



Der Kurier

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4 Generations of Fraktur Baptismal Certificates

By James M. Beidler

When I became interested in trying to reconstruct the records of the Rev. Isaac Miesse, I never thought it might result in owning four generations of fraktur baptismal certificates from my mother's family.

While fraktur – especially the handwritten and -decorated pieces of the Rev. Daniel Schumacher – have held my fascination for some time, I never expected to be fortunate enough to acquire any for my direct-line ancestors (though I had made off-and-on attempts to locate a for-now-lost-to-history Schumacher-created certificate for my ancestor Johannes Kraemer, I had pretty much written off that possibility).

My interest in Miesse, a fairly prolific German Reformed minister who was active in Berks County, Pennsylvania, for a quarter century up to his death on 1 February 1864,

stemmed from the fact that he was minister of my “primary church of heritage,” Bern Reformed United Church of Christ.

And egging on my interest was the additional fact that while he was “prolific” in the sense of handling a charge that usually consisted of half a dozen congregations, Miesse was equally “unprolific” in recording his pastoral acts in congregational registers.

As a matter of fact, for many of Miesse's congregations, no registers exist at all for the time period he was their pastor. He also didn't keep a register of his own unlike a fair number of his pastoral colleagues of the time period.

Miesse was also the pastor for similar periods at these other Berks County churches: Salem (Belleman's) in Centre Township,

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MID-ATLANTIC GERMANIC SOCIETY

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<http://www.magsgen.com/>

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

Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society (MAGS) is a non-profit genealogical society founded 10 July 1982. Annual dues are only \$15 (individual) or \$20 (family). Membership is open to all interested persons without regard to place of residence, nationality, or ethnicity. Benefits of membership include:

Spring and Fall Meetings featuring expert speakers
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MAGS reserves the right to edit submissions for length and style. Any material published becomes the property of MAGS. Deadline for submissions: the first of January, April, July and October. Submit to: James M. Beidler, *Der Kurier* Editor, MAGS, PO Box 241, New Windsor, MD 21776. E-mail: james@beidler.us

FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Dr. Kenneth Heger

MAGS Moves Ahead!

For years you have heard the Board talk about improving services to MAGS members and increasing our Society's appeal.

I'm happy to say MAGS is making real steps in that direction in two areas. Our fall meeting on 30-31 October will highlight our progress. It is a conference well worth attending.

First note the variety of topics. We'll have a Friday workshop on records of German-speaking churches. In that workshop you will have a chance to learn the kinds of records these churches kept, as well as an opportunity to increase your German vocabulary with records all family historians should know.

On the day of the main conference we'll provide diverse topics. There will be a presentation on visual images, focusing on photographs.

We will learn about the records of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) archives. This is a real coup for MAGS. These are woefully underutilized records that shed light on the lives of millions of German Americans. We will have a fun presentation looking at the problem Germany's fractured political situation confronts us with and how to tackle those problems.

We hope to mirror this diversity in future conferences.

Of equal importance is the rapid development of our new website and the increase of resources available on that website for MAGS members. You will be able to register for conferences and renew your membership on-line. There is a feature where you do a universal search to find names in the increasing number of name-focused databases the website contains.

MAGS is producing guides to help you navigate through complex bodies of records, records that often contain extremely valuable information but are challenging to research.

The new website will be home to an ever-growing number of photographs, maps, postcards, and other visual images, available in color to our members.

There is help explaining the new website. The first presentation of the fall conference will provide you with an introduction to the website, its features and content.

Other presentations during the conference will include references to where you can find additional information on those topics on the MAGS website. The hard-working members of the website committee (Carol Carman, Bob Greiner, and Roy Shiflet), as well as the other Board members, will all be on hand to answer questions.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Hagerstown in October.



The baptismal certificate of Thomas Hiester.

After-Auction Buy Creates 4 Generations' Worth of Fraktur

(Continued from cover)

Trinity in the village of Rehrersburg (Tulpehocken Township), Friedens in Oley Township, St. John's in the village of Pricetown (Ruscombmanor Township) and St. Luke's in the borough of Shoemakersville.



Harrison Hiester’s certificate was decorated by Francis Levan, who signed his work.

As I wrote in the December 2014 issue of *Der Kurier*, this lack of registers doesn’t mean that documentation of Miesse’s pastoral acts doesn’t exist; it’s just that genealogists have to work harder to track down records of the baptisms and marriages that he performed. While Miesse didn’t record his pastoral acts in congregational registers, by and large, he did report the marriages he performed to newspapers such as the German-language *Reading Adler*. As were listed in that same issue of *Der Kurier*, many baptisms he performed are found in family Bibles and on private baptismal certificates created for family members.

And that’s when the eagle eyes of the Earnest Archives and Library took over. The husband-wife-daughter team of fraktur experts consists of Russell and Corinne Earnest and Patricia Earnest Suter.



Rosabella Kerschner's certificate was likely infilled by the pastor who baptized her.

This spring, Corinne and Patricia were busily photographing the genealogy information from a huge lot of fraktur up for sale at an auction in eastern Pennsylvania. They found a baptismal certificate that showed the name of the Rev. Isaac Miesse as the minister who performed the baptism and sent me a casual e-mail that they'd found another Miesse baptism to add to the list.

But what they had no reason to know was that the information concerning the baptismal certificate of Thomas Hiester, son of Harrison and Rosabella Hiester, was for one of my great-grandfathers!

