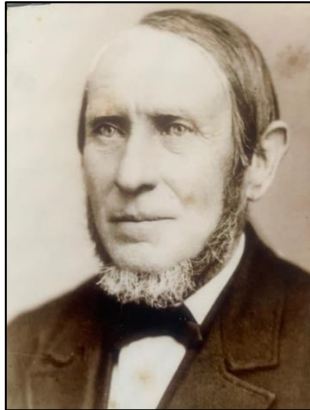
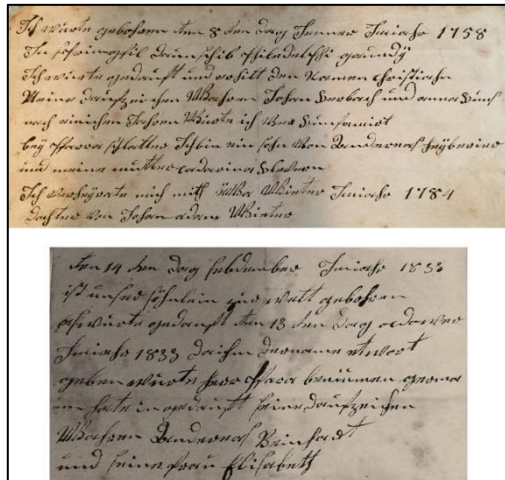


Der Kurier

VOLUME 39, NUMBER 1 / MARCH 2021



A faithful Lutheran: The first part of “Immigrant Connections” columnist Bob Greiner’s interpretation of events surrounding a letter written by Reverend Frederick Besel and translated by Dr. Michael Kraemer. **Page 7.**



Springfil Daunschib Philedeliphi gaundÿ: “Our Language Leaves” columnist Ken Weaver examines consonant substitutions as well as variations in capitalization in two German documents written in the old Kurrent handwriting. **Page 14.** Then, “Stick to the Script” columnist Katherine Schober alerts us to variations in handwriting in the same script that could lead readers to misinterpret certain letters. **Page 18.**

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**MID-ATLANTIC GERMANIC SOCIETY**

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New Windsor, MD 21776

<http://www.magsgen.com>

**Our mission: To stimulate and facilitate research on
Germanic genealogy and heritage in the mid-Atlantic region**

The Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society (MAGS) is a non-profit genealogical society founded in July 1982. Annual dues are only \$15 (individual) or \$20 (family). Add \$5 if you desire a printed copy of **Der Kurier** each quarter. Membership is open to all interested persons without regard to place of residence, nationality, or ethnicity. A membership application appears on the back cover and on our website. Benefits include:

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Submissions to Der Kurier: Articles concerning Germanic genealogy and heritage in the Mid-Atlantic region are welcome, as are "Letters to the Editor." Research articles should document conclusions with appropriate citation of primary sources. MAGS reserves the right to edit submissions for length and style. Unless previous arrangements are made with the editor, material published becomes the property of MAGS. Deadline for submissions: the first of January, April, July and October. Submit to Sean Kessler, *Der Kurier* Editor, MAGS, 400 S Manoa Rd, Havertown, PA 19083. E-mail: newsletter@magsgen.com

VOM PRÄSIDENT

FROM THE PRESIDENT

A New Year Begins

As I write this column, the snow is falling steadily. Everywhere I look I see white, and there are many inches of snow covering everything. *Der Winter bleibt.*

It looks like it will be a busy year for your Society. One of the biggest challenges MAGS faces is our website. As you may already know, EasyNetSites, our current website host, is going out of business; however, a representative from the company has informed us that a yet unnamed software development and hosting company will be assuming all operations and obligations of MAGS' hosting contract. In addition, the Web Committee has done a great job of finding a way for you to search MAGS' growing datasets during this transition.



Kenneth W. Heger

2021 will be a busy year for German-centric conferences. Don't forget MAGS' spring conference on April 10, when Dr. Roger Minert will present to us on a number of exciting topics. Dr. Minert is always an engaging and informative speaker, and a good friend of MAGS. For more details and to register see the MAGS website at <https://magsgen.com/>.

COVID prevented the International Germanic Genealogical Partnership (IGGP) from holding its 2021 conference in Cleveland. That obstacle did not stop the IGGP from its plans to continue to grow and provide researchers with information. To that end, the IGGP will hold a virtual conference in July. It looks like it will give us opportunities to learn about many new records from the comfort of our homes. You can learn more about the sessions and how to register at <https://iggp.org/>.

2021 is also the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's presentation to the assembled princes of the Holy Roman Empire at the Diet in Worms on 18 April 1521. Keep that important day in German and world history in mind. To continue MAGS' goal of providing members with illustrations to help in your research, I selected a postcard of one of the many statues commemorating the event from my collection. The German government erected this one in 1868.



For a while now, *Der Kurier* has carried two excellent columns on reading German. Here's an opportunity to put what you learned to use. I selected a trading card from the Eckstein-Halpaus cigarette company (of Dresden, Saxony). That company, like many companies, included trading cards in its products' packages hoping customers would want to collect all the cards in a series, and thereby increase sales. Over the years I have been collecting some of these cards and will begin sharing scans of them with MAGS members to illustrate articles, historical events, and to help us all improve our German. Let's begin now. The scans are the front and back of a single card from the Eckstein-Halpaus series of famous people, *Die Großen der Weltgeschichte*, depicting Martin Luther. The text is short and contains some useful words for genealogical researchers.

Sammelbilder
Eckstein ^{Nr. 5} | **Rarität**
ohne Mundstück | mit Goldmundstück

Die Großen der Weltgeschichte
Gruppe 2: Entdeckungen, Reformation,
Glaubenskriege
Nr. 21
Martin Luther (1483 — 1546)

(Gemälde von Thumann) wurde aus religiöser Gewissensnot Mönch. Seit er 1517 in Wittenberg seine 95 Thesen gegen das Ablasswesen erließ, wurde er zum Reformator der Kirche und zum Schöpfer des deutschen Protestantismus. Auf der Wartburg übersetzte er 1521/22 die Bibel ins Deutsche.

Mit Gen. d. Firma Gust. Schauer, Berlin-Wilmersdorf
Das **Sammelalbum** für 252 Bilder erhalten Sie für RM. 1.— beim Zigarettenhändler oder gegen Einzahlung auf Postscheck-Konto 37061 Dresden.

ECKSTEIN - HALPAUS

If you find these illustrations useful, please take a minute to let us know. As I mentioned in *Der Kurier*'s December issue, we are trying to ramp up member engagement in posting documents and images on the website and on our Facebook page. We would love to hear from you and welcome volunteers to help. Remember you can check out our Facebook page at

www.facebook.com/Mid-Atlantic-Germanic-Society-182626951765986 to view other images.

EMERITIERTER HERAUSGEBER

EDITOR EMERITUS

International Conference Coming ... Right to You, Virtually!

In the last issue of *Der Kurier*, I showered well-deserved praise on the MAGS Board for being able to pivot to having the fall conference virtually. What was just in final discussions then—keen observers will recall a “teaser ad” in the issue!—is now a full reality: The International German Genealogy Partnership, which was forced to cancel an in-person conference scheduled this year for Cincinnati, is having a virtual conference from 17–24 July.



James M. Beidler

I’m co-chairing the conference along with Nancy Myers from Germany. Both of us served on the IGGP Board together and though we retired from those director posts at the end of 2020, we went from “the frying pan to the fire” and have, along with many other volunteers and technology partner Playback Now (which turned around the National Genealogical Society conference last year into a virtual event in no time flat!), put together what we think is a great schedule of events.

We’ll have two days (17 and 24 July) of marquee-level speakers—some from Germany, some from America, all translated in some form—and more than 50 pre-recorded On-Demand presentations that will be released in the days in between. We’re also going to have Connections sessions available in breakout rooms that registrants can cobble together based on geographic or other cultural affinities. And not the least of it all, we’ll have a virtual Exhibit Hall that will include Gold Sponsor MyHeritage and many other top genealogy exhibitors as well as IGGP Partners.

The full schedule is still evolving but there’s an Early Bird discount deadline of 31 March to get the best prices for registration! Looking forward to “seeing” a strong presence of MAGS members there!



2021 INTERNATIONAL
German Genealogy Conference

INTERNATIONAL GERMAN GENEALOGY PARTNERSHIP

Virtual Conference, 17-24 July 2021

EARLY BIRD DEADLINE 31 MARCH!

RESEARCHING
TOGETHER
WORLDWIDE
WELTWEIT
GEMEINSAM
FORSCHEN

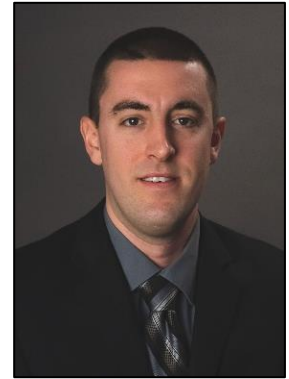
Registration: <https://playbacknow.regfox.com/iggp2021>

VOM HERAUSGEBER

FROM THE EDITOR

2021 RootsTech Connect: The Closest Thing to a Free Lunch

As I write this column, I am keeping an eye on the [Main Stage](#) of FamilySearch's 2021 RootsTech Connect, where many inspirational keynote speakers are telling their stories and giving their perspectives over the course of three days. While balancing regular daily activities (and sleeping at that!), one could not possibly consume all the content live, but I appreciate being able to turn it on as I find time as well as having the ability to stream the sessions anytime between now and next year's RootsTech.



