

Der Kurier

VOLUME 36, NUMBER 3 / SEPTEMBER 2018

Württemberg consulate resources at NARA:

The United States opened a consulate in



Stuttgart, capital of this south German state in 1830, beginning almost a century of contacts that have yielded many records of interest to MAGS



members. President Kenneth W. Heger profiles them and how materials on the MAGS website can help you access them. **Page 86.**

German plurals, possessives and more: “Our Language Leaves” columnist Ken Weaver tackles some of the basics of the German language, including the many ways that German words are made plural. Here’s a hint: It’s a lot more complicated than just adding “-s” or “-es.” The column also includes a handy chart to help with German contractions. **Page 97.**

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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: James M. Beidler, *Der Kurier* Editor, MAGS, PO Box 241, New Windsor, MD 21776. E-mail: newsletter@magsgen.com

VOM HERAUSGEBER

FROM THE EDITOR

Read This Journal and Expand Your ‘Universe of Possibilities’

Few things are as enjoyable to me as finding out about new records or new genealogical methodologies. I’ve been wont to say on many an occasion that expanding “the universe of possibilities” is one of my fondest goals.

What do I mean by such a phrase as “the universe of possibilities?” Well, let me use this issue of *Der Kurier* to illustrate what I mean.



James M. Beidler

There’s President Heger’s “Research Württemberg on the MAGS Website” piece that headlines this issue. It’s filled with background information on the Grand Duchy / Kingdom – and who doesn’t have at least one ancestor from Württemberg? (OK, I’m sure many don’t ... but a lot of us have at least one.

Among the things I learned from the tables Heger included from the consulate’s reports is how America-centric emigration from Württemberg was in the 1870s – all but a handful of those leaving each year went to the United States. Also significant is the count of Protestants vs. Catholics: I had thought that Württemberg was heavily Protestant but the 1878 report shows almost a third of the population to be Catholic.

Ken Weaver’s “Our Language Leaves” column tackles the not-so-uniform world of plurals and possessives in the German language. I had never thought about all the ways there are ... or how some of the irregular English plurals (such as children for child) come from Germanic roots.

Katherine Schober’s “Stick to the Script” column continues her top tips for deciphering handwritten documents in the German language. She magnifies some of the lookalike letters to show how some short strokes that you might overlook at first can make the difference between a misread document and hitting pay dirt! She also makes a good case for becoming knowledgeable about occupations and words related to them since they might come first in a document (and therefore be mistaken for a name!).

Bob Greiner’s “Immigrant Connections” column is “reverse engineered” genealogy from American eyes – since he finds German emigrant families and then traces them forward into America. But the value of this is apparent when he shows connections between emigrants. It is also worth noting that this is the type of genealogy that many Germans do, documenting those who left and their descendants!

Finally, our “DNA Discoveries” columnist Andrew Hochreiter tackles what is simultaneously the most popular and least accurate application of genetic science to genealogy: The ethnicity mixture percentages that virtually every genealogist encounters in cocktail party chatter today. Hochreiter shows what proper uses there are for this information!

All in all, I know I learned a lot editing this issue of *Der Kurier*. I hope every reader learns as much reading these 40 pages!

VOM PRÄSIDENT

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Much Progress to Report!

During the last quarter your Society continued to grow. We added substantial new content to the Society's website. We represented MAGS to outside organizations. We embarked on new ways to enhance your conference experiences and to finesse technical problems with our website. Membership chair Gunter Schanzenbacher reports membership is up; treasurer Bob Greiner reports we are in sound financial shape.

In this issue you will note an article announcing the completion of the Stuttgart Project. That project focused on the Kingdom of Württemberg, home to thousands of German American families. MAGS members now have a massive new Guide to help you identify files you might want to add to your research. As always we indexed the consulate's correspondence to the Department of State, adding hundreds of name-searchable entries to the Society's databases. We also added scans of approximately seventy vintage postcards depicting scenes from Württemberg. I need to recognize several students from the University of Maryland for doing that work. We have Luis Beteta, Lauren Cooper, Zeynep Diker, Nancy Harrison Gage, Marisa Gilman, Tracee Haupt, Rebecca Thayer, and Brandon Turp to thank for the scans.

Files relating to southern Germany aren't the only new additions to the website. There is an index of the Deutsche Correspondent that allows you to search all names among the articles; we estimate adding 75,000 names. We posted the 2001 Ahnentafel. There is an index of the students who attended the Columbia Institution for the Deaf in Washington, D.C. Hundreds of Germans from across America went to school there. The 1883 Pension Bureau report of pensioners living abroad is finally searchable on the website. Our web committee found a way to finesse the current problems we are having with our website contractor so you can search the expanded resources. In particular I want to thank Bob Greiner for finding and implementing this solution.

Program chair Carol Carman and Jackie Curro spent many hours exploring the area looking for new venues to hold our conferences, especially the fall event. After visiting several places, including some visits that resulted in amusing stories, they identified a couple of new possibilities. Carol has found a new site in the heart of Pennsylvania German country in Lancaster County that holds great promise. Our fall conference and workshop will take place there. Thanks, Carol!