And when I excitedly shared this information with them, they then informed me that in the box of fraktur documents that had been sold as part of the same lot were baptismal certificates for Harrison and Rosabella (whose maiden name was Kerschner) as well as a brother of Thomas named Edward.



The printing date of Catharina Kraemer’s certificate can be pinpointed from its imprint.

The certificate made for Harrison was printed about 1831 by Johann Ritter (died 1851) in Reading and decorated by Francis Levan (active c. 1826-50) who signed it. Levan was the foremost decorator of what are called the “old” angel-type certificates printed by Ritter. He added plumage to the birds, and turban-like crowns to the angels and often bows to their shoes. He also colored their gowns in rich tones, adding patterns that occasionally included aprons.

Rosabella’s certificate was printed about 1834 in Harrisburg by G. S. Peters (1793-1847), who often printed in color. However, Rosabella’s certificate is colored by hand, probably by Georg Mennig (1773-1851), the pastor who baptized Rosabella. The infill (biographical text added by hand) is also attributed to Mennig.

The certificate made for Thomas was printed about 1862 by Johann Ritter’s nephew, Carl Kessler. It was infilled by Gottlieb Schmid (active c. 1845-63), but hand-coloring was added by a printshop illuminator. Edward’s “new” angel certificate was printed by “Ritter u. Co.” The penmanship on it is plain, suggesting a

family member infilled the data. All these certificates were printed in German, showing my family continued to use German for recording personal documents.

Earnest and Suter didn't know who the winning bidder of the lot was, but did give me the contact information for Alderfer Auction Co. in Hatfield, Montgomery County. I sent a blind letter of sorts to Alderfer's, asking that they forward my request to the winning bidder. I confirmed that Alderfer's received my letter and forwarded it.

Nothing further happened for a couple of months until Earnest and Suter checked back with me. In the meantime, she had found out some information about the dealer who was the winning bidder and that he would be at the Allentown antique paper show on July 18; they were going to the show and would attempt to ask him about the box of fraktur from Alderfer's.

They met the dealer, whose name is Aaron Heckler, and he furnished his contact information. I called him and we set a meet at his home in Montgomery County. He graciously allowed me to look through the entire box of some 70 fraktur – the reward for which was two additional baptismal certificates in my family – Thomas' second wife Emma Amelia Ruth and Harrison's mother Catharina Kraemer.

Catharina Kraemer's German-language certificate was also an "old" angel-type edition printed by Johann Ritter. Although Catharina was baptized in 1806, her certificate was printed between 1823 and 1827, and probably infilled about that time. The anonymous penman who entered Catharina's biographical data was highly skilled in Fraktur lettering.

Emma Amelia Ruth's English-language certificate was printed about 1874 at the Ritter & Co. and Eagle Book Store in Reading, a continuation of Johann Ritter's printshop. The scrivener on this certificate is believed to have been Aaron Finrock (1825-1902), the pastor who baptized Amelia Ruth.

When added to the baptismal certificate of Thomas' son Walter that my mother had framed some years ago, I now have four generations of fraktur in this family.

Of course, hope springs eternal for a fifth generation to be added – since Catharina Kraemer's father is none other than the Johannes Kraemer for whom there is a Schumacher certificate, somewhere out there.

Grateful acknowledgement to the Earnest Archives and Library crew of Russell D. and Corinne Earnest and daughter Patricia Earnest Suter for their help in every stage of this process, from the heads up about the auction to identifying the scribes and printers.

DEUTSCH UNTERRICHTSFORSCHUNG

By Debra A. Hoffman

2 recordings don't equal a duplicate

In the January 2015 issue of *Der Kurier*, I emphasized the importance of obtaining all relevant sources for an event. In that instance, there were two passenger lists for the Bark *Jupiter* that arrived in Baltimore on 7 November 1834. That article discussed how the information varied for my ancestor, Caspar Weber, who is entry number 34 in the table below.

As a continuation, I wanted to analyze how the information compared across all forty passengers on board the *Jupiter* and determine the accuracy of the quarterly summary.

Overall, if the only passenger list you had for a voyage was the quarterly summary, in this instance, you were unfortunate. The compiler of the Baltimore quarterly list was obviously not concerned with accuracy. Below is a listing of the inaccuracies I found:

1. Of the forty entries, thirty had errors with the name. Whether it was misspelled or was abbreviated incorrectly, the original passenger list appeared to be much more accurate. For instance, #4 was Traugott F. Aey on the original list and F. F. Aey on the summary. Additionally, the compiler changed Ch^r to Chas. In another instance the compiler switched the first name and surname "Martin Peter."
2. Of the forty entries, twenty-five had errors with the occupation. The compiler of the quarterly liberally used ditto marks and listed the occupation of many individuals erroneously as "Potter." As one example, Herm Marverding was an "Apothecary" on the original passenger list, but became a "Farmer" on the quarterly list.
3. The quarterly compiler also omitted passengers. One female passenger, Marie Tate, was not included in the compilation. Additionally, Sabine Scheider, the other lone female passenger, was listed as Salme Schieder and was categorized as a male with the occupation of "Potter."
4. One of the most egregious differences between the two lists was the changing of "last dwelling place" to a generic "Germany" entry. On the original list, specific German cities and towns were provided as the "last dwelling place." Knowing this information is crucial to being able to conduct research in Germany. Only knowing "Germany" is of little value to someone researching their ancestor. Additionally, that change obscured those individuals coming from the same German town, such as the individuals from Coburg, Riede, and Schillkrippe. Knowing that other individuals came from the same town or city would be helpful to German researchers because there may be a family connection.
5. Finally, the other problem with the quarterly abstract is that it made all the individuals appear as if they arrived as single passengers when in fact seventeen of the forty entries probably represented families arriving together. The number of individuals in a unit ranged from two to nine. Additionally, the original list categorized the individuals as "Male," "Female," "Children of & above 5 years" and "Children below 5 years." This type of information can help researchers separate same name individuals. Also, you can see that the probable family traveled together, so you would not continue looking for other family members expecting that they may have arrived separately.