Sean M. Kessler

In addition to the Main Stage, the [Virtual Expo Hall](#) features exhibits from genealogical powerhouses FamilySearch, Ancestry, and MyHeritage (the "Platinum" sponsors), "Bronze" sponsors like FamilyTreeDNA and GenealogyBank.com, genealogical societies, and virtual booths from over 60 exhibitors, including one from *Der Kurier* columnist Katherine Schober demonstrating her expertise in translating German documents written in Fraktur, Kurrent, and Sütterlin scripts (<https://www.familysearch.org/rootstech/rtc2021/expohall/sk-translations>).

But in my opinion, the most valuable thing about RootsTech Connect, the thing that brings it close to a free lunch, are the over 1,500 sessions available from top genealogical experts as well as lesser-known specialists in specific topics ranging from research strategies to DNA to places to websites and tools, among many others. I for one will be putting together a substantial playlist of sessions that I will be able to watch at my leisure at any point during the next year. That is quite a lot of value for \$0! Check out the full list at:

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/bc/content/RootsTech/2021/RootsTech-Connect-2021-Sessions-eng.pdf>

Search the list of sessions by name or category at:

<https://www.familysearch.org/rootstech/rtc2021/search>.

And finally, here are some links to sessions on topics specific to German genealogy:

- [A Wealth of Websites: Deciphering the German Script Made Easy](#) (Katherine Schober)
- [Seven Things You Need to Know about German Church Records \(two parts\)](#) (Katherine Schober)
- [At Home with German Records: FamilySearch and Ancestry](#) and [At Home with German Records: Archion and Matricula](#) (Daniel R. Jones)
- [Finding Your German Ancestor \(two parts\)](#) (Richard Lynn Walker)
- [Useful Tools for Finding German Ancestors](#) (Dana Palmer)

I welcome and encourage all of you to reach out to me with ideas and suggestions (email me at newsletter@magsgen.com). *Bis zum nächsten Mal!*

AUSWANDERER ZUSAMMEN

IMMIGRANT CONNECTIONS

Frederick Besel's 1854 Letter to Germany

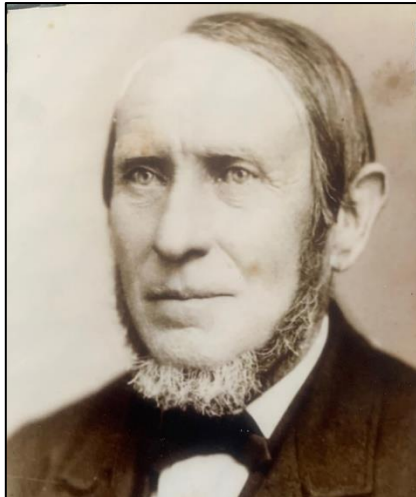
TRANSLATED BY DR. MICHAEL KRAEMER
WITH INTRODUCTION BY BOB GREINER

Dr. Michael Kraemer is a recent immigrant from Germany, who translated Christian Ph. H. Brandt's "Martin Luthers Hochzeitsgeschenk" (Martin Luther's Wedding Gift) and several handwritten letters by Johann Friedrich Carl Besel, with the translation encouraged by the latter's great-great-grandson, LCMS Pastor Keith Besel in Colorado.



Bob Greiner

The Rev. Frederick Carl Besel arrived in New York City on 6 October 1846 with the intention of becoming a missionary to German Lutheran congregations in the United States.¹ He had been trained at the Basel Mission in Switzerland and traveled with two other young missionaries. Upon their arrival they connected with several Lutheran pastors in New York City to discuss their plans. These pastors recommended that Besel accept a call to the Lutheran congregation at Coontown in Warren County, New Jersey, which he accepted. He later took on a congregation in Longhill, Morris County, just a few miles north of Coontown.



Frederick Carl Besel

Image courtesy of Judy Trautwein

After two and a half years and mutual dissatisfaction with these congregations, Besel traveled to Ohio, where he accepted a call to lead several Lutheran congregations in Holmes and Coshocton counties. He was installed at Mount Hope in April of 1849 by his colleague from the Basel Mission, Rev. Johann Melchior Steiner.² Besel remained there until April of 1852, when he moved further west to Staunton, Illinois.

In 1854 Besel wrote a letter to colleagues in Germany. The letter was printed in a publication entitled "*Kirchliche Mittheilungen aus und über Nord-Amerika*" (Church Reports from and about North America). Besel described his experiences as a pastor to German Lutheran churches in the United States. The original publication (in German) can be found on Google Books.³

¹ Ancestry.com, New York, Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820–1957 [database on-line], (Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010), ship Cotton Planter, arrived 6 October 1846, <https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=7488&h=1023084638>

² See my article *A Case of Genealogical Serendipity*, *Der Kurier*, Vol. 38, No. 3, September 2020, pp. 86–94.

³ https://www.google.com/books/edition/Kirchliche_Mittheilungen_aus_%C3%BCber_und_f/ftJCAAAAcAAJ

A translation of the letter by Dr. Michael Kraemer follows this introduction.

Background

Friedrich Karl Besel (baptized Johann Friedrich Karl Bösel) was born on 3 May 1815 in the village of Breitenlohe, Middle Franconia, Kingdom of Bavaria.⁴ His mother was the unmarried daughter of a gamekeeper for the earl of the castle in Breitenlohe. The father was a soldier who apparently had no desire to hang around. Besel's mother soon married a local schoolteacher, who became his stepfather. When Besel was 12 years old his mother died, and his stepfather remarried. He was schooled by several private teachers. According to Basel Mission records he was trained as a shoemaker.



Breitenlohe Castle, birthplace of Frederick Carl Besel

Image courtesy of Judy Trautwein

In 1841 Besel entered the Basel Mission, which was a training school for missionaries who were sent to several locations, including Africa, India, and the United States. The organization was founded as a Protestant, non-denominational mission society in 1815, primarily promoting both Lutheran and Reformed beliefs, as the denominations in Germany were being united as the German Evangelical Church. The Mission tended toward the Pietist view of Protestantism that was prevalent at the time. Pietism emphasized a more personal religious experience, the importance of living a personal life, and religious education through sermons and devotional reading. Besel stayed at the mission until 1846, when he was sent to the United States to minister to the growing number of German immigrants.

When young men expressed a desire to enter the Basel Mission for training, they typically wrote a *Lebenslauf*, or their life story. At the time he entered the mission, several pastors wrote letters of recommendation for Besel to the school. These documents are preserved in the archives of the Basel Mission. In addition, letters that Besel wrote to the director of the Mission between 1841 and 1850 are in the file.⁵ These documents were acquired by descendants of Besel and were made available to the author.

Two of Besel's letters would be interesting to translate. One of them was written from Le Havre in September of 1846 as Besel and his fellow travelers—Johann Melchior Steiner and David Gackenheimer—awaited their departure for America. He wrote another letter in October of 1846 after

⁴ See various sources available for Besel (ID #KZGD-383) in the FamilySearch tree.

<https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/details/KZGD-383>

⁵ A sketch of Besel made in 1846 and contact information for the archive can be found at this website.

<https://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/100206998>

they arrived in New York City. In this letter, Besel described meeting several Lutheran pastors and other men in New York and his decision to settle in New Jersey.

About a year after arriving in Coontown, Besel was urged by his parishioners to find a wife. Friends in Germany recommended a young woman to him. Margretha Sophia Melber agreed and arrived in New York on 18 January 1848. The couple was married on 30 January 1848 in Coontown. They eventually had six children, of whom only two sons survived to adulthood.

Besel also left a personal journal covering his life from 1852–1901, which is in the possession of his descendants.⁶ He documented his life, including details of his family and the congregations he served. Following the events described in his 1854 letter, he went on to pastor churches in several locations in Illinois and Missouri before finishing his career with a fourteen-year tenure in Guttenberg, Iowa. He and his wife retired in 1889 to Greenock, Pennsylvania, and then Youngstown, Ohio, to be near his son Frederick. Sophia died in Youngstown in September of 1900. After her death Besel moved to his son's house in Girard, Ohio, where he died in February of 1901.

The religious situation in 1854

Besel's published letter described his experiences with the three parishes he had served until that time. He did not paint a pretty picture, nor did he sugarcoat his descriptions. What he described was probably similar to what many itinerant pastors experienced attempting to serve congregations of German immigrants as they flooded the American Midwest in the mid-1800s. To comprehend the personal struggles Besel described in his letter, one must understand what was happening at the time within the Lutheran Church.

Following the decree of King Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia in 1817, the Lutheran and Reformed churches in Prussia and various other German states gradually began to merge into a united *Evangelische Kirche* (Evangelical Church). Despite the decree, there was some dissention among Lutherans who rejected the Calvinistic doctrine of the Reformed Church. These separatist groups were termed *Alt Lutheraner*—Old Lutherans. Many of these groups were persecuted and some eventually immigrated to America. Some who settled in the Midwest founded The German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States in 1847. This eventually became the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

By the 1850s the Lutheran Church had formed several synods in the Eastern United States. These organizations were also attempting to spread westward with the expanding population. As with other denominations, they found it difficult to find enough pastors to meet the growing needs of the pioneers.

