

Henry Penner

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CHAPTER EIGHT

GERHARD SCHELLENBERG GENEALOGY (1725-1802)

Section One. Jakob Schellenberg Stammvater.

1 The Kleine Gemeinde Schellenberg families are the descendants of Jakob Schellenberg, by his son Gerhard Schellenberg born 1725 and died 1802, in West Prussia.¹ Family sketches of his daughter Agatha Schellenberg (1778-1858) (who married Abraham B.Kornelsen), as well as grandson Gerhard Schellenberg (1797-1837), were published in 1987 in *Profile of the Mennonite Kleine Gemeinde 1874*.² Considerable data regarding the Schellenberg family has come to light since that time, including that of great grandson Abraham Schellenberg (1839-1924), who settled in Kleefeld, Manitoba, in 1874.

The fact that several lines of this family were strongly represented in the Kleine Gemeinde in the 1870s would indicate that the children of Gerhard Schellenberg (1725-1802) were early supporters of this movement. Certainly, the family members shared the normative characteristics of this reform movement, namely, a deep sense of religiosity and ethics, a high degree of articulation, and average to above average wealth. Therefore it was decided to proceed with the compilation of a more detailed history of this family going back to Jakob Schellenberg, father of Gerhard Schellenberg (1725-1802). The reader is reminded that considerable additional information for the Kleine Gemeinde associated families will be found in *Profile 1874*.

The collected writings of Theodore R.Schellenberg (1903-1970), formerly Archivist with the National Archives in Washington, form one of the significant sources of information regarding the early history of the Schellenberg family.³ Much of this information was made available through an essay entitled "The Schellenberg Lineage".⁴ Dr. Schellenberg describes the early progenitors of the family as follows:

"Entries in the Tiegengagen Mennonite Church books, and references in B.H.Unruh's *Die Niederlaendisch-niederdeutschen Hintergrunde der Mennonitische Ostwanderungen*, show that two Schellenbergs, with numerous progeny lived near Tiegenghof in the early part of the 18th century. Both were born in the 1720s and both belonged to the Tiegengagen Mennonite Church. It is quite likely that they were brothers."

"One of these two men, Gerhard, was our direct ancestor, and our study of our forbears will begin with him. The other person, Jakob, was born in 1720, according to an entry in the Tiegengagen Church Book. Jakob's offspring may have been the Schellenbergs that were born in the 1750's and 1760's near Tiegenghof. They included Johan, a woodworker of Lakendorf, born in 1757; Bernhard, a farmer of Waldorf, born in 1759; and Katharina, of Waldorf, born about 1769. Two other children, whose exact birth dates cannot be established, were born about this time: Heinrich and Paul, the latter being a farmer at Altendorf. This progeny of Jakob, for the most part migrated to the Chortitza colony in the Province of Ekatherinoslav; that of Gerhard, to the Molotschna colony in the Province of Taurida, in Russia."⁵

Dr. Glenn Penner, Guelph, Ontario, has examined the Catholic Church Records of Tiegengagen which contain a list of "Mennonite Beerdigunden 1758/1759" with the following Schellenberg entries:

- 1) "Schellenburger, Cath. Tiegengagen March 31, 1758 (26)." This would give her birth at around 1732. Dr. Penner adds that she could possibly have been a daughter of Jakob Schellenberg Sr., or a wife of Jakob Schellenberg (1719-1795).
- 2) "Schoellenberg, Gierth von Tiegengagen. Daughter Idkie October 1, 1758 (1/2)." According to Dr. Penner this indicates that Gerh. Schellenberg had other children between his marriage in 1753 and the birth of his son Gerhard in 1759.
- 3) "Schellenberg Jakob von Altendorf. November 30, 1757 (70)." (born about 1687) Dr. Penner is of the view that this may be the father of Gerhard (1725-1802) and Jakob (1719-1795) since the age, time and place all correspond with the known facts. Altendorf was near Tiegenghof.⁶

Gen	Name	Birth	Marriage	Death
1	Jakob Schellenberg	1687		Nov 30, 1757
m	(?)			
2	Jakob Schellenberg	1719		Jan 6, 1795
2	Gerhard Schellenberg	1725		May 6, 1802

Section Two. Gerhard Schellenberg (1725-1802).

2 The remainder of this sketch will deal with the descendants of Gerhard Schellenberg (1725-1802), the family patriarch, herein sometimes referred to as Gerhard Schellenberg I. Dr. T.R. Schellenberg has postulated that Gerhard Schellenberg (1725-1802) may never have acquired property since he is not listed in the records of the Tiegenghof Mennonite Brandordnung and that his father may have belonged to the Tiegenghof Catholic Church.⁷ According to the research of Dr. Glenn Penner, it is evident that both Gerhard (1725-1802) and his father belonged to the Mennonite faith as they are listed as such in the Catholic Church Records of Tiegengagen. See Section One of.

The *Konsignations Liste* of 1776 shows only one Gerhard (Gerth) Schellenberg, a labourer, resident in the village of Tiegenghof. The family consists of father, mother, three sons, and one daughter. Although the family are recorded as being Eigentuemer's or freeholders, that is to say, that they own some property, they are listed as being poor.⁸ The village of Tiegenghof was located about 20 miles east of Danzig (today Gdansk) on the banks