This article clearly emphasizes the need for correlation and analysis of any source.

If only one source is available, it is important to remember that sources are only as accurate as the person who created them.

In this case, the Baltimore quarterly summary woefully fell short of providing accurate information on the passengers. Also, remembering the purpose for why a document is created can sometimes help evaluate the reliability of a source.

For this document, the compiler was providing a summary and was probably not concerned that one day, his record may be the only source documenting a transatlantic voyage. Luckily for me, the original passenger list is still extant.

The full data showing the differences between the two lists follows on Pages 58 and 59.

List of Passengers from 1 October to 31 December 1834 ²									
List of Passengers, Bremen, 16 August 1834 ¹									
#	Name	Occupation	Last Dwelling Place	Male	Female	Children of & above 5 years	Children below 5 years	# together	Died on the Voyage
1	John Geo Wolf	Clothmaker	Coburg	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	None
2	John M Schneider	Taylor	Schneeberg	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	None
3	John Braun	Taylor	Haizenweiker	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	None
4	Traugott F Aey	Potter	Naumburg	1	[blank]	[blank]	1	2	None
5	Mart Ankenbauer	Peasant	Ebertshausen	1	2	3	2	8	None
6	Jacob Müller	Peasant	Frichsstadt	1	1	[blank]	3	5	None
7	Geo Woolfrath	Peasant	Hausen	3	1	[blank]	[blank]	4	None
8	Henr Dräbing	Peasant	Riede	2	2	3	[blank]	7	None
9	Martin Peter	Taylor	Riede	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	None
10	Bernh ⁴ Bollisch	Taylor	Zischen	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	None
11	Joh ⁴ Britting	Joher	Büg	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	None
12	Sabine Scheider	[blank]	Rütisbronn		1	[blank]	[blank]	1	None
13	John Geo Schwarz	Joiner	Nürnberg	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	None
14	Nicol ⁴ Pfaff	Basket maker	Michelan	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	None
15	Edward Henke	Mercer	Verviers	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	None
16	John Henr Kleime	Peasant	Rüschendorf	3	2	1	2	8	None
17	Arnold Meyer	Peasant	Lüdlöhne	2	3	2	2	9	None
18	John Fr Kirchoff	Peasant	Spradow	1	2	1	[blank]	4	None
19	Fr W ^m Delthorst	Peasant	Spradow	1	2	2	1	6	None

¹ "Baltimore, Passenger Lists, 1820-1964," database and images, Ancestry (http://ancestry.com : accessed 14 August 2015), passenger list, Jupiter, 16 August 1834, penned page 1, lines 1-40, citing NARA micropublication M255, roll 1.

² "Baltimore, Passenger Lists, 1820-1964," database and images, Ancestry (http://ancestry.com : accessed 14 August 2015), passenger list, 1 October - 31 December 1834, dated 1 January 1835, penned pages 19, lines 21-37, page 20, lines 1-22, citing NARA micropublication M596, roll 3.

³ The actual column title is "Country to Which They Belong."

⁴ The actual column title is "Country of Which They Intend to Become Inhabitants."

20	Herm Marverding	Apothecary	Münster	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	Herm Marverding	Stated	Male	Farmer	Germany	US	None	
21	Henr Löhler	Cooper	Ochsendorf	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	Hens Lohitter	Stated	Male	Cooper	Germany	US	None	
22	Marie Tate	[blank]	Ensen	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	Cha ¹ Redlich	not Stated	Male	Cooper	Germany	US	None	
23	Ch ¹ Redlich	[blank]	Arolsen	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	Ludwick Reinhard	Stated	Male	Cooper	Germany	US	None	
24	Ludw Reinhard	[blank]	Eldagsen	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	Fred Gledtch	Stated	Male	Cooper	Germany	US	None	
25	Fred ¹ Gleditsch	[blank]	Eisenach	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	Fred Welgert	Stated	Male	Joiner	Germany	US	None	
26	Fred ¹ Wiegert	Joiner	Gross Blossenfelde	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	John G Kunz	Stated	Male	Joiner	Germany	US	None	
27	John Gotte Kunz	Mercer	Coburg	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	Hy W Umberg	Stated	Male	Joiner	Germany	US	None	
28	Hen ¹ W ^m Amberg	Joiner	Farkensteih	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	John Pussner	Stated	Male	Shoemaker	Germany	US	None	
29	John Pussner	Shoemaker	Kohl	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	Cha ¹ Kraus	not Stated	Male	Shoemaker	Germany	US	None	
30	Ch ¹ Kraus	Peasant	Steppenbach	1	1	[blank]	1	3	Geo Schlett	Stated	Male	Farmer	Germany	US	None	
31	Geo Schleth	Peasant	Braunsberg	1	1	[blank]	1	3	C Fleckenstein	Stated	Male	Joiner	Germany	US	None	
32	C Fleckenstein	Joiner	Schillkriippe	1	1	[blank]	2	4	Johann Eich	Stated	Male	Shoemaker	Germany	US	None	
33	John Eich	Shoemaker	Schillkriippe	1	1	[blank]	2	4	Caspar Weber	Stated	Male	Joiner	Germany	US	None	
34	Caspar Weber	Carpenter	Wahlen	2	2	2	2	8	Ch ¹ F Schnicke	Stated	Male	Joiner	Germany	US	None	
35	Chr Fr Schnicke	Joiner	Gera	1	1	3	2	7	Henry Clogier	Stated	Male	Joiner	Germany	US	None	
36	Henry Pfüger	Shoemaker	Loest	1	1	[blank]	[blank]	2	Tho ¹ Kuppersmidt	not Stated	Male	Farmer	Germany	US	None	
37	Th Kupferschmidt	Peasant	Erwitte	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	Clemens Uihorn	Stated	Male	Smith	Germany	US	None	
38	Clemens Uihhorn	Smith	Cloppenburg	1	1	[blank]	1	3	Arand Snitker	Stated	Male	Miller	Germany	US	None	
39	Arand Snitker	Taylor	Kirch Hatten	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	Gottfried Eberfins	Stated	Male	Miller	Germany	US	None	
40	Gottfried Eberfins	Muller	Friedeburg	1	[blank]	[blank]	[blank]	1	Totals	44 ⁵						
					26	17	22	109 ⁶								