Many of the Basel missionaries who settled in the Midwest to serve German immigrants embraced the blending of Lutheran and Reformed confessions and theologies. Many newer German immigrants were glad to be rid of the state-controlled church that they experienced back home. They welcomed their independence and resisted the organized hierarchical structure of the established Lutheran synods of the East. In 1840 the *Deutsche Evangelische Kirchenverein des Westens* (German

⁶ See the Judith Trautwein Family Tree at <https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/86043899/person/48543494747/facts>

Evangelical Church Association of the West) was founded in St. Louis. It held a united Protestant (Lutheran and Reformed) doctrinal position similar to the Prussian Evangelical Church and was also supported by the Basel Mission.⁷

Besel, however, had different views. He steadfastly exhibited a reluctance to accept anything but the true Augsburg Confession and Lutheran doctrine throughout his life. Let us now examine what he experienced in the first three parishes he served.

Besel's letter of 1854

In his first New Jersey congregations, Besel discovered that many people welcomed the idea of merging German Lutheran and Reformed congregations into a single body, accepting the beliefs of both denominations. It is obvious that Besel was repulsed by this. He expressed the difficulties he faced attempting to force the congregation to adhere to strict Lutheran doctrine. He stated his wish to join the conservative Lutheran Missouri Synod at that time but was rejected because he was too far away from that synod.

Once Besel moved to Ohio, he discovered how hard it was to organize Lutheran congregations in the presence of myriad other denominations that were attempting to lure the pioneers into their faiths. Besel also had difficulty with those "Pennsylvania Germans"—whom we would call the Pennsylvania Dutch. The beliefs of the recent German immigrants, who had experienced the unification of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches in Germany, did not align with those Germans whose families had been in the country for over a century. Besel's depiction of the immigrants' lackadaisical attitude toward religion is almost humorous.

In Ohio Besel faced the challenge of serving multiple scattered congregations, which required many miles of travel on horseback every week. His detailed description of his weekly travails might apply to any itinerant pastor serving the dispersed migrant population in the midwestern states of the 19th century. It certainly was not a life for the faint-hearted and required a personal dedication to stay the course.

In June of 1852 Besel joined the Missouri Synod. As his situation with the Ohio congregations worsened, in 1853 Besel accepted a call to a congregation in Staunton, Macoupin County, Illinois. He described his family's difficult journey to St. Louis and into the prairies of Illinois. He did not say much more about his ministry here other than that he was satisfied that he was able to establish several new congregations and hoped that they would soon be able to support their own pastor.

When I first read Besel's letter, I was astounded by the details he presented about the life of an itinerant pastor. It certainly adds perspective to life in the mid-19th century of the American

⁷ See the following book for a history of the Kirchenverein. A pedigree chart of the organization is found facing page 394.

Schneider, Carl E., *The German Church on the American Frontier: A Study in the Rise of Religion Among the Germans of the West, Based on the History of the Evangelischer Kirchenverein Des Westens (Evangelical Church Society of the West) 1840 – 1866*, (United States: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2009),

<https://libsysdigi.library.illinois.edu/OCA/Books2012-02/germanchurchonam00schn/germanchurchonam00schn.pdf>.

Midwest. Besel's personal view of the doctrinal disagreements with other denominations illustrates the difficulty faced by many pastors trying to encourage formal religion among the pioneers.

What do you think? Read Besel's personal account and imagine yourself as a German immigrant struggling with pioneer life while at the same time trying to rationalize the life you knew in Germany with the realities of a new world. See the difficulties faced by these dedicated pastors who recognized the need to provide religious instruction and worship experiences to the dispersed German immigrant population. Oh, what our ancestors experienced as they attempted to build a new, independent life for their families.

A letter from Pastor Friedrich Besel in Staunton, Illinois.

[Translated by Dr. Michael Kraemer from "Kirchliche Mittheilungen aus und über Nord-Amerika" (Church Reports from and about North America), edited by Wilhelm Löhe, pastor in Neuendettelsau, and Johann Friedrich Wucherer, pastor in Nördlingen, 12th year (1854), issue number 5. Nördlingen, print and in commission of C. H. Beck bookseller, pages 33-44. The original is available at this link on [Google Books](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Kirchliche_Mittheilungen_aus_%C3%BCber_und_f/tJCAAAAcAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0).^{8]}

*(Printed here not only out of love for quite a few friends that pastor Besel still has in his old home country, but especially **as proof that it is not yet time to conclude our American work.**)*

A long train of years has passed since you proved your love for the undersigned, which I do not forget, although you were able to devote only little attention to my insignificance, because time and circumstances did not allow it. And if since then for quite a number of years I laid aside the thought to write to you in particular, it was only timidity and other lesser causes why I held back until today. But in recent times the thought matured in my heart that I owe it to you and to the dear ones in the home country that I should give a sign of life of my humble effectiveness. So I hope that you will view this letter as nothing else but as a sign that the band of brotherly love to my home country, to which I am grateful for so many blessings, is still firmly tied on my part. Yes, quite firmly tied and even firmer in recent times!! – From the following pages the reason why will become clear. Since I have never written to you before, please allow me to give a more detailed account, which I am necessitated to divide into three main periods.

- 1) **State of New Jersey.** *To go there was recommended to me by some preachers in New York upon my arrival in October 1846. The state of New Jersey borders on the state of New York and had at that time only one Lutheran congregation in New Ark, which is still served today by Pastor Marshop. This state and especially its center was settled by Germans from all conceivable provinces of Germany, but unfortunately hundreds of them had been without worship service in German language here for 18, 20, 24 years. That German discipline and fear of God were found hardly anywhere any more can be understood, and that indifference towards God's Word and Confession prevailed, how could it be any different! In four locations I then sought to erect the banner of the cross with God's help and found a listening ear here and there and also a foothold, especially in two places, to establish congregations and to build churches. It succeeded. But, but - I had to pay a price to learn that my good opinion and tolerance*

⁸https://www.google.com/books/edition/Kirchliche_Mittheilungen_aus_%C3%BCber_und_f/tJCAAAAcAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0

were wrong. For I was misled by some friends and by my indifferent heart to be tolerant of confessions from the very beginning, even though I declared at all times that I only represent the Lutheran side and only teach the Lutheran catechism and only study the symbolic books of the Lutheran church and hold fast to them, and we know that no one has anything against that. And so my naive intention was to make people Lutheran little by little, when the Savior had become dear to them. - My heart burned for the poor, lost sheep that had no conviction of anything, especially of a confession, and how much I would have liked to hold back with all distinguishing doctrines, had not my – what should I call it? perhaps – Lutheran conscience urged me to come forth with decisiveness concerning Absolution and Holy Communion and to demand decisiveness from the Unionists and the Reformed as well. I myself grew more and more in the Lutheran consciousness, which had not been created in me at home nor at the Mission House and only came into my heart through diligent and honest searching.

Two and a half years I spent under unspeakable struggles. The stubborn ones of the Reformed left the congregation, the better-minded ones joined the church, albeit with their deep-rooted and rusted-in-place sins and habits. The second congregation locked the church door to me and let me conduct worship services with a few remaining faithful ones in a private home. The majority turned their back on me as an insurgent. *Isachar's rest was the watchword*, - and where could I look for help? I was too far away from the West to join the Missouri synod that I had come to know and to love, and being absent from there my application was denied. – To this heartache was added that soon after the completion of the church building, for which everything had to be collected from the offerings, Satan filled the minds of the purified congregation with the unfortunate thought to draw in the Unionists in order to increase the congregation, and soon both gave each other the hand in union in the true sense of the word. Since, however, all my presentation against this mixing of religions remained fruitless, I took hold of the walking-staff in order to travel towards the West with my family. Where to go, we left up to the One Who sends out His servants. The Lord will take care - was our motto. – My faithful wife shared my exile with me in loving agreement, for she is of one mind with me. She was born in Niederstetten in the principality of Hohenlohe and was trained in Kaiserswerth for the deaconess service. From Frankfurt, where she worked in the administration of the *Infant's Hospital*, she was recommended and sent to me as a helper by dear friends. In the state of New Jersey she bore a daughter to me, my Maria, who is now 5 years old.

The result of my weak effectiveness in the state of New Jersey was made known in 7 letters, which this congregation wrote to me half a year after my departure, calling me back. In doing so, 1) they recognized and apologized for the injustice done to me, 2) and asked me to make the return trip at the expense of the congregation, at the least for the sake of the small children that were daily longing for their teacher, 3) even an Englishman makes request for the well-being of the congregation and asks me in a letter to serve the former congregation again, and also a housefather that had converted from the Catholic to the Lutheran church is imploring me that I must return. In my mind I could well imagine the plight of my poor school children and was not without sympathy for the loneliness of the well-meaning and of the remorseful! I would have liked to hurry back, however the Lord had already placed me in a position in the

- 2) **State of Ohio.** When passing through New York, the dear – but otherwise lacking the determination of a faithful confession – Pastor Stohlmann had drawn my attention to the so-called Pennsylvania Germans, whose forefathers mostly originated in Hessen, for these (he said) were obstinate folks etc.

