Johann Bernard Klitz (1779—1833)
Anna Maria Wernsing (1779—1837)

Town Crest of Schöppingen

Detail of the Ceiling of St. Brictius Church, Schoppingen, with the Face of Jesus in the center, and an image of St Brictius below.

Bernard, eldest son of Christopher and Margaret, inherited the Klitz plot of land on the Schulze-Sievert farm as was the custom of the day.

He and Maria raised five children (four to adulthood) on the farm, continuing a lifestyle of subsistence farming, working for the Schultze-Sievert family, and supplementary clothmaking.

Bernard and Maria raised their family through some of the most tumultuous times in the area as the wars of the French Revolution (1789) and the subsequent Napoleonic Wars (1800-1815) enveloped the region.

The social structure of Westphalia was a system that developed over hundreds of years. As with many societies, ownership of land (or lack thereof) dictated one's position in society.

The Westphalian landed social structure was divided into the following groups:

Bauerschaften: Large areas of land, dating from medieval times. ex. Tinge, Heven;

Schulte: Caretakers of the land owned by the nobility

Hoven: Simple peasant owned parcel of land with hereditary rights;

Kotten: Parcels of land removed from the Schultes and Kottens, using a subsistence existence supplemented by day-labor;

Brinkstinze/Liebzuchter/Tagelöhner: Lowest level of peasantry, owned next to nothing and relied on various day jobs to survive.

Map of Central Europe, 1779

Family Tree of Bernard Klitz and Maria Wernsing