⁵ The total of males appears to be off by one. It looks like the 40th entry was added after the totaling was complete.

⁶ The totals of the other columns are correct, so the total of all passengers should be 110 and is only off because of the mistake made in the male column as noted in footnote 3 above.

FRAKTUR FORUM

By Corinne Earnest

Ishler / Isler Examples Found in New, Old Sources

Susan Newton asked about ISCHLERS/ISHLERS on fraktur. Of the few examples I found, most show the spelling of this name as ISLER. Unless otherwise noted, locations below are in Pennsylvania.

The Warrior Run Heritage Society in Turbotville, Northumberland County, owns a *Taufschein* (birth and baptism certificate) made for Carolina DECKER, a daughter of Conrad and Elizabeth (ISHLER) DECKER. Carolina was born April 1, 1838, in Potter Township, Centre County. She was baptized by Peter S. FISHER on April 29, 1838. The parents sponsored Carolina's baptism.

ETZLER might be a phonetic spelling of ISHLER. The irregular Lutheran minister and fraktur artist Daniel Schumacher (ca. 1729-87) recorded that he confirmed a girl named Rosina Barbar[a] ETZLER in Weisenberg Township (today's Lehigh County) in 1760.

Two years later, on April 4, he confirmed another girl by that name (or perhaps the same girl) in "Allemangel" Township (today's Albany Township) in Berks County. And in 1764, Schumacher confirmed Andreas ETZLER in Weisenberg Township.

Schumacher was the first fraktur artist known to produce confirmation certificates for children he confirmed. It is not known,

however, if he made them for the ETZLER children.

In the new book, *Drawn With Spirit: Pennsylvania German Fraktur from the Joan and Victor Johnson Collection* (2015), Lisa Minardi cites examples of two birth records made for Maria ESLER (born 1808) and Sally ESLER (born 1810). The artist worked in northern New Jersey, so these ESLERs may have resided there. The artist, whose name remains unknown, usually recorded only a name and date-of-birth.

A birth and baptism certificate was made for Caroline ISLER's son, whose name was "General Scott Meganutery." The last name appears to have been added sometime after the certificate was originally written. General Scott was born March 6, 1871, near Forest Hill, Union County. He was baptized September 21, 1872, by William H. GOTWALD, Lutheran, in Logansville, Clinton County. No mention is made of General Scott's father.

I found only one other genealogical document related to fraktur. It is a Bible record made for the ISLER family of Fayette County. Information regarding this record was penned in an English-language Bible published in 1822 by H. C. Carey and I. Lea on Chestnut Street in Philadelphia.

Written probably by family members, this record gives various details not normally included in Bible records. Most added

notations express sentiments concerning death, such as “in full hope of blest imortality [*sic*],” but other entries specify locations and times of day when events occurred. In that sense, this Bible record is unusual. As mentioned in “Endstation der Pennsylvanich Deutschen Schreibkunst” (see September 2010 issue of *Der Kurier*), family members who entered data in Bible records often omitted biographical details, including locations, that a professional scrivener recording data in the fraktur tradition would include.

The record says Abraham W. ISLER and Mary ISLER, a daughter of Christain [Christian] GUMERT, married on January 4, 1818. According to an entry under deaths, Elizabeth ISLER was the mother of Abraham W. ISLER. Elizabeth died March 1, 1826, “in Christain [*sic*] fortitude and in Christain [*sic*] faith.” Abraham W. ISLER died three years later, on October 6, 1829, at the age of 34 years. Mary (GUMERT) ISLER lived much longer than her husband. She died January 29, 1871, at the age of 70 years, 10 months, and 13 days.