When I then stopped in Ohio to visit my study and travel colleague Melchior Steiner to allow mother and child to get some rest, I was sent to a Lutheran church that had been vacant for half a year. Here I preached and received a call entirely against my will and was necessitated from all sides to accept this call. On Pentecost morning I was installed by Pastor Steiner, who then still called himself Lutheran, and was committed to the complete symbolic books of the Lutheran church.

In this manner Steiner became my nearest neighbor in office that I knew. I stood in the center of the state of Ohio, and where? Among nothing but Pennsylvania Germans, whom I had taken to loathe in New York. How wondrous! What was I to do now? First I had to learn their warped language, to get used to their customs, and to translate unknown German words into their English in order to be understood. To be of any use – so I thought – I had to deny myself and become all things to this people so that I may gain some. Another worry and also another plan than in New Jersey. As for the confession, things were better here. To sum it up: I could be bold and follow Pastor Schmid's advice that he told me during a visit in Cleveland, namely that I should practice everything from the very beginning that I needed and wanted to introduce. – While I had in New Jersey 19-year old pupils, of whom for example one after three days' of explanation about the sixth commandment answered the question: "What does it mean to commit adultery? How do you understand it?" gave the answer: "You break the marriage when you harness too many oxen and run against a pole," and after you explained the matter several times more with the simplest examples, he answered the question what adultery means with "to jump in through a door", I found here 64-year old men with silvery white hair who could read neither German nor English, pupils that were half English, and confirmands that complained: "The pastor always tortures us to learn the Christian faith, perhaps I will not need it ever again in my whole life." – Besides, the town swarms with sects as the dog with fleas: Reformed, Unionists, Catholics, New-Lutherans, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Baptists, Dunkers, Sabbath Day People, Carmelites, Albright People, Märzen People, Weinbrenners, Schwedenburgians, Universalists, about 5 sorts of Methodists, Amish – in short: Who can count them all? You indeed find it here to be as Father Luther said, "A religion, as foolish as it may be, will always find followers." And how they are biting each other, how they are stealthily attempting to lead each other astray? There it is necessary to be on guard and to fight. In a continuous struggle I lived among my Pennsylvanians for almost 4 years. Conflict and labor and danger of life were the daily side dishes of a meager diet.

If you want to cure a conceited pastor, just place him among Pennsylvanians, and they will soon address him in this manner: "Listen, Pastor, we hired you to preach to us. If you do that, you will do well. The other things are none of your business. If you disagree, you may go your way." – When you find a very comfortable man, send him to the Pennsylvanians: They will assign a log cabin to him and will have him split wood if he does not want to freeze in the winter. If someone is not satisfied with his pay, just send him to this people, which have wallets, but not for the pastor; a dollar a year is

the most he can expect from a family. If a pastor wants to practice ceremonies, let him rehearse them among this people, where I found it to be like this: They come unshaven, barefoot in their shoes, shirt-sleeved, having bottomless hats on their head. There they sit and stare at the pastor when he reads and teaches a song verse by verse and is often glad when 3 or 4 sing with him. Quite often my wife and I had to sing by ourselves. And during prayer – one is sitting, another is lying on the bench, stretching both legs over the railing, a third one turns around and joins the arms behind his back. And if time passes too slowly during the sermon, they walk out and have a chat for a change. – If you are looking for beautiful sacristies, pulpits, and altars, you should come here where you find these three things all in one, that is, a table is nailed together, behind which two sticks are fastened to the wall, and a small board is put on top of them, and that is your seat. The pastor reads his text here, sings and prays and preaches and baptizes and offers the Holy Communion here. This table is for everything, yes, and in some places a container of water is placed on it, right in front of the pastor's Bible (if he brings one), not that he could make a lectern from it, but for the people to come forward during the sermon and drink from it, which they also diligently do. – In some churches there is no ceiling above, but only a roof in need of repair, so that when it rains the pastor has to move his table or (like the Nürnbergers) stand in the rain.

These and even many, many more similar and different performances I had to endure, and I say had to, until from time to time a change happened. For having his ancestral customs overturned all at once, no one wants to accept...

[to be continued]

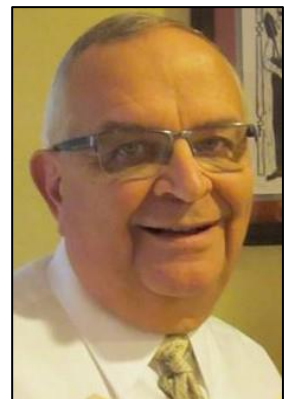
To find out about the rest of Pastor Besel's time in Ohio as well as his time in Illinois, be sure to read the "Immigrant Connections" column in the June 2021 issue of *Der Kurier*!

UNSERE SPRACHBLÄTTER

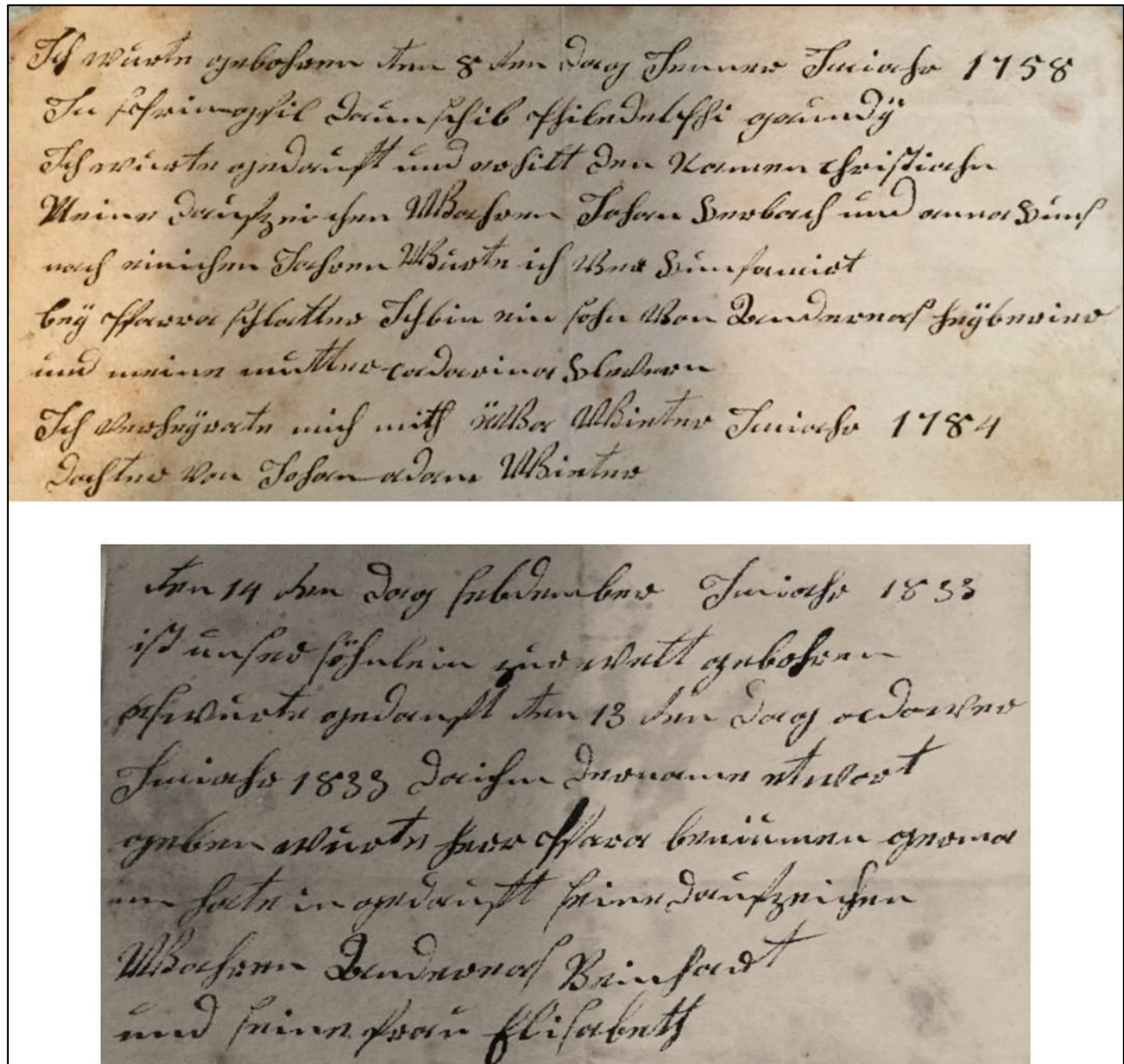
OUR LANGUAGE LEAVES

In Springfil Daunschib Philedeliphi gaundÿ

Whenever I receive a German document to review, transcribe, and translate from a member of my local genealogy society or from friends, I not only look for the information about the person's ancestors, but I also take a look at the document from a linguistic point of view. I was recently given two short handwritten notes from a high school classmate of mine that his niece had found in an old family Bible. While the information in the documents is typical genealogical facts for which we are all looking to round out our family trees, the spelling of the German words in the documents is quite interesting and points out several issues that American, English-speaking researchers need to keep in mind when using German documents.



Ken Weaver



(Since the focus of this column is not the actual deciphering of the old Kurrent handwriting, but rather the resulting transcription, I will focus strictly on the linguistic aspects of the two documents, not the handwriting. I do wish to thank Dr. Fritz Juengling of the Family History Library for serving as my second pair of eyes in helping to get through the relatively legible handwriting, but still troublesome in spots.)

