



## Swiss American Historical Society Review

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### Prefatory Note

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Prefatory Note:

Occasionally the mail brings unexpected gifts instead of bills, and such were the two accounts of the John von Gunten and Anna Schneiter Family, written and sent by Collins van Gunten of West Chester, Pennsylvania. Although primarily composed for the American van/von Guntens, the accounts are of interest also to readers of the SAHS Review for these reasons:

The reports show , first, what fine results a determined genealogical search may yield. John and Anna von Gunten-Schneiter had left no written documents. Yet Collins van Gunten's patient effort unearthed valuable information about their origin, family, occupation, and religious affiliation.

Second, van Gunten also makes clear how much luck one needs in finding knowledgeable people in such genealogical research. One must find distant relatives, keepers of archival records, and scholars who are all willing to share their expertise.

Third, Collins van Gunten's story shows how to proceed, how imaginatively to pursue trails of evidence, and how to assess what the findings reveal and what they fail to illuminate. Sincere thanks to Collins van Gunten for sharing with us the fruits of his labor and to all who contributed to the success of his search!

With best wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year 1993,

*Leo Schelbert, Editor*