The first child of Abraham and Mary (GUMERT) ISLER was William Taylor ISLER, born December 17, 1818, in Fayette County at “Avoula” between Union[town] and Brownsville. This location might refer to Avella in today’s Washington County. The next child born to Abraham and Mary ISLER was Nathaniel, who was born October 25, 1820, in Uniontown, Fayette County. Elizabeth ISLER came next. She was born March 13, 1823, in Uniontown. Andrew Jackson ISLER was born December 11, 1824, in Brownsville “in the 49th year of America’s independence [*sic*].”

Drusilla was the next child. She was born December 31, 1826, in Brownsville. Jacob was born January 1, but the year of his birth is illegible as is the entry for the next child, Sarah, who was born August 12. Jacob died young, at the age of 7 months and 15 days, but the exact date of death is illegible. It appears to say he died in August of 1829.

Entries concerning deaths of members of the ISLER family say Nathaniel died January 21, 1856, at the age of 35. Apparently, the above-named Sarah ISLER married a man named C. B. WHITE, for one entry says Sarah I. WHITE died April 21, 1869, at the age of 37, “with full and triumphant [*sic*] Faith of a blessed hope beyond.” It goes on to say Mary Lizzie [Lizzie] WHITE, the little daughter of C. B. and Sarah WHITE died September 28, 1869, at the age of 5 months and 19 days.

Drusilla ISLER, whose married name became DALLY [DAILY], died at 9:30 a.m. on March 29, 1900. She was 74. She died in Crafton, Allegheny County, and was buried in the family lot in South Side Cemetery in Pittsburgh. Andrew Jackson ISLER died at 9:00 p.m. on July 3, 1911, in his 87th year. He died at his home at 120 E. Steuben St., Crafton, and was buried at Redstone Cemetery in Brownsville.

Occasionally, I find few examples of fraktur for a specific surname, and that turns out to be the case with ISCHLER. However, the ISLER Bible was a bonus for it included a small archive of materials such as clippings of poetry, three portraits (two ambrotypes and a daguerreotype), locks of hair, and primitive watercolors.

It also includes newspaper clippings concerning marriages and deaths, but none appear to involve members of the immediate family of ISLERs, GUMERTs, DALLYs, and WHITEs. Recent research added to the archive says Charles Jackson ISLER (born 1867), son of Andrew Jackson ISLER (1824-1911), died in 1950. Charles Jackson’s mother was Rebecca Ann (DAILY) ISLER (1831-1912).

If you have names you wish me to research on fraktur, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Corinne Earnest, P.O. Box 1132, Clayton DE 19938. I research names on fraktur at no charge for members of the Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society.

Wiesbaden Consulate: Correspondence Sent

By Katherine Ayerst and Kenneth W. Heger

This is the sixth and final article in a series describing the records of the U.S. Consular Agency at Wiesbaden, Germany, based on work done by Dr. Kenneth W. Heger's students at the University of Maryland's College of Information Studies (the iSchool). The series provides information on the records' content, their arrangement, and how you may be able to use them to research your family's history.

Consulates were a key component in American foreign policy, acting as the eyes and ears of the American government in localities throughout the world.

American Foreign Service personnel operating out of these overseas offices kept the Department of State abreast of political and economic developments in local areas, supported American companies wanting to do business abroad, and cared for the well-being of American citizens.

To document this work, consulates created extensive correspondence files.

OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE FILES

Before Foreign Service posts began consolidating correspondence files in 1912, they kept letters received (incoming correspondence) and letters sent (outgoing correspondence) as separate records series. This record-keeping system complicates research among consular records. The last issue of *Der Kurier* discussed the correspondence the American Consular Agency at Wiesbaden received.¹ This article discusses the Agency's outgoing correspondence files and the registers to those letters.

THE LETTERS SENT

The extant outgoing correspondence files consist of four bound volumes of documents, covering the period 1904 through 1917. Within each volume the records are arranged in chronological order by the date the Agency wrote them. That arrangement helps simplify using the records. The earliest letters date from February 1904; the Agency sent the latest ones in February 1917 when the Department of State closed the Agency after America's entry into World War I.

Content of the Letters Sent

Recipients of correspondence from the Agency at Wiesbaden represented a broad spectrum of America. Some letters were replies to departments of the Federal government other than the Department of State.

There are also letters to American state and local governments, as well as letters the Agency sent to local German officials requesting information from those offices. The largest single category of letters consists of replies to American citizens or businesses who had reached out to the Agency for assistance or information. These letters are unique and rarely duplicated elsewhere.

Subjects include requests for office supplies, inquiries about deaths and subsequent wills and estates, the well-being of American citizens in the consular district, and information about local opportunities for American businesses.

¹ Carter, Samara and Emily Hampton. "Wiesbaden Consulate: Correspondence Received," *Der Kurier* 2015(Volume 33, Number 2): 25, 28-34.