The documents appear to have been written by the son of a German immigrant to Philadelphia in the mid-1700s. He documents his birth as 8 January 1758 and his name as Christiahn Heyberier (perhaps a misspelling of Heubauer, “hayfarmer”) and in his first sentence reveals through his words and spelling that in addition to German, he also spoke English, and most probably his English had a German accent to it. Throughout the documents, he substitutes the letter “d” where there should be a “t” and vice versa. And that pattern exists throughout both documents as well as substituting a “b” for a “p” and a “g” for “k” or “c.”

Jim Beidler often writes and speaks about spelling variations in German names and at least in these three cases there is linguistic justification for many of these substitutions. In German, these three (among others) are known as consonant pairs, and without getting too heavily into the articulation of consonant sounds in German and English, they are related because they are formed with the speech organs (mouth, tongue, teeth) all in the same location for each member of the pair. What distinguishes them from one another is the subconscious use of the vocal cords. “B,” “d,” and “g” all have the vocal cords vibrating, while their partners “p,” “t,” and “k” do not. (The consonant sounds that are produced with the use of the vocal cords are known as “voiced;” those that do not use the vocal cords are “voiceless.”)

To be very specific, in German a “b” at the end of a syllable is pronounced like a “p” (as in the word *Korb*, [basket], pronounced /korp/; *und*, [and] pronounced /unt/; and *Tag*, [day] pronounced /tak/). If you have ever been to the Pennsylvania Dutch area such as Lancaster or Lebanon Counties, you will hear these substitutions frequently. Although born in Lancaster County, I resided in Lebanon County for the last 27 years that I lived in Pennsylvania, and if you ask residents there where they live, you are likely to hear the response “Lepnin Gawndy,” where the voiced consonant sound /b/, is substituted with its voiceless counterpart and the voiceless sounds /k/ and /t/ are exchanged for their voiced partners.

Let us examine more closely the first two lines of the first document. What the author writes is:

*Ich wurte gebohren ten 8 ten **Dag** Ianuar Imiahr 1758.*

I have boldfaced the instances of where he substituted a “t” for a “d” and vice versa. The other issue present in this first line that plays a role in the naming of a pastor in the second document is the use of an “i” for what in standard German should be a “j.” In today’s standard German, the sentence should read: *Ich wurde den 8ten Tag Januar im Jahr 1758 geboren.* (I was born on the 8th day of January in the year 1758.) Also note that the writer’s word order in the placement of the word *geborenen* is not what most would consider grammatically correct, but perhaps reflects the English influence in his speech.

The second line of the document is probably the one that most reflects the writer’s attempt to use German spelling conventions to name a location which has an English name:

*In Springfil **Daunschib** Philedelphi gaundÿ* (In Springfield Township Philadelphia County)

The writer applied rules of German spelling to attempt to name the township and again, like in the first line, substitutes “d” for “t” and “b” for “p.” Amazingly, he uses the absolute correct German spelling of the “ow” sound (“au”) in both his versions of the names of the township and county.

The two documents are loaded with examples of these consonant pair substitutions. In the second one, the first line has the month September spelled *Se**bd**ember*, where the letter “b” carries both the “b” and “p” sounds within the same word: the first “b” at the end of the first syllable, so it

would be pronounced like a “p” in German, and the next one at the beginning of the last syllable, so it would be pronounced like a “b.”

It is in the second document that the “i” substitution for “j” caused me some issues that took several times to return and ponder before deciding what the man’s name was. The first name of the minister who baptized the child in the fifth line was *beniumen*. Because the name was not capitalized, at first, I did not think it even was a name. And it finally dawned on me! Old German alphabets did not have the letter “j” at all and here, like in the expressions used earlier in the documents, an “i” took its place. So, the pastor’s first name was Benjamin and I believe his last name might be the word “German.”

Christiahn is very consistent in his consonant substitutions in both documents: *gedauft* (*getauft*, “baptized”), *Dochter* (*Tochter*, “daughter”), *cadarina* (*Katarina*, “Catherine”) to name just a few more. But he is very inconsistent with his capitalization of German nouns. He fails to even capitalize first names, as in the case of his wife *cadarina* or the first name of the minister. Without further belaboring the point, these two documents are not only genealogy treasures, but linguistic ones as well. They clearly indicate the need for German American researchers to pay attention to the language and spelling that are used in documents, and in this case, the consonant pair substitutions. There is a definite linguistic reason that the clerk in the customs office in Philadelphia in the 1700s or the one at Ellis Island in later times wrote what he or she did when listening to a German immigrant recite his or her name!

(Obviously, these two documents have great linguistic meaning for me, but they also present some genealogical issues. While the handwriting in both appears to have been penned by the same person, it seems improbable—not totally implausible, just not likely! If Christiahn was born in 1758, married in 1784 and had a son, per the second document, in 1833, he would have been 75! Yet both documents contain the same consonant substitutions!

But, sadly, even after transcribing the documents for my HS classmate’s niece, she did not recognize any of the names from the two as part of her extended genealogical family tree!)

As a native Pennsylvania Dutchman, Weaver can trace most every line of ancestors to a German immigrant in the 18th century, so it was only natural that he learn to speak German and did so under the tutelage of a very inspiring immigrant high school German teacher. Majoring in German at Millersville University, he studied at Philipps-Universität as a junior and upon graduation began a career as a German teacher and later became a principal. Upon retirement from the public schools, he taught at the college level until moving to Florida. Feel free to e-mail suggestions for this column to kenneth.n.weaver@gmail.com.

VORSCHRIFT IST VORSCHRIFT

STICK TO THE SCRIPT

Six Letter Swaps to Save the (Handwriting) Day



Katherine Schober

Is your handwriting the exact same as your spouse's? As your best friend's? Of course not! Just as our handwriting differs from person to person today, so too did the German handwriting of our ancestors. This means that while we genealogists can use an alphabet key to get a general idea of what the old script looked like, we still need to be ready for all the personal variations that existed as well.

"Great," you may be thinking to yourself, "those documents are hard enough to read as it is!" While it is true that they can be difficult, there is no need to fear. This is where "letter swaps" come in handy. What are "letter swaps," you ask? This is by no means an official term; it is simply a term I coined for lookalike letters in the old German script. Since these letter pairs look very similar to one another, the way one person wrote one letter may be the way another person wrote its "swap" equivalent. So, if a word is not making sense with the letter you think it is, try replacing it with its swap counterpart and see if you now have a plausible German word. This has saved me a good deal of frustration in my transcription work! Read below for the typical letter swaps in the world of German handwriting.

s – f

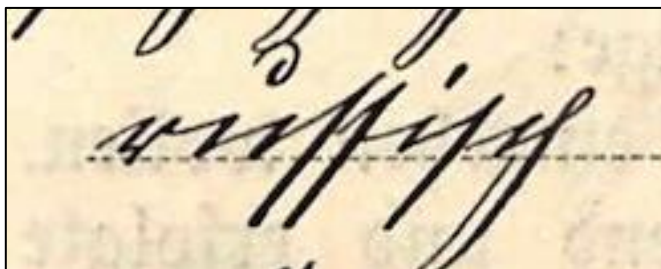


s

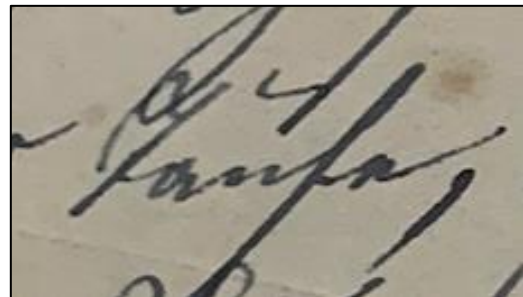
f

While the handwritten "f" is normally crossed in the middle and the "s" is not, and the "f" should have a loop where the "s" does not, some scribes were not exact in writing the details of each letter. Therefore, if you cannot find your transcribed word in a dictionary written with an "f," try replacing that letter with an "s," and see if it now makes a German word.

On the right, notice how the "f" in *Taufe* ("baptism") is not fully crossed, nor does it have a loop. When transcribing, you may have originally thought this word was "Tause." However, you would not find

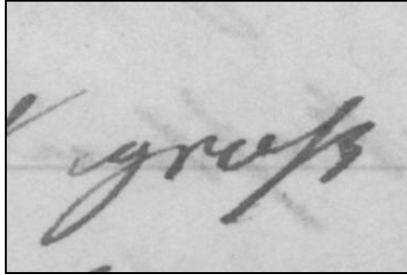


russisch ("Russian")

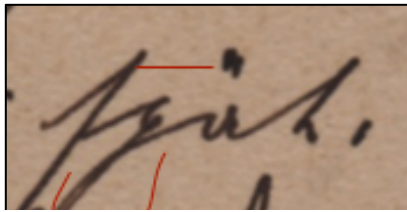


Taufe ("baptism")

“Tause” in a dictionary. You could then remember that “s” and “f” look similar, replace that “s” with an “f,” and would then succeed in finding the word *Taufe* (baptism).



groß (“big”)



spät (“late”)

The letters “g” and “p,” with their circles above the line of writing and their loops below, can often be confused for one another. Look at the “g” in the word *groß* (“big”, “tall”) compared to the “p”

in the word *spät* (“late”) at left. Can you see how they look similar?

g – p

g

p

Extra Hint: The letter “g” is more common in German than “p,” so if you are not sure which letter it is, the letter “g” is more likely. However, if the word does not make sense with a “g,” try switching it out for a “p” and see if you can find the word in the dictionary then.