Board members continue to be active with outside organizations, publicizing MAGS along the way. Carol Carman is now the president of the Anne Arundel County Genealogical Society. John Frank continued his work representing the Society with the International Germanic Genealogical Partnership (IGGP). Debra Hoffman served as co-director of the Genealogical Institute on Federal Records (Gen-Fed). Your president traveled to Southern California to speak to the German Interest Group of the Southern California Genealogical Society; while there I worked with the IGGP Speaker's Committee to select speakers for next year's international conference in Sacramento. I also



Kenneth W. Heger

taught at Gen-Fed. These activities have engendered great interest in MAGS throughout the country. We'll be watching to see if it also results in increased membership.

Once again, I urge you to access the Society's website. In addition to the databases and guides, there are high-quality scans of vintage post cards, maps, and bibliographies to help you find secondary sources. There is always information about meeting of other societies, as well as details about upcoming MAGS events. The web committee adds content to the website often; therefore, it is well worth your while to type www.magsgen.com into your browser and take a look to see what's new.



President Heger and Amy Chidester, program chair for next year's German Partnership conference in Sacramento, met up in Southern California.

Research Württemberg On the MAGS Website

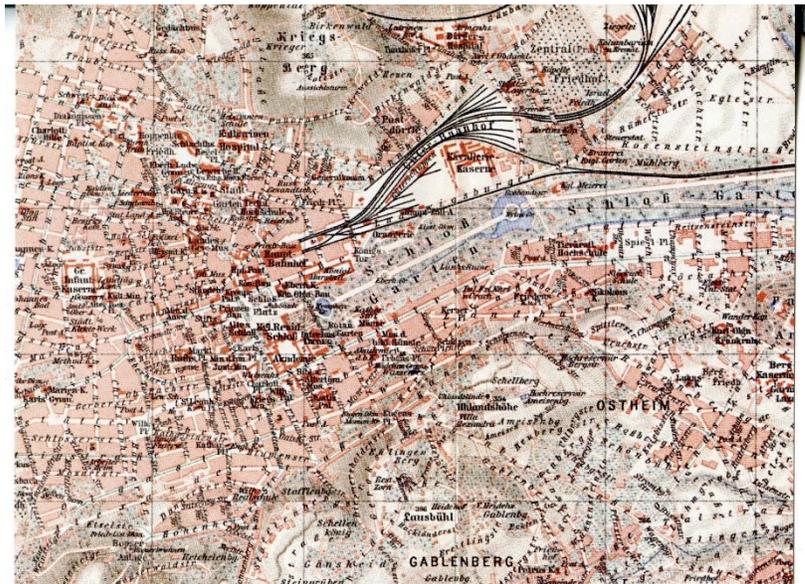
BY KENNETH W. HEGER, PH.D.

The south German state of Württemberg was home to thousands of American immigrants, many of whom remained in contact with friends and family they left behind. As part of MAGS' mission to provide researchers with information on our ancestors' homeland, it made sense to turn our attention to providing MAGS members with guides to records and scans of visual images. This article talks about sources you can consult on the MAGS website to further your research.

American Consulate in Stuttgart, 1835 -1917

Stuttgart was the capital city of the German Kingdom of Württemberg. Württemberg was an important mid-sized state, located in southern Germany. As a reflection of the federal government's commitment to represent American interests in key areas throughout the world, the United States opened a consulate in Stuttgart in 1830. This article points out the significance of the Stuttgart consulate's records and provides an overview of the new Guide available on the MAGS website. Although small, Württemberg was densely populated. In 1865, the consulate reported the Kingdom's population to be 1,748,328 people.¹

Twenty-one years later the population had grown to 2,250,000, making it one of Germany's most densely populated areas.² More significantly, throughout its existence, the



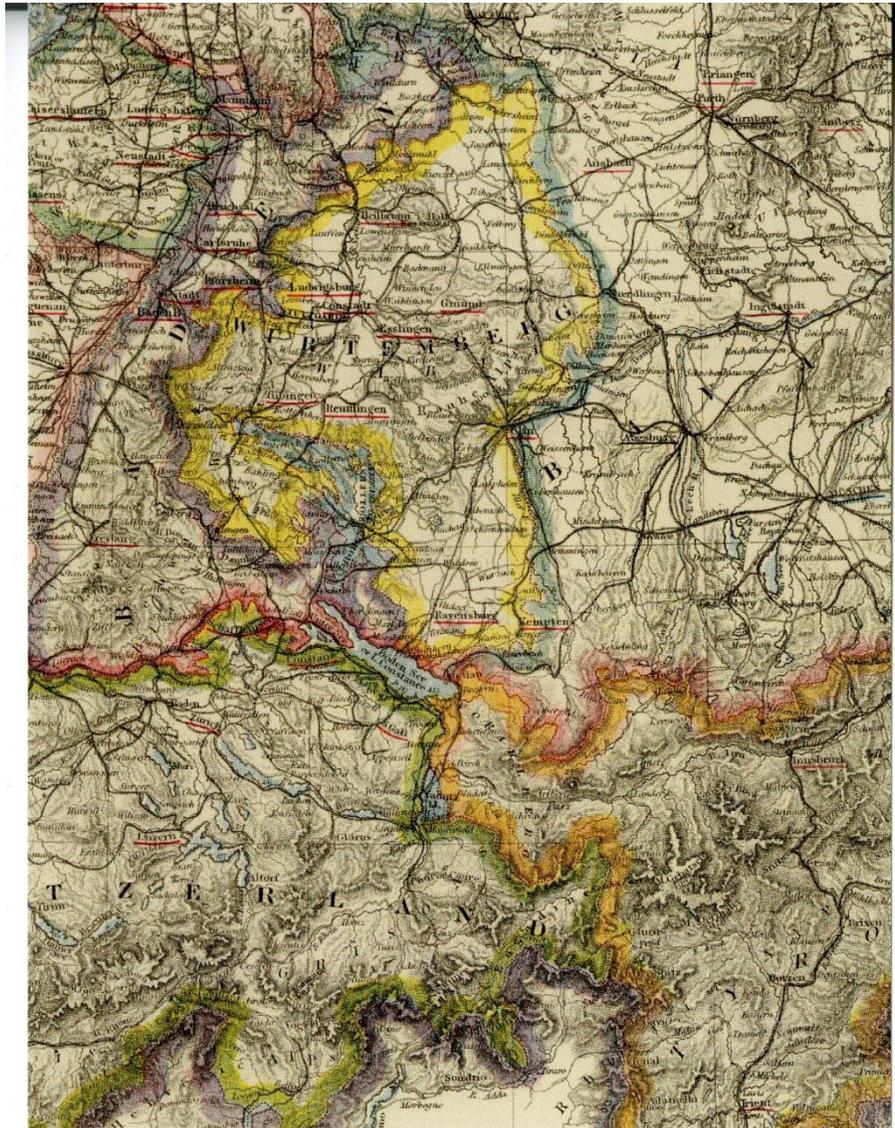
Map of Stuttgart, 1909 (Author's collection)

