

**MOTHER OR STEPMOTHER:
A GERMAN-AMERICAN GENEALOGICAL PROBLEM**

by
ROBERT E. STIENS

This is an account of a research problem that starts in Cincinnati, Ohio in the early 1900's and travels to Langförden, Niedersachsen, Germany. Many other records other than those mentioned were searched to prove the relationship of a woman who lived with or near the Frank *Stiens* family for over 40 years.

The death certificate of Joseph A. *Stiens* filed with the Cincinnati, Ohio Board of Health indicates the following:

Date of death — 28 Dec 1915

Date of birth — 8 Oct 1844

Father — Frank *Stiens*

Mother — Mary A. *Busse*

The 1870 Federal census of Hamilton Co., Cincinnati, Ohio, 13th ward lists the family of a Frank *Steins*, wife Elizabeth, 7 children and a Gertrude *Busse* age 76, born *Ohio*.

The 1860 Federal census of Hamilton Co., Cincinnati, Ohio, 12th ward lists the family of Francis *Steins*, wife Elizabeth, 7 children and a Gertrude *Bussa* age 68, born *Ohio*.

The 1850 Federal census of Hamilton Co., Cincinnati, Ohio, 11th ward lists the family of a Frances *Steine*, wife Elizabeth, 4 children. A Gertrude *Busher* age 53 born *Germany* is living at the same residence.

The 1840 Federal census of Hamilton Co., Cincinnati, Ohio, 5th ward lists as a head of a house a Francis *Stiens*. This name is followed by a Gertrude *Busse*, age 40-50.

Based upon the census records it was assumed that the Gertrude *Busse* living next to and with the Frank *Stiens* family was the mother of Elizabeth. A marriage certificate filed with the Hamilton Co., Ohio Court House indicates a Francis *Stins* and Elizabeth *Bush* were married 15 May 1834. The death

certificate for Gertrude *Busse* gave her age as 78 and her place of birth as *Germany*.

The will of Frank *Stiens* did not mention a Gertrude *Busse*.

No ship's passenger list carries either a Gertrude or Elizabeth *Busse*.

A birth date of 15 Nov 1817 is listed for Elizabeth on the head stone at St. John's Cemetery in St. Bernard, Ohio.

A review was made of many parish registers for the present German state of Niedersachsen that are available on microfilm through the Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

Microfilm 911504 and 911505 for Langförden, Germany, St. Laurentinus Catholic Church has the following entries:

Born 15 Nov 1817 Maria Elisabeth, parents Johann Friedrich *Busse* and Anna Maria *Lamping*.

Other children of this union:

Christened 7 Apr 1816 Mary Anne

11 Jan 1820 Anna Maria Gertrud

10 Jan 1822 Friedrich Joseph

29 Feb 1824 Theodor Henrich

Died 29 Feb 1824 Anna Maria *Lamping*, wife of the carpenter Frederich *Busse* died in childbirth

Marriage 26 Apr 1826 Widower Friedrich *Busse*, carpenter married Gertrud *Lautenbach*

This proves that the Gertrude *Busse* living with or near Frank *Stiens* for over 40 years was not the mother, but rather the stepmother of Maria Elisabeth *Busse*.

This research problem demonstrates that the spelling of first and last names must be watched very closely. Census records, although a good source of information need to be reviewed with an open mind since ages, places of birth, etc. may not be correct. The use of all available records must be undertaken to prove the assumptions that are made as a research problem develops.