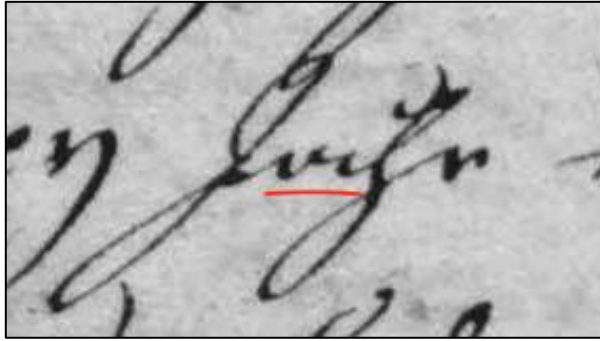
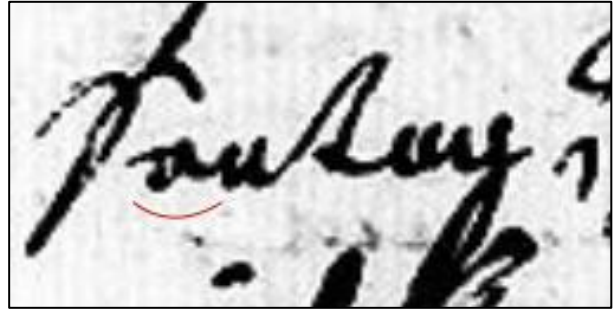
a – o

a

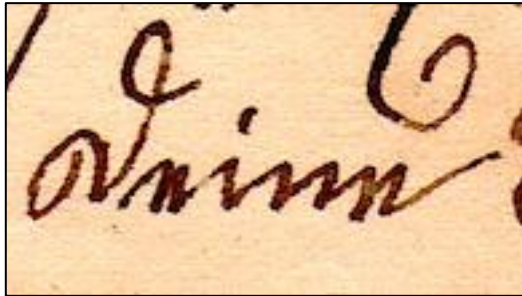
o

While the final line of the letter “a” should come down to the line of writing and then flow smoothly into the next letter, this is not always the case. Many times, this final line of a handwritten “a” can resemble the final line of the “o,” which is a straight horizontal line to the right.

To some, the letter “a” in the word *Jahr* (“year”) in the image at the top of page 20 could be confused for an “o,” as this scribe wrote his “a” with a horizontal line to the right before dropping down to the line of writing. The “o” in *Sontag* [sic] (“Sunday”), on the other hand, could look like an “a,” as it is difficult to tell if that final horizontal line was meant to go down to the line of writing or not. These samples exemplify why it is helpful to know that “a” and “o” can look similar—simply swap them out for the other if your word is not making sense!

*Jahr* ("year")*Sontag* [sic] ("Sunday")

While "e" and "n" are perhaps the two most confused letters in the old German handwriting, the letter "e" should technically be written more narrowly than the letter "n." The letter "e" should also be more rounded, while the letter "n" should be more jagged and spread out. Here, however, the key word is "should"—scribes did not always write these differences clearly.

*deine* ("your")

e – n

n

n

e

n

Notice how the "e's" and the "n's" look similar in the word *deine* ("your") at left. If your word is not making sense with an "n," try swapping it out for an "e" and vice versa!

N – St

Uppercase “N” and “St” can look similar if the author does not clearly cross his “t.” See the example of *Nachmittag* (“afternoon”) and *Stunde* (“hour”) at the bottom of the previous page. It is difficult to tell if that “t” in *Stunde* is crossed or if it is just a blot on the letter “N.” That is why it is important to know that if you cannot find your word in a dictionary starting with an “N,” swap it out for an “St” and vice versa.

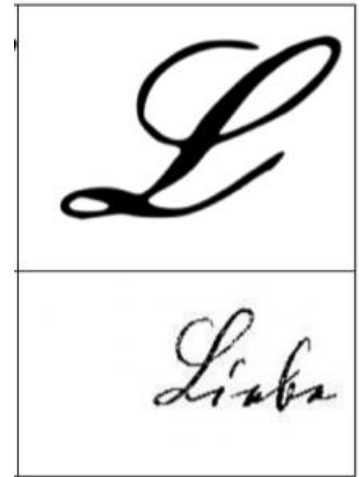
B – L

The uppercase “B” should end with a straight horizontal line to the right, while the uppercase “L” should smoothly flow into the next letter. However, sometimes those horizontal lines are not very clear!



B

See the examples of *Brief* (“letter,” at left) and *Liebe* (“dear,” as in a salutation/love, at right) to see how similar these capital letters can look. Therefore, remember to swap out your “B’s” for “L’s” and vice versa if your word isn’t making sense as transcribed!



L

And there you have it. I hope that these letter swaps will help you in your transcription work as much as they have helped me!

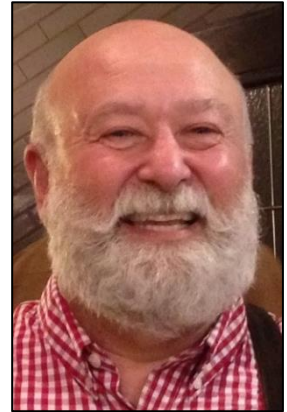
Schober is the author of the book, *Tips and Tricks of Deciphering German Handwriting*, and creator of the online course, *Reading the Old German Handwriting*. Her business is SK Translations, found on the web at www.SKTranslations.com.

DNA-ENTDECKUNGEN

DNA DISCOVERIES

New Germanic Communities at AncestryDNA

I have already written a couple articles on Ethnicity Estimates for this column. This is despite the caution that ethnicity estimates are “more sizzle than steak.” So why another article? It is because test companies are constantly trying to improve their predictions and therefore making continuous updates to our ancestry results. This seems to perpetually feed our voyeuristic need for self-identification. Think Kilt versus Lederhosen! Of course, that does not account for those of us with purely objective, scientific reasons. I still keep my Lederhosen handy. All kidding aside, it is intriguing to see the evolution of this pseudoscience. The companies can now take advantage of their huge databases to gain insight and improve algorithms. And it continues to be a popular feature for customers to research their biogeographical origins.



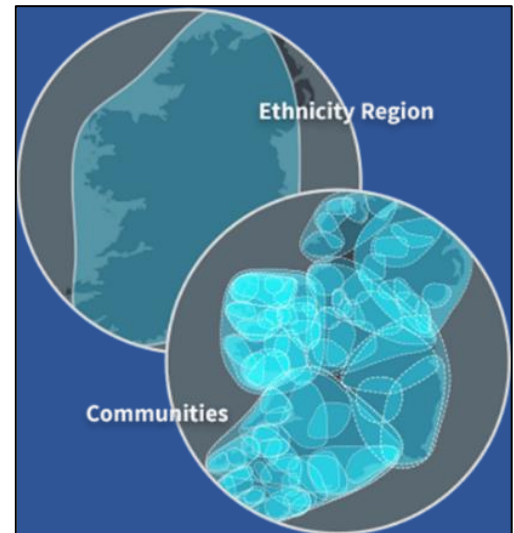
Andrew
Hochreiter

Y-DNA and mitochondrial DNA tests reveal ancient origins of our ancestors along the patrilinear and matrilinear lines. But autosomal DNA tests provide a composite picture of our whole DNA and reveal the geographic origins of more recent ancestors. In addition to specific ethnicities, the admixture (ethnic mix) is provided. This recent ancestry is more directly associated with Germanic identity and origins. In the past, these predictions depended on various academic studies and databases. Population geneticists have long studied variations in different populations and locations. These projects identified Ancestry-Informative Markers (AIMs). Scientists found that AIMs can estimate geographical origins because DNA mutations have different frequencies between people of different regions. This is most dependable at the macro level, such as Continental. Regional predictions are problematic because of migrations, overlap, and cross procreation. Validity and reliability are called into question. Revisions are based on new discoveries or adjustment of faulty assumptions.

