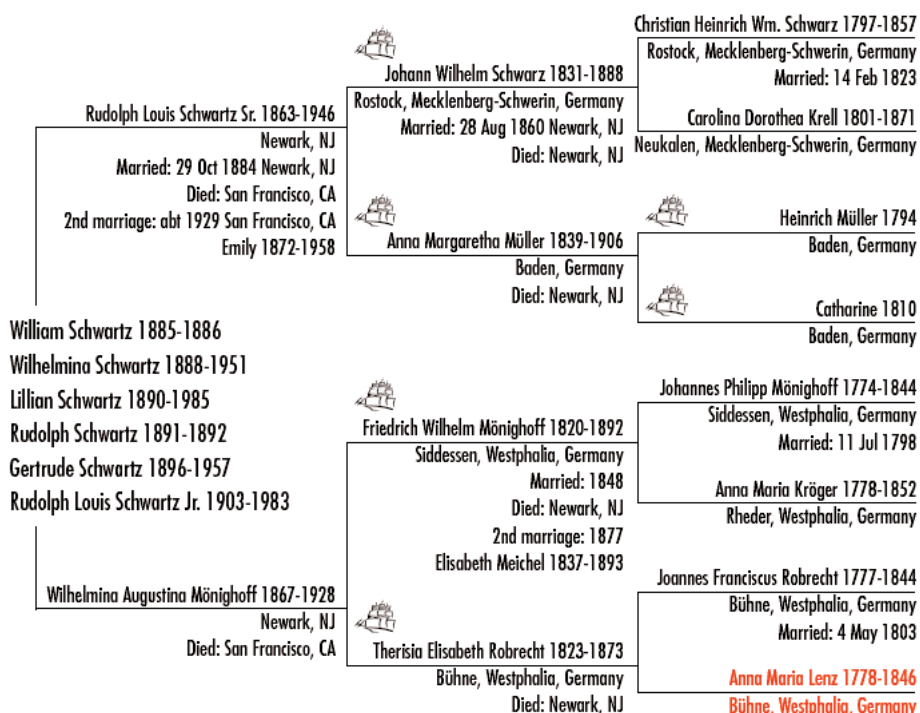


Anna maria Lenz and her sister and brother grew up in a German farmhouse similar to this one.



Anna Maria Lenz

1778-1846

Spouse:

Franz Robrecht 1777-1844

Children:

Clara 1804-61

Johannes 1807-36

Carolina 1810-73

Ignatius 1813-88

Anton 1816-1905

Joseph 1819-26

Elisabeth Robrecht 1823-73

Parents:

Franz Georg Lenz 1739-1805

Eva Maria Weber 1743-1809

Siblings:

Eva Maria Elisabetha 1772

Johann Franz Joseph 1775

Anna Maria Elisabetha Lenz was born 12 May 1778 in Bühne, Germany, and was baptized two days later at St. Vitus Catholic Church. Anna Maria was the youngest of three children born to Eva Maria Weber and Georg Lenz, who were married in Bühne on 30 January 1770.

At Anna Maria's birth her sister, Eva, was eight years old and her brother, Franz, was two and a half.

George Lenz farmed the fields to support his family, and the farm house they lived in was located on the outskirts of Bühne. Anna Maria and her husband, Franz Robrecht, later lived in the Lenz farm house where their seven children were born.



St. Vitus Catholic Church in Bühne, Germany, where Anna Maria was baptized in 1778 and where her parents were married in 1770.

The Schwartz Family History

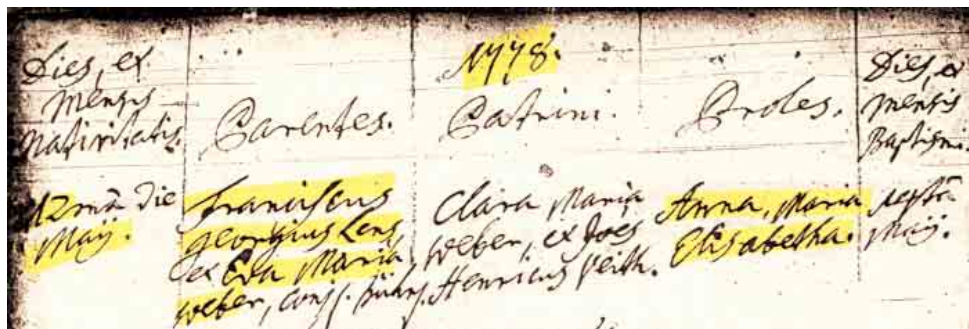


The George Lenz farmhouse was located on the outskirts of Bühne. The road leading off the bottom center of the above photograph is the one on which the farmhouse was located. A new house has replaced the old one, which was destroyed by the bombs of WW II. Farming fields can still be seen in this 1981 photo of Bühne.

