

The following letter is a translation of one my grandfather wrote to his children. It forms the basis of what I know about our family background. Unfortunately I do not know the whereabouts of the original (written in German) but I translated this from an Afrikaans copy in my possession.

My Dear Children,

I suspect that apart from your parents and grandparents you do not know much about the circumstances of your ancestors, and that it may thus be of interest to you to know something more about them. I want thus, as far as it is in my power, to share with you as much as I heard from my parents, (both of the male and female lines) and what has become known to me from other sources.

When I was a child my father often told me that his oldest known ancestor lived in the sixteenth century and that he was a pastor in Salzwedel. His name was Stephan Schulze but he was much better known by his latin name Stephanus Praetorius which means the head or leader of a community. The word "Schulze" still occurs in German as "Dorfschulze" that equates to mayor (burgomaster) or magistrate.

The adopted latin form Praetorius thus had the same meaning as the old old-German name Schulze, and in the period of the life time of ancestor Stephanus Praetorius it was custom in Germany to translate names into their latinised form. For that reason he was called Praetorius rather than Schulze and it was under this name that his books and tracts were published. Under this name you will still today be able to track him down in the Salzwedel archives.

By chance a few years ago, I had a conversation with the missionary superintendent, A Merensky on the subject "our ancestors", and after I had told him the story of Stephanus Praetorius he replied that he owned a book written by this same Praetorius. He then offered it to me as a gift which I accepted gratefully and leave to you as a remembrance, seeing it was undoubtedly written by the same ancestor my late father often spoke about to me.]

This Stephanus Praetorius was thus our earliest known ancestor. His was also a name well known and often mentioned in Evangelical Lutheran circles. In his work environment in Salzwedel he was an active carer of souls and comforter in the true sense of the word.

He was born on the 3rd May 1536 and was thus a contemporary of Martin Luther during the first ten years of childhood. Raised to the same calling he was at first a Deacon in the old Salzwedel from 1565 until 1569, and was called to the pastorate later in the same year in New Salzwedel where he followed his calling as pastor until his death in 1610. How he performed his tasks you can see for yourselves from the book which has been left to you.

Shortly after his death during the turbulent times of the Thirty Years War, everything in Germany went to ground and was destroyed which made it very

difficult to record and keep accurate records of family happenings. As a result very little information about his immediate descendents has survived. He did, however, have a son, Christian Jürgen Schulze born ca 1575 and possibly also a second son of whom Ilse Schulze who married Johann Baumann was a descendent.

This son Christian Jürgen Schulze had a son, Dietrich Schulze born ca 1615. Last named married Anna Baumann on 8th July 1657. Anna Baumann (born 10th April 1631) was the daughter of the second son of Stephanus Praetorius.

Johan Baumann was born in the year 1597, the son of Jürgen Baumann (born 1560) and Ilse Krüger (married on 19th October 1592). Jürgen Baumann in turn was the son of Jürgen Baumann Snr. and Elizabeth Genken who were married in New Salzwedel in 1558. Thus far this information has been verified from information still in existence in the archives.

Out of the marriage of Dietrich Schulze and Anna Baumann a son, Stephan Schulze (probably named after his great grandfather, Stephan Schulze or Praetorius) was born on 24th November 1664. He also studied Theology and became pastor and superintendent in his hometown Salzwedel. He first married Elizabeth Burchardt on 3rd October 1695 and later Elizabeth Dorothea von Chüden. Out of the later marriage Stephan Christian Schulze was born on 4th July 1724. Stephan Christian Schulze married Christiane Johanne Kelch on 17th November 1761. They had a son, Carl Ludolph Schulze, born on 30th June 1772, who married Charlotte Albertina Wagener of Havelberg on 2nd November 1798. These two were my grandparents.

I never knew my grandfather as he died at an early age while on an official trip. This great grandfather of yours was a pastor in Boebenzien in the vicinity of Seehausen in the Altmark. I knew your great - grandmother Charlotte Albertina Schulze (née Wagner) well. She lived until the year 1856. From her came the New Testament in which she wrote Bible texts in her own hand and also the silver spoon which I still use.

She had five daughters and four sons of whom the eldest, Franz Ludwig (i.e. your grandfather) was born on 31st January 1805. He also studied Theology and was at first the pastor at Wendemark in the Altmark district and where he married Pauline Staemmler of Wilsnach in 1831. There too, I, your father, was born on 23rd April 1836. From there your grandfather was transferred to the small town of Werben Bishopric. In 1848 he was again transferred to Camern as pastor and superintendent. He remained at his post until 1876 when he retired to spend his last years in Wernigerode where he died in 1883.

Reinhold. Schulze
Bis C1.