¹ 31 October 1865, Despatch No. 12. Stuttgart to State. National Archives Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State. (Here after cited as NARG 59); T443, *Despatches from U.S. Consuls in Stuttgart, Germany, 1830-1906*. Roll 2. (Here after cited as T443)

² 7 January 1886, Despatch No. 9; T443, Roll 6; NARG 59.

consulate stressed the fact that many German Americans emigrated from Württemberg, and a substantial number of them returned to visit relatives or to retire in their home country. As early as 1870, the consulate reported there were at least 600 American citizens living permanently in the district.³ By 1896, that number had swollen to 1,307 – 428 of whom lived in the Stuttgart metropolitan area.⁴ In 1899, a State Department inspection of the consulate reported there were approximately 100 U.S. military veterans or their dependents drawing pensions for military service living in Württemberg.⁵ The records the consulate created are replete with data on these people and Americans who traveled through the Kingdom.

Unlike other foreign service posts, the Department of State never seriously entertained the thought of closing the consulate in Stuttgart. It was America's only post in Württemberg and it was a busy one, providing services to hundreds of Americans residing in the area. Moreover, the consulate was responsible for more than merely the Kingdom of Württemberg. Its district also encompassed the Principalities of Hohenzollern-Hechingen, and Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, as well as the area around the Baden city of Pforzheim, the so-called "Pforzheim Peninsula." The post remained open until February 1917, when the United States broke diplomatic



Map of Württemberg and neighboring states (Author's collection)

³ 30 June 1870, Despatch No. 20; T443, Roll 3; NARG 59.

⁴ 31 December 1896, Unnumbered Despatch. Stuttgart to State; T443, Roll 7, NARG 59.

⁵ Inspection Report 24 June 1899, p. 147; Volume 3, Consular Instructions, 1896-1902, Entry 856, NAID 1229805; NARG 59.



Stuttgart's Stiftskirche (Author's collection)

several volumes in which the consulate registered Americans. Unlike earlier MAGS Guides, this one is a consolidated document, discussing all the records regardless of which National Archives record group contains the records.⁶

relations with Germany. Although outside the scope of this article, the Department reopened the post in 1922.

Many Exciting Records: Guide to the Records

The Stuttgart consulate produced a large body of records making this record creator an essential source of information for anyone whose family lived in or traveled though Württemberg. There are 178 volumes of correspondence, including 8 volumes of despatches the consulate sent to the Department of State and 12 volumes of State Department officials sent to the post in Stuttgart. There are 9 volumes pertaining to American citizens in the district, including

⁶ NARG 59 contains the record copy of the despatches the consulate sent to the Department of State in Washington, D.C.; while NARG 84 contains the records the consulate kept on site in Stuttgart, including copies of the instructions and despatches the Department of State in Washington sent to the consulate in Stuttgart.

Statistical Information

Several of the consulate's despatches provide detailed statistics about the Kingdom's population, economy, and society. These statistical documents give you the data you need to place your ancestor's lives in context. The following despatch serves as an excellent example.

Despatch No. 86; 7 November 1878 – Annual Report

This approximately 125-page document contains exceptional information on the Kingdom. It has sections on the condition of Württemberg's working classes (pp. 36-71); crops in Württemberg pp. 73-78); forests and wine cultivation in the Kingdom (pp. 87-104); and an overview of Americans in Europe (pp. 105-122). In addition, the report includes several valuable tables of information. Three examples are:

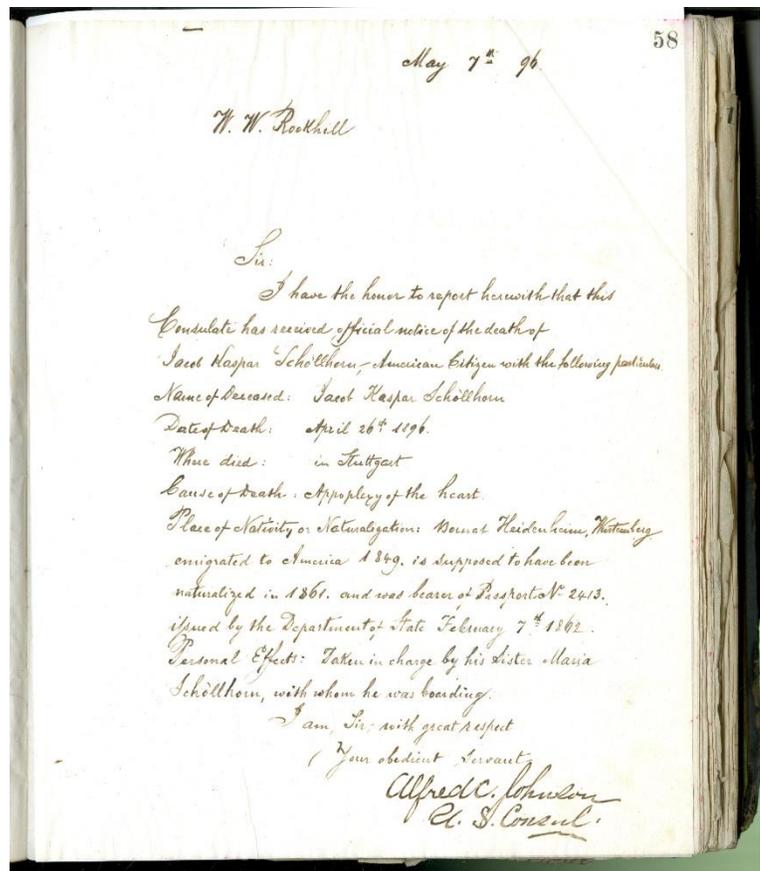
DESTINATION OF EMIGRANTS, 1871 – 1876 (p. 84)						
COUNTRY	1871	1872	1873	1874	1875	1876
Argentina	1	6	3	1	2	0
U.S.A.	4,732	5,447	4,622	1,992	1,256	1,038
British America	0	1	0	0	0	0
West Indies	3	2	0	1	0	0
Brazil	14	22	18	4	22	5
Peru	0	4	0	0	3	6
Chile	3	2	6	1	6	0
Other American Countries	2	5	0	3	0	0
Africa	0	1	0	0	0	0
Asia	0	0	0	0	0	1
Australia	16	7	2	1	4	11
Total	4,765	5,497	4,651	2,003	1,292	1,061

RELIGION (p. 85)		
Protestants	1,233,265	68.92%
Catholics	567,578	30.17%
Other Christians	4,167	0.22%
Jews	12,881	0.68%
Other Religions	229	0.01%

PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION BY OCCUPATION (p. 86)	
Agriculture	33.80%
Mining & Manufacturing	40.05%
Commerce	8.52%
Military	0.95%
Personal Services & Laborers	7.25%
Other	9.42%

A Wealth of Information on Individuals

Although a consulate's primary purpose was to provide the American government with information to support American businesses and foreign policy, there were occasions when a foreign service post also documented American citizens in a consular district. Stuttgart's records are no exception. In some cases, the consul decided the Department of State needed to know what was happening with a specific person because the consulate might need the Department's assistance. This perspective resulted in despatches about American citizens imprisoned by local authorities for alleged crimes or for not fulfilling their military service before they emigrated, records of people applying for passports, and communications about pensioners that the State Department would need to forward to another department of the government in Washington. Other despatches resulted from legal requirements imposed on consuls, such as reporting deaths, births, and marriages of American citizens. Given the number of German Americans whose families hail from southwest Germany, these despatches are invaluable. Keep in mind, there may be correspondence from Stuttgart to Washington, D.C., and from Washington, D.C., to Stuttgart. The Guide contains detailed lists of the correspondence.



Death report for Jacob Kasper Schöllhorn 7 May 1896 (RG 84, Stuttgart, Vol. 103, NAID 1328557)

Death Reports

Reporting the deaths of American citizens abroad was a key duty of American foreign service posts. The records of the consulate in Stuttgart include many death reports, perhaps reflecting the number of Americans who hailed from or traveled to the area. Most of the reports include the date, place and cause of death; although, this information is inconsistent and depended upon the details the consulate received from relatives of the deceased or from local German authorities. In addition, many of the reports include an official death notice form, such as the Department of State Standard Form 192 or the German *Sterbekunde*.

The despatches Stuttgart sent to Washington, D.C. contain 177 death reports, in addition, there are 4 lists of recently deceased Americans in the district with a total of 24 names. There are a further series of 18 despatches where the consulate requested information from the United States about someone's death. Closely related are 26 despatches relating to estates pertaining to Americans. The Guide provides you with information on these records and citations, so you can find the originals. States in MAGS' core are well represented among the reports; see for example:

- Dr. Theodor Trautmann of Baltimore, MD – Despatch No. 8, 17 July 1875
- John Ludwig Linkenheil of Camden, NJ – Despatch No. 11, 1 October 1880
- Frederick Naar of Philadelphia, PA – Despatch No. 64, 3 January 1882
- Karl Friedrich Bussert of Newark, NJ – Despatch No. 98, 3 April 1883⁷
- Eugene M. Leutze of Washington, D.C. – Despatch No. 98, 3 April 1883
- Isaac Vandlinger of Baltimore, MD – Despatch No. 98, 3 April 1883
- Christian Seitzer of Philadelphia, PA – Despatch No. 91, 30 April 1901
- August Eugen Ruff of Franklin City, PA – Despatch No. 108, 25 October 1901
- Eugene Finkenbinder of Allegheny City, PA – Despatch No. 108, 25 October 1901⁸
- Charles Mayer of Jersey City, NJ – Despatch No. 111, 3 January 1902

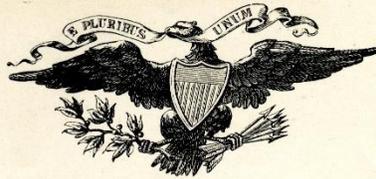
Marriages

The consulate at Stuttgart did not report many marriages to the Department of State. It is unclear why that was the case. Even so, the records contain documentation of seven marriages the consul performed. State Department guidelines required consulates performing marriages to keep a copy of the marriage certificate, give a copy to the wedded couple and send a copy to the Department of State in Washington, D.C.