The earliest record of Anna Maria Lenz's ancestors in Bühne is the 1669 marriage of her great-great grandparents, Henrici Krull and Elisabeth Heerdemert.

In the early 1600s, German churches were mandated to keep written records of births, marriages, and deaths.

However, recordkeeping in most areas of Germany began in the decades following the end of Thirty Years War (1618-48), during which entire villages were wiped from the map and bare survival took priority over record keeping.



Anna Maria Lenz's 1778 baptism recorded in the Bühne parish church record book.

The Schwartz Family History

LIFE ON THE LENZ FARM

Like hundreds of villages dotting the north central German farmlands, Bühne was populated with barn-like farm houses, home to both humans and animals.

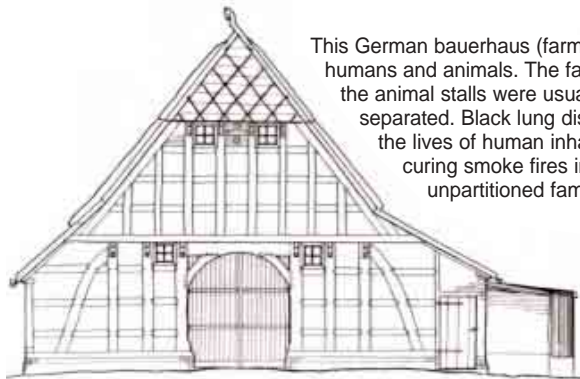
A barn was the central feature inside the farm house with animal stalls on one side and family living quarters on the other. Large double barn doors accommodated wagons, oxen, and cattle. The loft held drying farm produce and smoked meats hung on large hooks. The ground floor housed cattle, horses, pigs, chickens, geese, rabbits, and whatever else the farmer used to support his family. Grain and dried fruit were secured in barrels.

Smoke from an ever-smoldering fire hung in the rafters, curing meats, drying crops, repelling bugs, and killing bacteria. No chimney or hood caught the smoke that slowly drifted through the thatched roof and open windows into the cool damp German sky.

A wood burning iron stove, used for both cooking and heating, stood in a combined kitchen, dining, and living space. Coal oil lamps provided light.



Photo of the interior of an old farm house showing a fire grate placed over an open fire. Smoke from the flames cured meat and kept harvested crops from molding. Photo from a museum in Cloppenburg, Niedersachsen.



This German bauerhaus (farm house) housed both humans and animals. The family living area and the animal stalls were usually, but not always, separated. Black lung disease often cut short the lives of human inhabitants when the curing smoke fires invaded the unpartitioned family living quarters.

Bedrooms were unheated. A mattress consisted of several feet of straw within a burlap envelope covered with a sheet. Children went to bed wearing longjohns, slept under feather down comforters, and snuggled up to blanket-wrapped hot bricks.

Young children helped with keeping the farmyard tidy, caring for the animals, and harvesting crops. Older children watched over cows and sheep in the afternoons.

With confirmation at age 14, the relatively untroubled time of childhood came to an end. Boys went to work as farm laborers or became apprentices to craftsmen. Girls went to work as domestic servants.

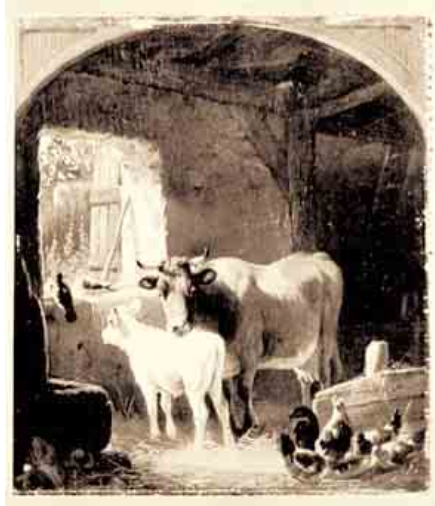
The farm passed from father to child when one of his married children took over the farm and entered into a legal agreement with his/her father and mother, who continued living on the farm. This agreement spelled out specifics, such as living quarters, pensions, field access, and food allowances due the retired farmer and his wife.

This change of ownership normally took place when the farmer was around age 55 and his married child was about 27. The new owner and his/her family nursed the old farmer and his wife through old age.

In the late seventeenth century the following labor and goods were due the Bühne manor house for rent/tax on one small farm:

From Petri to Michaelis (22 February to 29 September, the feast days of St. Peter and St. Michael) the farmer was required to work one day a week for the lord of the manor, and from Michaelis to Petri, one day every two weeks. Payment also included four scheffel (bushels) each of rye and oats, three shillings, four chickens, and 60 eggs.