Guarantee Company in Baltimore, Maryland, informing that company that the local attorney with whom they dealt had died. The Agent provided the company with the names of two attorneys who could assume the deceased's duties.²

- On 22 December 1905 the Agency wrote to the Collector of Customs at New York City with information concerning a shipment of goods from the Wiesbaden area destined for Macy's department store.³
- Between December 1905 and March 1906 the Agency wrote three letters concerning the estate of the late Henry V. Feder of Chicago. One of the letters is in German. From these letters we learn that Feder had left an estate worth approximately 160,000 Marks, and that his daughter Irene was at a boarding school in Wiesbaden.⁴
- On 15 January 1909 the Agency wrote to Rose Kingsley of Kingston, New Jersey. The matter pertained to the will of Samuel Tuch and his wife Rosa, nee Riess. The letter provides the death dates for the couple, both of whom had died the previous year. The issue appears to be that the Tuchs left three wills and the Agency was trying to provide the family's American attorney with assistance.⁵

- On 20 July 1909 the Agency wrote to the District Attorney at Port Washington, Wisconsin. The District Attorney had written for information pertaining to a pending case. The Agent replied asking for clarification, for example, asking if the woman in question's last name was Bodenhimer or Bodenheimer.⁶
- In April 1912 there is correspondence relating to the Venn estate, including a letter to Frederic H. Venn of Chicago. You may remember in the article on the Wiesbaden Agency's incoming correspondence in the last issue of *Der Kurier*,⁷ there was a substantial discussion of letters received about this estate. The outgoing correspondence provides you with another angle of the story.⁸
- On 12 April 1912 the Agent wrote to the American Embassy in Berlin on behalf of Verner R. Reed. Reed was an American residing in Wiesbaden with his family, who needed an emergency passport from the Embassy in order for him and his family to take a cruise on the Mediterranean.⁹

Challenges in Researching Letters Sent

Finding the right date and the possible existence of relevant correspondence is the easy part. Being able to read the documents may be more difficult. The first problem you may face is

² 22 November 1905, Letters Sent by the Consular Agency at Wiesbaden, Page 185, Volume 5, NAID 1328632, National Archives and Records Administration Record Group 84, Records of Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State. Hereafter cited as NARG 84, Wiesbaden, Vol. 5, NAID 1328632.

³ 22 December 1905, Letter from Breuer to Collector of Customs New York City, pages 198-199, NARG 84, Wiesbaden, Vol. 5, NAID 1328632.

⁴ 22 December 1905 pages 200-202, 29 January 1906 pages 224-225, 8 March 1906 pages 255-258; NARG 84, Wiesbaden, Vol. 5, NAID 1328632.

⁵ 15 January 1909, Letters Sent from the Consular Agency at Wiesbaden, page 344, Volume 6, page 344, NAID 1328633; National Archives and Records Administration Record Group 84 Records of Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State. Hereafter cited NARG 84, Wiesbaden, Vol. 6, NAID 1328633.

⁶ 20 July 1909 Letter Breuer to District Attorney Port Washington Wisconsin, page 494, NARG 84, Wiesbaden, Vol. 6, NAID 1328633.

⁷ Carter, Samara and Emily Hampton. "Wiesbaden Consulate: Correspondence Received," *Der Kurier* 2015 (Volume 33, Number 2): 25, 28-34.

⁸ 12 April 1912, Letters Sent from the Consular Agency at Wiesbaden, pages 80-81, Volume 4, NAID 1328631; National Archives and Records Administration Record Group 84 Records of Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State. Hereafter cited as NARG 84, Wiesbaden, Vol. 4, NAID 1328631.

⁹ 12 April 1912, Letter Breuer to American Embassy in Berlin, page 78, NARG 84, Wiesbaden, Vol. 4, NAID 1328631.

sloppy handwriting, as some Agency staff had poor penmanship. The next problem may be some letters are written in German script; this is a problem German Americans face with regularity in their research.

In addition to these two familiar problems, Wiesbaden's "letters sent" present researchers with another obstacle, unique to the document type. Wiesbaden's letters sent are not the neat handwritten ones often found among letter sent copy books. Instead, the only remaining letters sent from the Agency are press copies of outgoing correspondence. To create these press copy letters, the Agency used a process much in vogue in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth- centuries. The person writing the letter would pen it and then place a thin piece of paper, akin to onion skin or tissue paper, on top of it and press down on it, hence the name "press copies." The wet ink would seep into the thin paper, resulting in a copy.

While this process created a copy of the outgoing letter, it did not always result in one that was easy to read. Sometimes the amount of ink on the page was so little that the text was almost illegible. Over the decades the ink faded; the result is that some of the letters are entirely illegible. The fragility of the copy paper could result in the page being torn. Sometimes the page was torn out of the volume and lost.

As you examine the records you should keep these potential obstacles in mind. Sometimes placing a sheet of white paper behind the page (as a backing page) amplifies the ink and helps you read the text. That technique is often the best way to proceed when using your digital camera to make a copy.

REGISTERS OF LETTERS SENT

As a means of keeping track of its outgoing correspondence the Consular Agency kept a series of three register volumes.

They cover the period 1 December 1906 through 10 February 1917. This means they provide a good finding aid for almost all of the letters sent. Keep in mind, a register is not an index. The information is not arranged alphabetically by the recipient's surname; rather, the information is arranged chronologically by the date the Agency sent the correspondence.

Each volume is arranged in columns. The headings of those columns are: Date Sent, To Whom and to What Place Sent, Subject of the Letter, Amount of Postage, and Remarks. The Remarks column is usually empty. Note the columns are aligned so they occupy two pages of the volume, and you read the information left to right across both pages. The register's page number appears on the right page; there is no page number on the left-hand page.

Value of the Registers of Letters Sent

Although the registers of letters sent are not an index, they hold potential value to you. They are a useful guide to the records, allowing you to survey the outgoing correspondence quickly without needing to wade through volumes of fragile, tissue paper documents. This may be a great benefit as you undertake your research.

There are several other practical reasons to consider allocating time to examine the registers. As you examine the registers you will quickly gain a sense of what the Agency's major activities were at any point in time.