⁷ This despatch forwarded death reports for three men.

⁸ This despatch forwarded death reports for both men.

3.



Consulate of the United States of America
for the
Kingdom of Wurttemberg.

I, the undersigned, hereby solemnly swear, that I was born at *Newark, New Jersey*
on the *15th* day of *October* 1855, and that I am the child of
Friedrich Kolb, deceased
and *Marie nee Faas*
that I am the identical person named in a *Certificate*
issued from *the Consulate of the United States*
in Stuttgart, Wurttemberg,
dated *October 11th, 1873.*
and signed by *C. Blumpraecht, Consul,*
that I am a citizen of the United States of America with legal domicile at *Newark, N.Y.*

_____ that I am single, of no blood relationship to *Carolina Humm*
daughter of Carl Friedrich Humm, and Elizabeth Humm
nee Kugmerling,
of *Reutlingen, Wurttemberg.*
and that I know of no legal impediment to my marriage with said *Carolina Humm.*

Friedrich. Kolb.

Sworn to, and subscribed before me this *21st* day of *Dec.* 187*7*

R. M. Jaeger
U. S. Consul.

Marriage Affidavit for Friedrich Kolb of Newark, NJ (RG 84, Stuttgart, Vol.193, NAID 1328620)

Although there are only a few despatches from Stuttgart to Washington pertaining to marriages, the records the consulate kept on site contain several volumes to relevant records, more than making up for the dearth of despatches. You might want to note the three volumes of marriage affidavits. These volumes contain affidavits in which the undersigned swore by facts concerning his or her birthplace, date of birth, parents, identity as stated in a naturalization certificate (for non-native born citizens), marital status, absence of blood relationship to the proposed bride, and lack of legal impediments to marriage. Not every affidavit has all this information. These statements were sworn to and subscribed before the U.S. consul in Stuttgart. The Guide has an appendix listing all the names of the men and women who swore out the affidavits; there approximately 360 affidavits in these volumes.

