

# Wilhelm Schur & Maria Schoppa

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*Story of the Black Wedding Dress - But she wanted to be married in white!*

When Maria Schoppa (born December 27, 1861) married Wilhelm Schur at Winchester April 26, 1881 (95 years ago) it was still the custom among the Wendish people for the brides to wear black wedding dresses. But the times, they were a-changin' and more and more girls looked forward to being presented at the altar wearing the new fashion, the white wedding dress. That was the secret dream of pretty, youthful, 19 year-old Maria Schoppa, whose parents, Michael Schoppa and his wife Maria Zoch Schoppa landed at Galveston aboard the sailing ship "Texas" October 19, 1868. Maria looked forward to the day when her father would lead her and the large wedding party into the church and down the aisle, she wearing the symbol of virginal purity, the white wedding dress!

But Maria's mother, Maria Zoch Schoppa, died January 15, 1881, three months before the April wedding day. Sorrow surrounded the joyful wedding plans in the Schoppa home. When Maria went to Mrs. Falke (Warda Store) to have her sew the wedding dress, Maria was advised that it would not be proper to wear white. Since her mother had just died recently, she would wear a black wedding dress, she was told. And so she did! She was married in black.

For years, almost to her dying day, January 19, 1958, in Vernon, Texas, Maria Schoppa Schur related this incident and she always choked up with tears of regret that she could not be married in white.

Wilhelm Schur and his wife Maria Schoppa Schur moved to Wilbarger County in 1906. They had seven children who lived in Vernon and Lockett, Texas; Mrs. Herman Lehmann, Mrs. F E Lowke, Mrs. Rudolph Guggisberg, Gerhard Schur, and Mrs. William Fiesler. Two other children, Mrs. Selma Kubitz, died in 1919 and Paul Schur died in World War I in 1918.

SCHOPPA-ZOCH -- Going back a little farther now; Michael Schoppa and his wife Maria Zoch, brought their children with them to Texas in 1868. They were Johann, the oldest, eight years of age, who died during the voyage and was buried at sea, Maria, (subject of the above story), Christian, father of Mrs. Blondina Schoppa Rummel of Lockett, Texas, who shared these stories with us, Helene, and Christiana.

The Schoppas traveled by foot and ox-drawn wagon to Warda in 1868 and settled on a small farm three miles south and west toward Winchester. There they lived happily in a one-room log cabin surrounded by a quaint hand-hewn rail fence. Schoppa farmed with oxen decked out with home-made yokes and home-made harnesses. Schoppa felled the trees with his self-made axes to enlarge the little, crowded cabin and he made wooden shoes for his children from willow trees.

In 1883, two years after his wife, Maria, died Michael Schoppa married Widow Schur, mother of Wilhelm and Frederick Schur.

For Christmas Schoppa traded a bale of cotton in Giddings for a barrel of flour, a barrel of apples, and a few sticks of peppermint candy.

Schoppa hauled his cotton to be ginned in Brenham. Since there were no buyers at the gin in those days they hauled the bales back home and sold them at the cotton market at a later date. They stored the cotton seed in a "cotton seed house", where the children slept when the bedroom space became overcrowded, especially when "company" came!

It was a happy day when the whole family climbed aboard the horse or mule-drawn wagon and they could all go to church on Sunday. The children rode to school astride their faithful donkey!

RUMMEL -- Mrs. Robert Rummel (Blondina Schoppa), mother of Mrs. Norval Skov (Carolyn Rummel) now of New Braunfels, and formerly of Giddings, when Norval and she taught at Immanuel Lutheran School, provided the information for the above stories. Her grandparents were John Reinhardt, born January 2, 1849; died December 5, 1920 at Winchester at age 71 and Maria Laake Reinhardt, born February 4, 1847; died January 25, 1916 at Winchester. Both were devout Wendisch Lutherans. They had seven children: August, Johann, Bernhardt, and Ernest, Maria (Mrs. Rummel's mother), Theresia and Bertha.

While my wife, Elsie and I were in Lockett (Vernon) for their Mission Fest October 24, we were grandly hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Rummel. As we talked and viewed old, old pictures, we were constantly taken back to Lee County and the early settlers among the Wends who settled in and about Serbin, at that time a part of Bastrop County.

We had the pleasure of riding around on a rainy afternoon, viewing old homesteads, founded by pioneers of the area who came to North Texas from Lee County to give their family the benefit of their industry and perseverance, given to them by their God-gearing and devout parents. We visited with Emma Lehmann Schur at her home near the "Five-In-One" High School. She was born in Lee County February 26, 1887 and moved to Wilbarger County about 1907. She married Gerhard Schur at Lockett in 1911.

The people of Lockett have a beautiful Lutheran Church, served by the Reverend Gerald Thiele. It was interesting to me to be preaching in a church, founded by people who followed the guidance of God to a land of "milk and honey" just as their fathers had done when they were led to American and to Texas from their homeland in Lusatia more than a hundred years ago.

Taken from the Giddings Paper Bi-Centennial Notebook 1779-1976 by Minster John about 1976

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