You will find letters sent to American businesses, attorneys, private citizens, American Foreign Service personnel abroad, German companies, etc. You can find references to letters sent to specific people. There is an entry, for example, listing the 15 January 1909 letter to Mrs. Rose Kingsley of New Jersey about the Tucht estate in Register Volume 11, a letter referred to above.¹⁰ Perhaps of greater importance, the

¹⁰15 January 1909 Entry for Mrs. Rose Kingsley, page 70, Register of Letters Sent December 1906 – October 1910, Volume 11, NAID 1328638, National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 84 Records of Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State, Records of the Consular

Agency at Wiesbaden. Hereafter cited as NARG 84, Wiesbaden, Vol. 11. You should also note the difference in the spelling of the subject's surname. In the letter sent, the name is Tucht; where as in the register the name is Tucht.

registers may help you cope with some of the inherent difficulties of doing research with letter press volumes.

As discussed above, letter press copies of outgoing correspondence can be very difficult to read. Although the handwriting in the registers can often be hard to decipher, it is often easier to read than the copy of the letter; you may be able to pick up enough clues from the register to help you read the letter press copy.

In some cases, the information you find in the registers may be the only information you will have on outgoing correspondence. Some press copies are so faded they are entirely illegible; the register will be your only source of information about that correspondence.

Sometimes the press copy of the letter was torn from the volume prior to the National Archives accessioning the records. The entry in the register may be the only clue you have that the Agency sent a letter.

Volume 11 contains, for example, an entry dated 21 January 1909 to Raymond M. Glacken of Baltimore, Maryland.¹¹ A search of the press copies of letters sent did not locate a copy of this letter, making this entry in the register the only proof of the letter's existence.

ACCESSING THE RECORDS

Examining the Records

The "letters sent" this article discusses are not available on-line. You will need to examine the originals at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland (Archives II). Should you choose to examine these records the following information will guide you.

Examining the records is a two-step process. First you will need to visit Archives II and request the volumes. To achieve the best results, you should provide the staff with a complete citation, including the National Archives ID numbers (NAID numbers) for each volume. You should also note the citation for the records

provenance: National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Record Group 84, Records of Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State; Records of the American Consular Agency at Wiesbaden, Germany.

Note on the Volumes' Numbers

Note that the neither volumes of "letters sent" nor the registers are in numerical order.

Letters Sent Volumes, February 1904 – February 1917

- February 24, 1904 – November 9, 1906; Volume 5; NAID 1328632
- November 9, 1906 – August 12, 1909; Volume 6; NAID 1328633
- August 14, 1909 – November 17, 1911; Volume 3; NAID 1328630
- November 14, 1911 – February 6, 1917; Volume 4; NAID 1328631 (Note: The first letter in this volume is dated November 14; the next letter is dated November 17. The following letters are dated in ascending chronological order.)

Register Volumes of Letters Sent, December 1906 – February 1917

- December 1, 1906 – October 21, 1910; Volume 7; NAID 1328634
- October 29, 1910 – December 31 1913; Volume 11; NAID 1328638
- January 2, 1914 – February 10, 1917; Volume 12; NAID 1328639

Making Copies

The "letters sent" and the registers are in bound volumes. You may not make electrostatic (Xerox) copies of them. You may, however, make copies using an overhead camera in the research room or take along a personal digital camera and make photographs of the pages.

¹¹ 21 January 1909 Entry for Raymond M. Glacken, page 70; NARG 84, Wiesbaden, Vol. 11.

Wiesbaden, Germany.
Jan. 15. 1909.

Mrs. Rose Kingsley,
Counsellor-at-Law.
Kingston, N. Y.

Madam:

I just returned from my annual leave of absence to my post, and I have ascertained, that Samuel Tuch died here Dec. 26. P. 8. His wife Rosa, nee Reiss, died April 16. 1908. Place of death: 11. Kuedorheimer Strasse, Wiesbaden. There have been three consecutive wills. - Dr. Beres, attorney at law, 5 Kirchgass., Wiesbaden, had been appointed executor. -

According to him, the testament makes Moses Reiss, a nephew of the deceased, residing at Ellrichstein, Ober-Hessen, universal heir.

The 3 wills are contentious documents.

If you want to have them copied and sent you, please apply to Dr. Beres, who is willing to have copies, if you can prove the status of your client in the matter.

Yours truly, Julius B. Brewer, a.c.a.

P.S. Of course you will have to add the usual fee for such copies

A letter from Volume 6, page 344 regarding Samuel Tuch.

SUCHANZEIGEN / ***Queries***

Please mention at least one time, one place, one German surname with known variants. Limit each query to one family. Use no more than fifty (50) words, not counting your name and address. There is no charge for members of MAGS. Non-members please include \$1 (check payable to Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society) per query with your submission. More than one query may be sent at a time, but each should be clearly written or typed on a separate sheet of 8 1/2 by 11 inch clean, white paper. E-Mail is acceptable. Please indicate desired priority for printing. MAGS reserves the right to edit. Neither MAGS nor Der Kurier assumes any responsibility for accuracy. Send your Queries to Edythe H. Millar, Queries Editor, MAGS, 7102 Cedon Road, Woodford, VA 22580 or e-mail: ehoffmillar@netscape.net (Please write 'MAGS Query' in subject line)

DRAUDE

#33-1 Seek anc, par, sibl Joseph DRAUDE. b 9 May 1838 Nuumberg, Hesse Kassel, Ger.; d 26 Sept 1887, Phila,PA. 1860 census listed w/1, ANN, Ch: Elizabeth age 5, Charles 4; In 1870 & 1880 w CATHERINE. Also would appreciate any info of wives & fam. Joseph my GGrandfather. Need help on how to find earlier info and how to start.