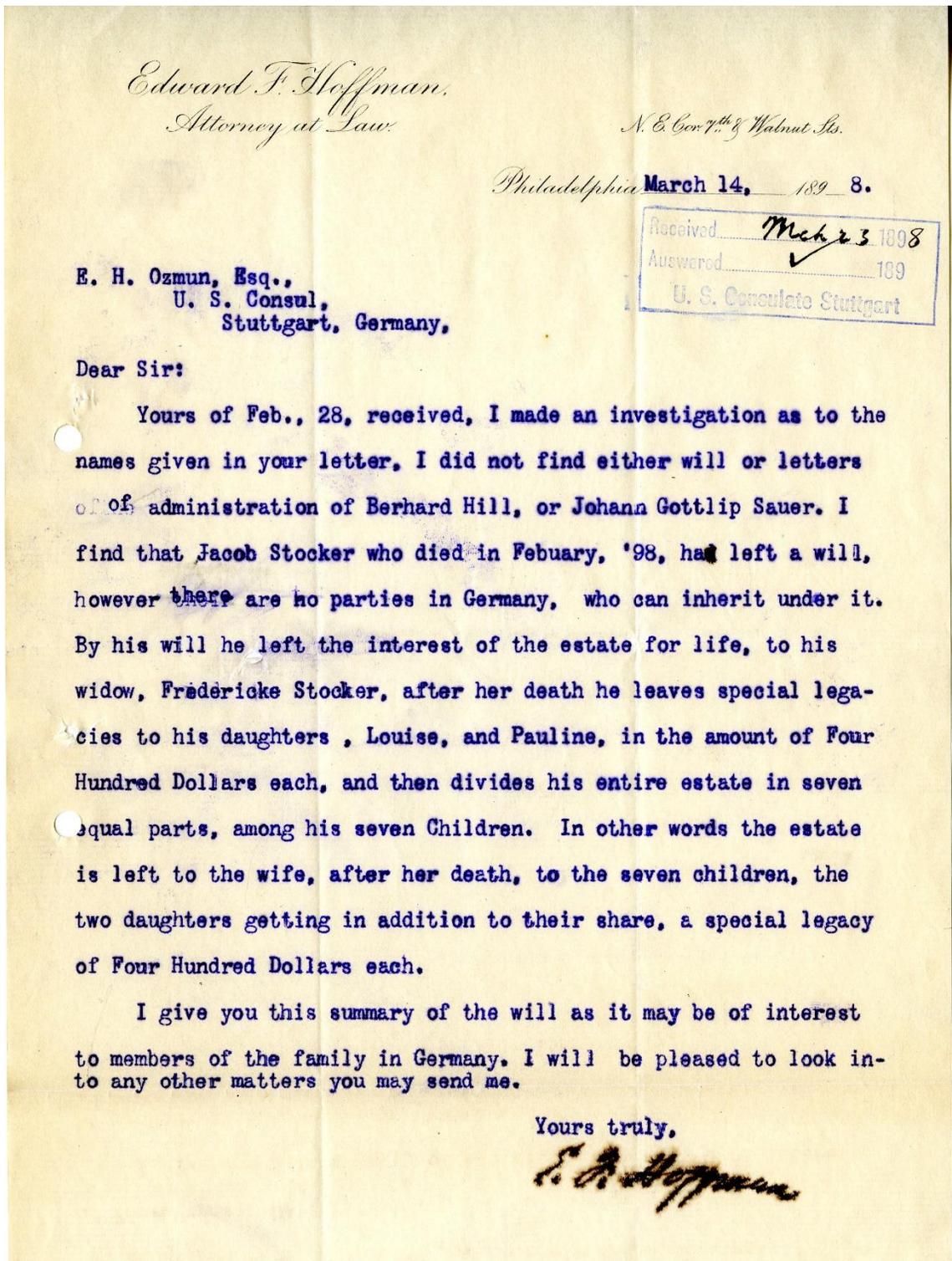
Pensioners

Records of American foreign service posts in southern Germany are rich in files documenting pensioners. This reflects the large influx of Germans into the United States from that part of the country during the nineteenth-century. In the case of the Stuttgart consulate, the despatches document the administrative aspect of pension payments as well as identifying individual pensioners. Both kinds of documents are useful for researching this topic.

In addition to the official correspondence to and from Washington, D.C., there is extensive correspondence relating to pensioners among the consulates other correspondence volumes. There are two entire volumes the consulate earmarked to writing about pensioners and there is

Zuffenhausen Dec 26th 1893.
 Mr. Fred. C. Gattschalk!
 Dear Sir!
 Please allow me to
 ask a question of you & state
 also that I have received the
 National Tribune of Dec 14th 1893,
 and not my Pension Check yet;
 it looks to me as there must
 have been put in the Pension voucher
 the wrong Post office address;
 given. I gave The Wright address
 to the Gentlemen Clerk in your
 office, when I was in Stuttgart
 Dec 4th inst; 1893; Please let me
 know by return mail if possible
 what be the best to do
 yours most respect
 Everhard Gerdtz.
 Stuttgarterstrasse 24
 Zuffenhausen
 O/a Ludwigsburg.

**Letter Received from American pensioner
 Everhardt Gerdtz 26 Dec 1893 (RG 84, Stuttgart,
 Vol. 42, NAID 1328469)**



Letter from Edward T. Hoffman of Philadelphia re the Stocker Estate, note the family information (RG 84, Stuttgart, Vol. 44, NAID 1328471)

correspondence dispersed throughout other volumes of incoming and outgoing correspondence. One of the volumes contains 95 individual addresses to whom the consulate wrote. Remember, these letters are likely available nowhere else and are, therefore, a unique source of information on your ancestor; the Guide contains a list of all these names and the page numbers on which the letters appear. The Guide provides additional information on how to find and use these records.

Lists of Names

To help you locate relevant documents, the Guide includes several detailed lists of names. The lists contain a brief description of the document's subject and the records citation information you need to find the documents at the National Archives. The Guide has a table of contents to help you find these lists. The four most detailed lists are:

- List of despatches from the consulate to Washington, D.C., 1835-1906
- List of despatches and instructions from Washington, D.C., to the consulate, 1851-1912
- List of names of pensioners and other addressees in Volume 164, Letters Sent Relating to Pension Cases, 1891-1894
- List of names of people who applied for affidavits to accompany marriage certificates, 1877-1907

Accessing the Records

The records of the consulate in Stuttgart are not digitized. You will need to visit the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) facility in College Park, MD, also known as Archives II, to examine the originals or their microfilmed surrogates. Please keep in mind, if records are available on microfilm, you will need to use the microfilm rather than the hard copies. The staff will not pull microfilmed records. The Guide contains a section providing additional, detailed information about how to examine the records.

Other Resources on the MAGS Website

New Names in MAGS Databases

As part of the Society's description program, the names of people mentioned in official correspondence was added to the Consular Despatches Database and the Consular Instructions Database. After a quality control review, the MAGS web committee will forward the updated databases to the contractor who provides the Society with technical support. We hope the contractor will have the new data online in a reasonably short period of time. In the meanwhile, you can use the

Guide on the MAGS website to search for names. Note: Until the contactor posts the updated databases, be sure to examine the entire Guide. Some names show up in more than one place; you don't want to miss those other documents.

Vintage Postcards

Naturally our resources for Württemberg would not be complete without adding scans of vintage postcards to the website. A small group of students at the University of Maryland (see the President's column for their names) processed, organized, identified and scanned approximately 70 postcards depicting cities, scenery, and other aspects of Württemberg. Scanned at 300 dpi in color, those images are available on the MAGS website for you to use in your research.

Quick Facts Sheet

The website also has a Quick Facts Sheet for Württemberg available, providing a short overview of the Kingdom's history.

Log On!

With so many new resources available on the Society's website it is well worth your time to log on and explore them. Search for a name. Read through the Guide. Peruse the postcards. This is another step to making MAGS stand for the Major American Germanic Society.