Anomalous findings result from databases too small to associate markers with areas where they occur in indigenous populations. But the popularity of Direct-to-Consumer (DTC) test kits produced incredible amounts of data for the test companies to study and improve their ethnicity. Ancestry has been a pioneer in this area with a DNA database that has grown to about 20 million people. This has not only provided customers with increased probability of finding DNA matches but offered Ancestry a ready source of data to study. Early sources of similar results include the Sorensen Molecular Genealogy Foundation project that compiled 100,000 DNA samples and the National Geographic Society's Genographic Project with 1,006,542 DNA samples. What's more, Ancestry has melded data from their vast collections of Family Trees to supplement DNA data. They started by identifying customers who reported all four grandparents born within 100 km of each other. They then looked at the DNA of the descendant test takers to collaborate common markers. This helped to refine subareas of various ethnic categories and link them to specific geography. In 2012, Ancestry

compared a person's DNA results to 22 possible regions. This has dramatically increased to over 1,400 regions. Europe is richly represented with 1,148 regions, whereas some areas remain undertested (such as 12 in Oceania and five in West Asia). This is certainly a reflection of the fact that North Americans and Europeans are the primary customers who comprise the database population. Currently, Ancestry states that there are 24 regions of Germanic Europe. These include:

- Central & Northern Germany
- Central & Southwest Germany
 - Baden-Württemberg
 - Franconia/Thuringia
 - Frankfurt-Rhine-Main
- Coastal Northwest Germany
 - East Frisia
 - Elbe-Weser/Middle Weser
 - Osnabrück
 - Schleswig-Holstein
- Germans from Austria-Hungary & the Don Steppe
 - Germans in Dakota Drift Prairie
 - Germans in Southeast South Dakota
 - Germans in Western North Dakota
- Germans in the Central Russian Upland
 - Germans in Central European Russia
 - Germans in Ukraine
 - Germans in Ukraine & European Russia
 - Germans in Upper Volga
- Northwest Germany
 - Artland
 - Münsterland-Emsland
 - Oldenburger Münsterland
 - The Bavarian Forest & Pilsen



In addition to the basic ethnicity categories, Ancestry introduced the concept of Communities to its test takers. This grouping is derived from an analysis of one's matches, family trees, and historical events. Communities differ from ethnicity regions by revealing more recent history (last 200 years). Communities are descended from populations in the larger ethnicity groups. Communities are groups of people who share the same DNA matches probably based on relatives who lived in a place during the same time. Ancestry utilized their family trees for common dates and locations to identify shared places and events. Public family trees, ethnicity data, and historical records were used to determine where a group of people lived over time.

An intriguing additional feature is a Timeline assigned to each Community. As one moves through the years, events are described and displayed on the map to show history of the Community. The following pictures illustrate the Community of **Central and Southwest Germany**. The first one describes the period of 1700–1725 as a time of war and hardship for this geographical area and its



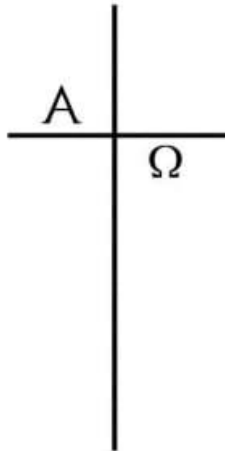
population. The period 1725–1750 shows that overpopulation led many Germans from this area to migrate east to lands vacated by the defeat of the Ottoman Turks by Austria. The third map (1825–1900) shows the period of mass migration during the second wave of Germans to America. This is especially accurate for my family as it illustrates migration from that German homeland though the port of New York into western New York and the cities of Rochester and Buffalo. In 1886, Germans made up 100,000 of Buffalo's 250,000 residents.



Ancestry recently announced that the number of Communities associated with Germanic Europe will increase from 15 to 33. But don't expect that changes to Ethnicity and Communities will end. As more people take a DNA test, the database will increase and continue to offer further data to refine results. Ancestry hopes to increase the number and granularity of its predictions. And customers will continue to drink it up. Proust!

Andrew Hochreiter, MEd, MIS, is a genetic genealogist who manages multiple DNA surname projects and has successfully applied DNA to trace several related family branches overseas. He is an experienced genealogist and has 12 years involved with genetic genealogy. He instructs continuing education courses in basic and advanced genetic genealogy at Howard Community College in Columbia, MD. He is a facilitator for the genetic genealogy module of the on-line Genealogical Research Course at Boston University.

In Memoriam



*Wenn ihr mich sucht, sucht mich in euren Herzen.
Habe ich dort eine Bleibe gefunden, lebe ich in euch weiter.*

Rainer Maria Rilke

In tiefer und unermesslicher Trauer
nehmen wir Abschied von

Reinhard Hofer

Berufsgenealoge

* 03.04.1951 † 22.11.2020



In Liebe und Dankbarkeit:

Margit Hofer, Ehefrau

Andreas Hofer, Sohn, mit **Nathalie**

Matthias Hofer, Sohn, mit **Eva**, **Rosalie** und **Valerie**

Anneliese Wagner, Schwiegermutter

Rudolf, Günter und **Josef Wagner** mit Familien

Anneliese Habbig mit Familien

Brigitte Hofer mit Familien

Rudolf Malcher mit Familie

Der Trauergottesdienst findet auf Grund der aktuellen Situation im Familien- und Freundeskreis am Dienstag, den 01.12.2020 um 14.30 Uhr in der Pfarrkirche Hader mit anschließender Urnenbeisetzung statt.

*When you look for me, do so in your hearts.
I have found a home there, and I live on in all of you.*

In deep and immeasurable mourning

we say goodbye to

Reinhard Hofer

Professional Genealogist

born 3 April 1951 died 22 November 2020

In love and gratitude:

Margit Hofer, wife; **Andreas Hofer**, son, with **Nathalie**; **Matthias Hofer**, son, with **Eva**, **Rosalie**, and **Valerie**; **Anneliese Wagner**, mother-in-law; **Rudolf, Günter**, and **Josef Wagner** and families;

Anneliese Habbig and family; **Brigitte Hofer** and family; **Rudolf Malcher** and family

Friends and family are invited to a funeral service that will take place Tuesday, 1 December 2020 at 2:30 p.m. in the Hader Parish Church with interment of ashes following.

From “DNA Discoveries” columnist Andrew Hochreiter: “Many of you attended a luncheon with him at the Savage Mills Rams Head restaurant a few years ago. Reinhard was a professional genealogist and researcher who lived in Bavaria. We spent many hours researching together and I credit him with many discoveries about my Hochreiter family. We collaborated on two German television programs about finding German relatives. He was an outstanding scholar who spent many hours at the Bishops Archives in Regensburg to locate records for Americans. His specialty was Bavaria and his knowledge of the customs, geography and dialect provided invaluable clues to my roots. (<https://historicalfamilyresearch.wordpress.com/ueber/>) He was a member of many professional genealogy organizations including the International German Genealogy Partnership where he is listed in their Researcher List (https://iggpartner.org/upload/files/research_page/ResearcherList.pdf). We had many plans for future projects and his passing greatly saddens me. His son Andreas is also a researcher and I hope to continue work with him.”

From *Der Kurier* Editor Emeritus James M. Beidler: “I met Reinhard when we both did some research on the Romberger family that ended up in upper Dauphin County, PA. When Reinhard visited the States, John Romberger (the guiding force of the family’s research efforts) sponsored a meal in Elizabethtown. I had a chance to chat with Reinhard there and we stayed in touch afterwards. He contributed a cover article for *Der Kurier* (“A German researcher’s perspective on 18th century emigration from Franconia,” *Der Kurier*, Vol. 23, No. 4, December 2005, pp. 77, 79–83), and a few years ago when I was still independently offering research-for-hire, his son did German religious archival work in Bavaria for me. Sorry to hear of his passing; he helped a lot of people!”

A Gem from Frankfurt-am-Main: An Imprisoned American

BY KENNETH W. HEGER, PH.D.

The records of the American consulate-general in Frankfurt-am-Main are voluminous, making organizing those records, providing description, and indexing names a slow, arduous process. Rather than wait until the project is done, it is beneficial to see regular examples of the variety of work the post did in the form of snippets from the records, many of which provide wonderful details that might shed light on your ancestor’s experience. This is the second of these reports.

Charged with Evasion of Mandatory Military Service: The Case of Daniel Bandmann

Many MAGS members have commented that they had an ancestor who returned to Germany to visit a relative, take care of a business matter, tend to an estate of a deceased relative, etc., only to run afoul of local authorities and wind up in jail on a charge of evasion of military service. This was a legalistic term many German states used to refer to the fact that a man had not performed his military

service to the state prior to emigrating. Neither the man's age at emigration nor his American citizenship dissuaded German authorities from levying this charge.

Daniel Bandmann was one such man. Bandmann was an American citizen who traveled to Hesse-Cassel in fall 1861 to visit relatives. Soon after arriving, local law enforcement officials arrested him and threw him into prison on the charge of evading the military service he owed the Electorate. The transcription below from Frankfurt's records provides the case's highlights as Bandmann saw them and as he told the American consul in Hamburg when he fled Hesse-Cassel. The consulate in Hamburg sent the report to Washington, D.C., for guidance and further action.

At that time, the consul general in Frankfurt-am-Main also served as consul to the Electorate of Hesse-Cassel; consequently, the Department of State referred the matter to Frankfurt rather than to Hamburg for further action. The Frankfurt consulate-general's record contain this two-page September 1861 letter; it is key to understanding Bandmann's plight and serves as an example of what hundreds of Americans faced when they returned to Europe to visit relatives.

(Copy)

Consulate of the United States of America

Hamburg, September 16th 1861

To all whom it may concern:

Know ye, that Daniel Bandmann, this day appeared before me, and having first made oath due form of law, that he is a citizen of the United States, represented that the he had been grossly outraged as follows:

That on the 13th day of September 1861, he was in Cassel, in the Electorate of Hesse Cassel, visiting his relatives, that on that day the police of Cassel arrested him for military service due the Electorate, threw him into a dungeon, kept him there without a bed, or any thing to eat or drink for a whole night, and only released him from close confinement, upon the payment of One hundred and Fifteen Prussian Dollars, that he (Bandmann) told police that he was citizen of the United States, and to prove it, produced a regular passport issued by the State Department in Washington, signed by Lewis Cass, Secretary of State, and countersigned by the Minsters of the United States in Berlin and Vienna, and further told the police, that he was a mere child, about eight years old, when he emigrated from Germany, and that the United States was the only country to which he owed allegiance, and that the United States would afford him protection and boldly, but courteously, protested against the right of the police aforesaid to exact of him the performance of military duty in the said Electorate. Said Bandmann further says that his passport was treated by the police aforesaid with gross contempt, and taken from him, and never returned, the police aforesaid declaring it to be a mere piece of paper, that any one might produce to avoid the performance of military service. Said Bandmann says, that although he got his liberty by the payment of the money aforesaid, he did not get his release from the demand upon him for military service, and that as soon as he got out of jail, he secretly escaped from said Electorate.