Virginia Ankele John

94 Newbury Way, Lansdale, PA 19446

vaj42@hotmail.com

MEISTER/MASTERS KLOTZ CROSBY

#33-2 Seek bpl ggf Conrad MEISTER/MASTERS (1814-1891) and sis Magdalene (1820-1899) in Prussia/New Prussia, Ger. Both arr Baltimore bet Apr-Jun 1836 & liv w/ aunt Mary KLOTZ & h Barnhart in E. Berlin, PA. Both m & liv in PA, MD. Conrad naturalized 1843 Washington Co. MD & mov to IL 1865. Magdalene m John L. CROSBY. Par William & Catherine MASTERS/MEISTER. Considered themselves "Highlanders." Census no rec bpl, Ger religion, ship.

Jerry Masters 23231 Coconut Shores Dr.
Bonita Springs, FL 34134
jmastersrc@hotmail.com

MAGS Welcomes 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.

John Faber of Massapequa, NY

(Faber, Höring/Hoering, Pfannstiel, Scheumeister)

Bruce Gilmore of Chattanooga, TN

(Eckert, Gilmore, Hauser, Young)

Jerry Masters of Bonita Springs, FL

(Meister(s), Masters)

Patricia Yater Strawmyer of Prosper, TX

(Kuhn, Schaefer, Schick, Strohmeier)

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DER KALENDER / *The Calendar*

2015

Sept. 11-12. Genealogy Conference, Pennsylvania German Cultural Heritage Center, Kutztown University, Kutztown, PA. Friday bus tour and Saturday conference. Info:

<https://sites.google.com/site/pagermanhc/library/genealogyconference2015>

Sept. 17-19. FGS Regional Conference co-sponsored with Central New York Genealogical Society and the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, Syracuse/Liverpool Holiday Inn, located at 441 Electronics Parkway, in Liverpool, N.Y. Details may be found at <http://www.nysfhc.org>.

Sept. 19. 9th Annual Bucks County Ancestry Fair at Bucks County Community College, Swamp Road, Newtown, PA. Info at Ancestry Fair website: <http://www.ancestryfair.org>.

Oct. 3. Maryland Genealogical Society Fall Seminar, Holiday Inn Laurel-West Hotel, 15101 Sweitzer Lane, Laurel, MD 20707. A day of four one-hour lectures by Dr. Thomas W. Jones, "Identifying Your Ancestors and Telling Their Stories." More Info: <http://www.mdgensoc.org/>

Oct. 24. Ohio Chapter Palatines to America 2015 Fall Seminar, Der Dutchman Restaurant, 445 Jefferson Avenue, U.S. Route 42, Plain City, OH. Featured Speaker is Marianne Wokeck, native German author of *Trade in Strangers*; Chancellor's Professor of History, Indiana University. Register online by PayPal: <http://www.oh-palam.org/> or send to: Linda Dietrich, 5422 Cindy Lane, Cincinnati, OH 45239

Oct 24. Fairfax Genealogical Society, Dunn Loring Volunteer Fire Station, 2148 Gallows Road, Vienna, VA 22027. Shannon Combs-Bennett with "Beyond the Obituary: Finding Death Sources." More information regarding the general lecture and education programs of the Fairfax Genealogical Society, please visit the Society web site at <http://www.fxgs.org/>

October 30-31. MAGS Fall Meeting, Ramada Plaza, West Hagerstown, MD. Friday workshop by Bob Greiner on "Understanding German Church Records" and Saturday full-day conference with programs on the theme of "MAGS of the Future." More info, www.magsgen.com

Nov 7. Fairfax Genealogical Society Fall Fair, the Dunn Loring Volunteer Fire Station, 2148 Gallows Road, Vienna, VA 22027. Presentations by Judy Russell, entitled "1) The First Trip to the Courthouse, 2) Dowered or Bound Out: Records of Widows and Orphans, and 3) Finding the Law" More info: <http://www.fxgs.org/>

2016

May 4-7. National Genealogical Society Conference, Fort Lauderdale, FL. More info, www.ngsgenealogy.org

May 7. Palatines to America, Pennsylvania Chapter, Kutztown University, Kutztown, PA.

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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.

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Phone: (319) 835-3960
E-Mail: ajwitter@iowatelecom.net

2. Gen Collins
Phone: (301) 770-0683
E-Mail: glcjpc@verizon.net
Specialization: Translates German and German script and English to German.
NOTE: No address to be listed.

3. Global Accents, 15011 Hunter Mountain Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20906-6216
Phone: (301) 438-0020
E-Mail: globlakcnt@aol.com
Website (being redesigned): www.Globalaccents.com

4. Ann C. Sherwin, 1918 Medfield Road, Raleigh, NC 27606-4732
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They have an online directory for individual translators and area of specialization choices.

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E-mail: uwejacobsen@gmx.de Specialization: Genealogical research in Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg-Altona, Sonderjylland / Denmark Transcription of old documents.

8. Klaus F. Alt, 692 Carodon Drive, Ruckersville, VA 22968
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