A cartoon advertisement for the Swabian railway (Author's collection)

UNSERE SPRACHBLÄTTER

OUR LANGUAGE LEAVES



A typical Pennsylvania Dutch will begins with “In Namen Gottes Amen.”

Nouns, Plurals, Possessives, Contractions: It’s a Wild Ride!

As I was about to sit down and write my column for this issue, I came upon an old will in my filing cabinet from a Pennsylvania Dutch farmer that was penned in 1846. I had been given the document in the mid-’90s to decipher and translate and for some reason still had it. It is the perfect lead-in to finish my discussion on German grammar for genealogists in that it contains two of the items I still need to discuss. Again, our goal here is not to make the reader a fluent speaker of German, but rather to provide some explanation for some of the issues that may be encountered in German documents.

It should hopefully be apparent that modern English is by comparison to German a rather bland language in terms of variations and changes to words to reflect gender and use in the sentence. At one time in its history, English, too, had very similar gender and case structure to German, but that has obviously fallen by the wayside. While German, too, has changed over time, particularly in terms of sounds, many of the features of German grammar of the past have remained intact.

Let’s begin by continuing the discussion of German nouns. In addition to always being capitalized, making nouns plural is also much more complicated than it is in English. German noun plurals can be formed in a wide variety of ways, including making no change at all to the word, only changing the words (the, a/an, adjectives) that precede it. An example would be the German noun *Lehrer* (teacher). As a singular noun used as the subject of a sentence it would be *der Lehrer*, the teacher. Make it *die Lehrer* and it now read ‘the teachers.’

Other ways to make German nouns plural include adding an Umlaut (¨) to the main vowel, adding an Umlaut and –er, just adding –er, adding an –e or an Umlaut and –e, and –n or –en, and in the case of foreign nouns, adding –s. (The genealogist will find very few nouns in old documents where the plural has been formed by adding an –s.) Just like a noun’s gender, native speakers of German acquire the plural as they develop their language skills. Unfortunately, second language



Ken Weaver

learners must resort to memorization, although there are some hints and tricks that help with the process.

Also notable about German plurals and their connection to English are those plurals we all learned in school: foot/feet, goose/geese, man/men, mouse/mice, tooth/teeth. All of these can trace their vowel change back to the German roots from which they came. To that we can add child/children, which are related to the German Kind/Kinder.

One other issue with nouns is the addition of an -n, if the noun is masculine, neuter, or plural and used in a certain case structure known as Dative. In the example above the noun as found in the dictionary is der Name. But, note in this phrase, an 'n' needed to be added to make it grammatically correct. Similarly, in older German documents are found single syllable masculine and neuter nouns with an -e added, such as in the expression auf dem Schiffe (on the ship). While adding an -n in this type of usage has been maintained in modern German, adding an -e has fallen by the wayside with the exception of a few common expressions.

One of the items of grammar that is similar between German and English is the use of the letter -s to signify possession. English notably should have an apostrophe (although that punctuation mark is dying in American usage!). In the example above, the word Gottes is possessive – in the name of God. The 'e' is added to aid in pronunciation of this one syllable word, but in longer words just an -s would be appended to indicate possession. Only masculine and neuter nouns add an -s, but possession is also indicated by the determiners preceding the noun: des/eines – 'of the-of a/an' and significantly the feminine form of 'the' die becomes der to indicate possession.

No discussion of German grammar would be complete without a brief look at verbs and word order. German sentences are constructed by very strict order – certain things belong in certain places. English is much less restrictive in terms of word order, but for the sake of this discussion, the genealogist needs to know that it is not uncommon for the verb forms to come at the very end of the sentence, particularly when dealing with verb tenses that require more than one word to indicate when the action takes place. In these end-of-sentence verb constructions, it is very possible that there will be a verb form that begins with ge-.

Ge- is equivalent to our -ed in the English forms of verbs used in what are known as the perfect tenses: has played, had used, have looked. Even though English irregular verb forms don't use -ed such as in has eaten, had drunk, have gone, it is highly likely that the German equivalent will still begin with ge-. Key words for the German genealogist of this type include geboren (born), getauft (baptized), gestorben (died).

In the example at the beginning of the column, the reader will see the first word is Im. This is a contraction of the preposition in and the form of 'the' dem. Contractions in German differ greatly from English in that they are formed by prepositions and a form of the word 'the' and require no apostrophe to indicate that a letter is missing. Not all prepositions or all forms of 'the' can be contracted, but common ones a genealogist may find in documents include those shown in the chart. Luckily, German-English dictionaries have entries for most of the more common contractions, so they should not cause issues for the genealogist who doesn't speak German.

an + dem = <u>am</u>	on the
bei + dem = <u>beim</u>	with/at the
in + dem = <u>im</u>	in the
von + dem = <u>vom</u>	from the
zu + dem = <u>zum</u>	to the
zu + der = <u>zur</u>	to the

One last item of note that should help is a brief discussion of how ordinal numbers are formed in German. These can be the numbers used in dates, such as the twelfth of September. In English we primarily add the suffix –th to make an ordinal number. In German, the same is accomplished by putting a period (.) after the numeral. That period stands for the ordinal ending –te or –ten, depending on how the number phrase is used. For example, a document may contain the expression am 7. Oktober, which would be am siebten (older German: siebenten) Oktober, or ‘on the seventh of October.’ Just like English, ordinal numbers in German are fairly regular and –te/-ten is added to the regular counting number, with the exception of 1st. In German, that would be der erste or am ersten – ‘the first or on the first,’ a bit different from the counting number one eins.