Now, therefore, in view of the premises that it is to request the Consul General of the United States in Frankfort on the Maine, to demand of the Government of Hesse-Cassel full and ample reparation for the injury, loss, and indignity so sustained by said Bandmann, and to request all American Ministers and Consuls, and others in authority, to afford this misused man protection in traveling, especially from "the Hessians"

*In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand
And Consular Seal, this 16th day of September, A.D. 1861
(Signed) James H. Anderson
U.S. Consul*

You can find this letter in NARA RG 84, Records of Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State; Records of the Consulate-General in Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany; Fair Copies of Instructions and Despatches from the Department of State to the Consulate-General in Frankfurt-am-Main October 1858 – November 1867, Volume 74, pp.14-15, NAID 1325628.

Want to Learn More?

For the consul general's responses to Washington (the outgoing despatches) on this matter you need to consult the records of the despatches from American consuls to Hesse-Cassel. There are two meaty despatches the consulate general produced after investigating Bandmann's case, including reports the Electorate's government wrote on the case. For additional information, citations to the despatches, and how to access those despatches, you should consult the Guide to the despatches from Hesse-Cassel available on the MAGS website.

Index for Volume 38 of *Der Kurier*

As has been the case for many years now, MAGS is indebted to Emily Andrews for compiling an every-name index to the issues of *Der Kurier* published in 2020. The index gives surnames, first names, date of issue and page number.

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VON	August	Jun	61	YURICH		Jun	70
ICHTERSHEIM				ZERWIG		Sep	118
VON	Franz			ZILLER	Joseph	Jun	60
ICHTERSHEIM				ZODY		Sep	118
	Reinhard	Jun	61	ZOLLICKOFFER		Dec	157
VON	Heinrich	Jun	61				
ICHTERSHEIM							
VON	Johann						
ICHTERSHEIM							
	Zenobie						
	Albertini	Jun	61				
VON	Ludwig	Jun	61				
ICHTERSHEIM							
VON	Sophie	Jun	61				
ICHTERSHEIM	Louise						
W							
WAGNER	Conrad W.	Dec	155				
WEAVER		Sep	118				
WEDELL		Dec	157				
WEINGARTEN	Wilhelm	Dec	155				

MAGS Welcomes These New Members

A maximum of four surnames being researched by each new member appears *in bold parentheses and italics* following the new member's name. Space does not permit more than four surnames or most spelling variations. MAGS encourages all members to submit free queries to the queries editor regarding specific ancestors.

DENYS ALLEN of DOUGLASVILLE, PA
(Heberling, Streibig, Hannis, John)
 TYLER AUFFHAMMER of CLEMMONS, NC
(Auffhammer/Aufhammer)
 PATRICIA FREY of COHASSET, MN
(Wegley/Wagerlne, Berkebile, Faust, Fissel)
 SUSAN LEANZA of STRONGSVILLE, OH
(Tanz/Tantz/Dantz, Ullmann, Aubele, Winkler)
 MARTHA REESE of CHESWICK, PA
(Baumgartner, Rees(e), Strein, Reeve)

MAGGIE ROTH of OAKLAND, CA
(Roth, Kircher, Ebberlay/Eberle, Wetzler)
 SHANNA SIMPSON of MUNCY, PA
(No Names)
 MARY STAUB of HANOVER, PA
(Monath, Krafft/Kraft/Groft, Wildasin, Berkheimer)
 ROBERT TONSMEIRE of WAYLAND, MA
(Jährling, Ehrhardt, Tonsmeire, Stiehl)
 CHARLES WILSON of Camp Hill, PA
(Kynett/Keindt, Strickler, Kramer, Bange)



Finding Ancestors in Taufscheine

This form was done for Burton Eugene Sylvester Werley, son of Frank Werley and Jane Amanda Fritz. He was born 3 May 1869 in Weisenberg Township in Lehigh County and was baptized on 4 July 1869 by Pastor O. Leopold. The noted scrivener John Heller did the form.

DER KALENDER

THE CALENDAR

2021

13 March. The Ohio Chapter of Palatines to America 2021 Virtual Spring Seminar via Zoom with Speaker Daniel Jones, MS, AG, with four sessions focusing on German and Swiss research and records.

<https://oh-palam.org/>

19–20 March. 2021 North Carolina Genealogical Society Virtual Conference. Eight speakers, two days, 90-day access to recordings. Featuring Jeanne Bloom, LaBrenda Garrett-Nelson, J. Mark Lowe, Sunny Morton, Craig Roberts Scott, Diahn Southard, Jean Wilcox-Hibben, and Ari Wilkins.

<https://www.ncgenealogy.org/event/2021-ncgs-virtual-conference/>

20 March. Fairfax Genealogical Society invites you to “Power Up Your Family Research with DNA” at their 2021 Spring Genealogy Fair with presenter Karen Stanbary, MA, LCSW, CG, BCG Trustee.

<https://fxgs.org/cpage.php?pt=21>

10 April. Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society’s 2021 Virtual Spring Conference with the theme “German Family Research.” Dr. Roger Minert’s presentations will be:

- Status in German Society 1500 to 1800: Where Did Your Ancestor Fit In?
- Census Records in Germany, 1816–1916
- German Residential Registration
- Which Hessen is Which?

Register now at

<https://magsgen.com/store.php?sid=1&page=1&nr=50&cid=4&tf=A&acs=A&ars=A!>

14–17 April. Ohio Genealogical Society 2021 Virtual Conference, “Bringin’ It Home,”

Nationwide Hotel & Conference Center, Lewis Center, OH. Featuring Peggy Lauritzen, D. Joshua Taylor, and Ari Wilkins.

<https://www.ogsconference.org/>

24 April. Indiana Chapter, Palatines to America’s 2021 Spring Meeting, featuring *Der Kurier* Editor Emeritus James M. Beidler as featured speaker, presenting three lectures detailing researching Germans in Pennsylvania and one on the availability of newspapers online.

<https://www.palam.org/indiana-palam-chapter.php>

19–22 May. National Genealogical Society Virtual Family History Conference, “Deep Roots of a Nation”, Greater Richmond Convention Center, Richmond, VA. Learn new techniques, resources, and strategies to sharpen your family history skills.

<https://conference.ngsgenealogy.org/>

4–5 & 11–12 June. Two separate virtual conferences hosted by the Southern California Genealogical Society—Genetic Genealogy, “The Genes in Your Family,” and Jamboree, “The Stars in Your Family.”

<http://genealogyjamboree.com/2021/>

17 July–24 July. The International German Genealogy Partnership’s 2021 Virtual Conference, featuring headline speakers Ute Brandenburg, Dr. Wolfgang Grams, Timo Kracke, Roger P. Minert, PhD, AG, FUGA, Judy G. Russell, JD, CG, CGL, *Der Kurier* “Stick to the Script” columnist Katherine Schober, MA, Diahn Southard, and Michael Strauss, AG.

<https://playbacknow.regfox.com/iggp2021>

Translators

This list of translators is offered as a service to MAGS members. It is not intended, however, as an endorsement or recommendation of any translator's work. When requesting a translation, include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the translator's reply, along with a photocopy of a sample page from the text to be translated so that the translator may understand your needs and estimate the charge for the translation. Do not send original documents.

1. Klaus F. Alt, 692 Carodon Drive, Ruckersville, VA 22968-3138

Phone: (434) 409-1582

Email: klaus@klaustrans.com

American Translators Association Certified Translator: German into English, English into German

2. American Translators Association, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314-2875

Phone: (703) 683-6100

Website: www.atanet.org.

They have an online directory for individual translators and area of specialization choices.

3. Gen Collins

Phone: (301) 770-0683

Email: glcjpc@verizon.net

Specialization: Translates German and German script into English and English to German.

4. Uwe Jacobsen, Wilhelm-Spiegel-Str. 30, D-24145 Kiel, Germany

Email: uwejacobsen@gmx.de

Specialization: Genealogical research in Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg-Altona, Sonderjylland / Denmark. Transcription and translation of old documents.

5. Roger P. Minert, Ph.D., A.G., PO Box 1845, Provo, UT 84603-1845

Phone: (801) 374-2587

Email: grtpublications@juno.com.

Specialization: German-English, English-German, German script, French, Latin

6. Katherine Schober

Phone: (314) 660-1061

Email: language@sktranslations.com

Website: sktranslations.com

Specialization: Genealogy and old German script, translates German to English

7. Ann C. Sherwin

Website: www.asherwin.com

Specialization: Genealogy, history, old handwriting.

American Translators Association Certified Translator: German into English

8. Andrew Witter, 2056 255th St., Donnellson, IA 52625-9679

Phone: (319) 835-3960

Email: andrewjwitter@gmail.com



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