Kinder
dessen Beihaus ( <i>its auxiliary house</i> )	2 Kommunikanten, 2 Kinder
<u>Wille-Göbblingk</u>	5 Kommunikanten, 1 Kind, 1 Evangelischer
dessen Leibzucht <i>its Leibzucht</i> )	6 Kommunikanten, 3 Kinder, 1 Evangelischer
dessen Scheune ( <i>its barn</i> )	2 Kinder

On the Johanningk estate a new building had since arisen, which housed a *Heuerling* family, while the status of the *Leibzucht* dwelling cannot be interpreted clearly. There might have been two families living in it, as before, or several generations of a single *Heuerling* family. The same state appears to us in the *Leibzucht* house of the farmowner Wille-Göbblingk, which is the same as the Lampe-Göbblingk of the earlier census record. It is nonetheless clear that this building was no longer used as a retirement place, or else it would not have had three persons of Communion age.

All in all, the whole Communion register demonstrates that the *Heuerling* existence had become more dense in the foregoing fifty years. At first it was restricted to the larger estates, but by then there was scarcely a farmowner who did not have a *Heuermann*. So it is no wonder that by this time the *Heuerleute* constituted the majority of the village population.

<sup>1</sup> Chapter by Bernard Völkerding, pp. 426-432 in Ernst Böhm, Johannes Kampers, Barbara Schlärman Gemeindecronik Holdorf 1188-1988. Printing: Vechtaen Druckerei and Verlag GmbH & Co., Vechta. Binding: Grossbuchbinderei, Oldenburg. Distribution: Bernd Sandmann, Schefflenz (formerly Ihorst). The translation is mine.

<sup>2</sup> The term is something like “hired hand” or “tenant farmer.” It is defined more fully in the pages that follow.

<sup>3</sup> See Johannes Tack, Die Hollandgängerei in Hannover und Oldenburg, Leipzig 1902, pp. 55 – 64. In übrigen auf die Ausführungen von Ernst Böhm zur Entstehung des Heuerlingswesens in dieser Chronik verwiesen. (Geschichte des Bauernstandes)

<sup>4</sup> The picture does show a chimney on this example. Perhaps it was one of the more elite versions. [Footnote added]

<sup>5</sup> Tack, pp. 113 ff.

<sup>6</sup> See Heinrich Bockhorst, Der Heuermann, ein Kulturträger des Münsterlandes. Heimatblätter 50 Jahrgang Num. 1, March 1971, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p.5.

<sup>8</sup> Dinklage was one of the villages of Wilhelmina Bernardina Brüning's ancestors.

<sup>9</sup> See Johannes Ostendorf, *Der Kreis Vechta im 19. Jahrhundert*, Vechta, 1961, p. 73.

<sup>10</sup> See the following chapters for discussions of linen weaving and working in Holland.

<sup>11</sup> Wilhelmina Bernadina Brüning's grandmother Engel Elisabeht Albers was noted to have an occupation as a weaver, besides being heiress of the Albers estate. [footnote added]

<sup>12</sup> The emigration to America is likewise the subject of a later chapter in this book.

<sup>13</sup> Hermann Rother, *Kreis Bersenbrück*, p. 70.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>15</sup> The Europäische Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft (EWG) was the original name of an international coalition promoting European integration. See [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Europ%C3%A4ische\\_Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Europ%C3%A4ische_Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft). This was a forerunner of the European Economic Community (EEC). [Footnote added]

<sup>16</sup> See Johann Theodor Moormann, *Kurze Geschichte über Fladderlohausen*, included in this work.

<sup>17</sup> See the chapter of Ernst Böhm in the chronicle above.

<sup>18</sup> State Archives of Osnabrück, Report 100, Section 89, Number 20.

<sup>19</sup> People's last names were frequently taken from the estate name, both for proprietors and common folk. [footnote added]

<sup>20</sup> The **-zucht** entry under **Leib** in *Cassell's English & German Dictionary* (1958) refers the reader to **-gedinge**, *n.* jointure, dower, appanage, settlement, (*dial.*) pension, life-annuity. If an estate owner died before his wife, she had a right to a *Leibzucht* or annuity, while the male heir took charge of the estate. Like other obligations, this was likelier to be expressed in reference to specific property and commodities than as abstract money or gold, which village farmers wouldn't have much of. The term is rather like the French *pension*, which may mean retirement payments, or a room for a boarder. Perhaps the closest English equivalent would be in-law apartment, though the *Leibzuchthaus* more likely was a structure separate from the main house. (Logically, the *Leibzuchthaus* would be vacant if the wife died before the husband – or, likelier, given over to some other use.)

The Introduction to the *Economic and Social History of the 19th and 20th Centuries* ([http://www.uni-muenster.de/Geschichte/SWG-Online/dem\\_uebergang/glossar\\_leibzucht.htm](http://www.uni-muenster.de/Geschichte/SWG-Online/dem_uebergang/glossar_leibzucht.htm)) notes, "The term generally indicates a lifetime right of use to real estate, but can also refer to other revenue-generating property (assessment and lease rights, prerogatives of nobility, mineral rights, annuities). In marriage law, it is understood as referring to the lifelong entitlement of the widow (and less often the widower) to the property left for the benefit of the surviving spouse. The *Leibzucht* bestows to the beneficiary (*Leibzüchter*) an irrevokable but time-limited right to alien things: she might possess and use the *Leibzucht* property for her life, but could not diminish or worsen its value.

*Leibzucht* was an overwhelmingly rural phenomenon, seldom to be found in urban areas." [footnote added]

<sup>21</sup> Bistumarchiv Münster, Off. Vechta, *Catalogus Communicantium* 1705.