The Schwartz Family History



Even the family dog helped out on the farm. Dog-driven grinding mills for corn and wheat can still be seen in many old barns.



In 1812 Bühne's human inhabitants numbered about 800. The following is Bühne's animal population in 1812:

Horses (3+ yrs)	110
Donkeys	14
Bulls	10
Oxen	8
Cows	257
Pigs	200
Beehives	34

A typical farm workday began at 5 am with barn chores. At 6 am the first of five meals was served, consisting of bread and milk. Gardens and fields were tended until 9 am, when a second breakfast was consumed, consisting of sausage, cheese, bread, and milk. At noon everyone returned to the house for the main meal, a one-pot stew with potatoes, vegetables, and meat.

The next meal was at 3 pm, consisting of cake, cookies, and coffee. Then back to work until 6 pm. Supper was served about 6:30 and consisted of the same one-pot stew from the noon meal. Everyone stumbled into bed by 8 or 9 pm so they could repeat the routine the next day. On Sundays the family walked to the village church wearing their sabbath best.

All food was grown and cooked on the farm. During summer months smoked meat or poultry were eaten. Butchering was done in the winter.

German peasant farmers lived in the village and farming fields started where the village ended. Farmers and farm hands, day laborers, were the majority of the professions scribed in village record books. Fields were tended by families and farm hands, and even those who were not farmers by profession cultivated vegetable patches on land surrounding their houses and cottages.

Farms and houses were not owned but leased from the nobel family. Leaseholds were hereditary as long as the taxes were paid.



1925 photo of a Bühne field being harvested in much the same way as the Lenz family did 200 years ago.

The Schwartz Family History

A LIFE IN BÜHNE

Bühne village life centered around family and church. Celebrating weddings, confirmations, and births in addition to the many feast days of the saints was the core of village social life. The earliest marriage records were noted not by day and month but by the saint on whose feast the marriage occurred, such as Festum Jacobi (Latin for the Feast day of St. James, which was July 25)

Common squabbles were settled by either the noble of the manor or by village priest. No government authority existed for the administration of common justice, therefore most civil matters were handled by the church and the nobility.

In Germany the sharpest social division occurred between the landed nobility (the families who owned the land) and the peasants (those who paid rent/tax with labor and goods to lease their farms and cottages from the nobility)

Three social classes existed in the peasant population:

- The first class (about 3%) consisted of farmers who possessed leaseholds on the big farms.
- The common farmers (60-80%) made up the second class. These farmers worked hard and usually provided a modest standard of living for themselves and their families. Also in this category were craftsmen such as tailors, shoemakers, smiths, and cartwrights.
- The third class consisted of day laborers (20-40%), who worked for other farmers for day wages and were very, very poor.



The barn area of the farm house was the ideal location to celebrate a marriage, as depicted in the painting above of a peasant marriage feast.

People normally married within their social class. Anna Maria Lenz, daughter of a common farmer, married a tailor, who was the son of a tailor. Women who bore a child out of wedlock sometimes married below their class, as was the case with Anna Maria Lenz's daughter, Carolina Robrecht, who married a day laborer.



Old Bühne village street scene.

The Schwartz Family History

Bühne's population grew steadily from 700 inhabitants in 1803 to 1,055 in 1852, a peak year of German emigration to America. The village population slowly declined through the next four heavy emigration decades to a low of 805 in 1895. By 1989 Bühne's population reached 1,369.



The 1770 marriage record record of Anna Maria Lenz's parents, Franciscus Georgius Lenz and Eva Maria Weber.

MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN

Anna Maria Lenz married Franz Robrecht in Bühne on 4 May 1803. Anna Maria and Franz had seven children from 1804 to 1823. Read about the lives of their children in the Franz Robrecht biography, chapter 15.

Anna Maria and Franz lived with her parents in the Lenz farm house where the seven Robrecht children were born. Anna Maria's older sister, Eva, also married in 1803, and she and her husband, Bernard Wagener, and their six children also lived in the farm house. Three of the Wagener children died in childhood and Bernard Wagener died in 1823.

Anna Maria Lenz's father died of cancer on 3 March 1805 at age 65, and her mother died on 23 April 1809 at age 66. Around 1829 the Robrechts moved from the farm house to a house in the village.

Anna Maria Lenz Robrecht lived to see 12 of her 38 grandchildren, of which only three lived out their adult lives in Germany. Anna Maria died in Bühne, Germany, on 14 November 1846 at age 68. She was buried two days later in the Bühne church cemetery, joining her husband, Franz Robrecht, who died two years earlier at age 67.



The 1803 marriage record record of Anna Maria Lenz and Franz Robrecht. The witnesses are Bernard Weber, the brides uncle, and Herman Liliendahl, the groom's cousin.