

Third visit to Steinwenden

By Eric Dysinger
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In of 2015, I had the chance to visit Steinwenden for the third time while on a business trip. I was in contact with Roland Paul who was a historian for the Palatine region in Germany at that time. He has since retired. Like myself, Roland is a descendant of Steinwenden. His ancestors were priests in the Reformed Church in Steinwenden. During our meeting, I learned our ancestors crossed paths. His ancestor, a priest of the Reformed Church, married my ancestors Henrich Erasmus Deissingner and Anna Gertraude Buchi in 1748. Roland's ancestors were also Mayors of Steinwenden around the early 1900s. Roland currently owns the Mayor's residence of his ancestors.

Roland invited me to stay in his ancestor's residence where we could discuss our family's history and I would get the chance to visit his records office in Kaiserslautern. After two trips to Steinwenden and a lot of microfilm viewing, I had thought the amount of information was near the end and fortunately I was wrong! The records office contained much more information for me! I spent a Sunday morning and afternoon getting as much information as I could.

The first new, important information was I found more information about our direct lineage. In my previous report I noted Barthel Deissingner's grandfather to be Theobald Theisinger. From this third trip, I was able to gather more information on Theobald's family and also determine a connection to Steinwenden as well as connecting branches of the Deissingers in the towns of Wolfstein, Rothselsberg, and Steinwenden.

Theobaldt Theisinger - The earliest record tied to my line of ancestry is Theobaldt. I found him residing in Wolfstein in 1670 where he was listed as father of the groom in tracing back through his children and grandchildren. The interesting piece of information I found was the wedding information where it indicated Theobaldt was originally from Steinwenden. This means our earliest records reside in Steinwenden and there was a migration of our line to the Wolfstein area, likely to avoid the 30 year War and during the 1680s, our line re-settled Steinwenden. There are Deissingers in tax records of Steinwenden as early as the late 1500s but, unfortunately, I am unable to tie Theobald to these early records.

Theobaldt had a wife named Ottilia and I have not found any further records on her or their marriage at this time. Theobald and Ottilia had at least four children. Two of their children were baptized in Wolfstein and the other two baptized in Meisenheim. Wolfstein had an Evangelist Church and Meisenheim had a Reformed Evangelist Church.

Maria Salome Theisinger (b. 28Jan1642 d.) – Maria is the eldest child of Theobald Theisinger and Ottilia I have found so far. She was baptized in the Reformed Church in Meisenheim, Germany. No other information has been found about her at this time.

Wendel Theissingner (b. 9May1650 d.) – Wendel is the son of Theobald Theisinger and Ottilia. He was born in Wolfstein, Germany. Wendel married but it is unknown whom he married and on

what date. He did have at least two daughters, Anna Engel and Anna Ottilia. Anna Engel lived to marry Velten Hebel on 25Feb1716 and Anna Ottilia lived to marry Simon Budinger on 12Mar1715.

Wendel ended up residing in Rothselberg, Germany after the 30 Years War. Rothselberg is about 1 mile (1.6 kilometers) south of Wolfstein.

Johannes Theissinger (b. d.) – Johannes is also the son of Theobald Theisinger and Ottilia. There is no information on his birth though it is assumed in Wolfstein. Johannes married Anna Margareth Plaut(ern) on 19Apr1670. Anna Margareth was from Olsbrucken, Germany. Johannes and Anna had one known child, Elisabeth Margareth (c. 9Apr1671). It is important to note Melchior established a large family in the Wolfstein and Rothselberg area. The records of Johannes give us a new important clue. His daughter's birth record indicates Johannes's is a citizen and his occupation is a baker.

Johan "Hans" Georg Theissinger (b. 1645 c. Mar. 27, 1648 d. 23Jan1710) – Johan Georg is my direct ancestor and is the son to Theobald and Ottilia. He was born in 1645 and he was baptized in the Reformed Church in Meisenheim, Germany on March 27, 1648. Meisenheim is located about 12 miles north of Wolfstein. His exact record of birth has not been found but from his church records in Steinwenden his age at the time of his death in 1710 is indicated as 65 years old. He married Catharina Seyler (b. 1656 d. 4Aug1726), from Sahl, Germany in May 1672. Hans Georg and Catharina were married in the Zweikirchen (Three Churches) between the towns of Rutsweiler and Wolfstein. At the time of marriage, Johan Georg's occupation is listed as an apprentice baker. He migrated to Steinwenden and became the town's kirchensensor of the Reformed Church. The kirchensensor was a high position in the church responsible for hiring the priests in the church and determining punishments to residents who were not following the guidelines of the church. He was involved heavily in the community being godfather to many children in the town.

Hans Georg and Catharina had nine children. It is assumed the eldest children were born in Wolfstein and the remaining in Steinwenden. The reason for this assumption is the Wolfstein church records range from the years 1641 to 1670. The Steinwenden church records begin in 1684. So, we have a period of 14 years of missing crucial information from church records. However, a clue when Hans Georg and Catharina moved to Steinwenden is given from the tax records in Wolfstein. Hans Georg paid taxes of 150 Guldens in 1685. Therefore, they must have moved between 1685 and 1687 as their first child born in Steinwenden was in 1687.

Barthel Deissinger

Surprisingly, I learned a lot more information about my ancestor who is responsible for coming to America in 1748. He and his family came on the ship "Patience". When he immigrated to America I found records of him and his son, Henrich Erasmus, and their signatures. This was the first "personal" finding of Barthel and Henrich.

In addition, I found the occupations of Barthel prior to his journey to America. He was listed as a Master Baker, like his father and grandfather, in his early records but in Steinwenden records from 1718 through 1734 they list him as an inn keeper.

New information found indicated Barthel had a maid named Anna Eva Burger. Anna Eva gave birth to a child with Velten Pletsch as the father on Dec. 12, 1729.

Barthel also had an affair found in the records. On Aug 20, 1707, a woman named Barbara Schmidt from Kottweiler had her son, Johann Andreas Schmidt, christened in the Reformed Church of Steinwenden. Barbara Schmidt was not married at the time and she had to name the father of her child. On March 25, 1708, she named Barthel Deissinger as the father of her child and she had to pay a fine for having a child out of wedlock. On April 4, 1708, Barthel acknowledged in public he was the father of the child. This occurred during Barthel's marriage with Maria Magdelana Raab whom he married in 1707!

Barthel's place of birth is unknown as I have been unable to find records of his birth but based on the information I have he was likely born in Wolfstein. Here's my reasoning behind it:

1. When Barthel emigrated to the America in 1748, the passenger list indicated he was 66 years old giving his date of birth in 1681 or 1682 depending on the month he was born.
2. I have found Barthel's confirmation record in the Steinwenden church records indicating he was confirmed in 1697 and confirmations occurred around the age of 14. This also back-dates to a 1682 or 1683 date of birth.
3. Hans Georg, Barthel's father, has a record in the Wolfstein tax records of paying 150 Guldens in 1685.
4. The earliest record of Hans Georg having a child in Steinwenden is Abraham born in 1685. Therefore, it is likely Hans Georg moved from Wolfstein to Steinwenden in 1685 a few years after Barthel being born.