Hopefully, my explanations of these various issues of grammar have been of use to the reader and not too confusing. As always, I welcome questions, comments and ideas about this and future columns at the e-mail address below.

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

Citation:

Baldemas, Alfred and Ernst Schwabe. "Baden 1771" (map No. 34), *F.W. Putzger's F.W. Historischer Schul-Atlas*. Bielefeld and Leipzig, Germany: Velhagen & Klasing, 1905. Copy from original atlas (Editor's collection)

Digital images available:

<http://www.maproom.org/00/01/present.php?m=0074> :
accessed 18 Aug 2018

What later became the Grand Duchy of Baden in the 19th century was still a hodgepodge of smaller, disconnected nobility units in 1771, the year depicted in this map found in the Putzger's Atlas that was published shortly before World War I.

As you can see, MAGS is providing members with an ever-growing number of products covering an ever-larger geographic area. You can access guides and lists on the MAGS website, www.magsgen.com, under the members-only section.

First Look: *The Family Tree Historical Atlas of Germany*

Der Kurier editor James M. Beidler, author of two previous commercially published books, *The Family Tree German Genealogy Guide* and *Trace Your German Roots Online*, is at work on a third German-themed volume from Family Tree Books.

The publication, tentatively titled *The Family Tree Historical Atlas of Germany*, will trace the history of Germany from the ancient Germanic tribes that destroyed the Roman Empire, through the Holy Roman Empire of the Middle Ages and early modern world, to the modern day.

The Putzger's atlas from which this issue's "From the Records" map of Baden in 1771 is a crucial source of the maps for the volume, according to Beidler.

In addition to maps showing the boundaries, cities and towns through the ages, there will be explanatory text about each map as well as a summary of the various time periods in the history of the German people. Included also will be some maps relating to other German-speaking areas of Europe such as Switzerland, Austria and the former Eastern European enclaves.

The atlas will be available for preorder in spring 2019 and will debut at the International German Genealogy Conference in Sacramento, California, next June.

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- **DNA/Technology** – Websites, software, DNA; sharing your research
- **History and Culture** – Historical influences, migration, religion, rites and rituals; daily life including work, ethnic foods, the role of women
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5 More Tips to Hone Your Skills

Hallo alle zusammen! Or, in English, hello everyone! If you read my June column, you will remember that we discussed my first five tips and tricks for deciphering German handwriting. Today, as promised, I will be giving you the next five. Happy transcribing!



Katherine Schober

6. **Master the tiny details of the letters.** In the June issue, I discussed the minute differences between "e", "n" and "m". Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately, for those of you who like a challenge!), these aren't the only letters in *Kurrentschrift* that look almost the same. Other examples include:

- **"N" and "St"** - These two letters are very similar and are often difficult for even a professional to tell apart. If you look closely, however, you can see that the bottoms of the two letters are (or should be) different. The "N" finishes with a stroke up to the right, while the "St" finishes with the crossing of the "t" itself. However, in actual documents, this can still be difficult.

The 1920s example of "St" in Stunde (hour) at the top of the next page also finishes with a stroke to the right and thus even more strongly resembles an N. Here, however, you can differentiate it from an "N" in the fact that the "t" is (slightly) crossed, as opposed to the "N" in "Nachmittag" (afternoon) below.



- **"B", "C" and "L"** - If you look at the three capital letters below, you might be a little alarmed. They are incredibly similar. However, if you know the clues to look for, you will be able to tell them apart. The "C" (middle) is easy to differentiate from the other two letters as there is no loop at the top. Just a simple stroke with a little downward hook at the top right. As for the "B" (left) and the "L" (right), the "B" is different in that it finishes with a small horizontal line towards the right, much like our lowercase cursive "b" today. Notice this line in the left word "Brief" (letter) compared to the rather fluid finish of the "L" on the right in the word "Liebe" (dear, love). "C" is not a very common letter in German, and is often only found in names, such as "Christian."

- **"v" and "w"** - These lowercase letters look similar, but are actually quite easy to tell apart. While they both have the loop on the right, the "v" only has one stroke before the loop, while the "w" has two. Below, "v" is on the left, with a real-life example of the word "vielen" (many). The "w" is in center, followed by an example of the word "wird" (will). Finally, the last column shows both letters in the words "verkauft werden" (will be sold). Notice how the "w" has one more stroke before the loop than the "v" in this sample from an 1868 letter.

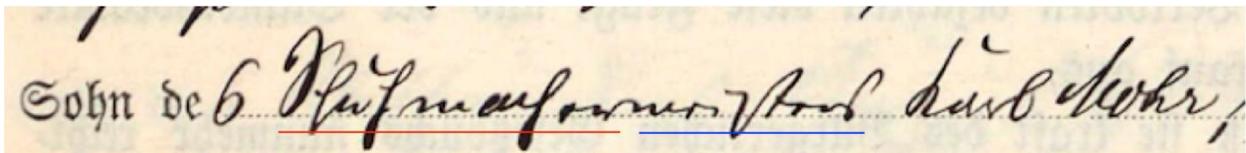


7. **Forget all you know about writing rules.** Punctuation? Who needs it? Writing one word on one line? Not for our ancestors! Many historical writers simply did not use periods or commas in their writing. While this usually doesn't make handwriting transcription too difficult in itself, the lack of line rules does. What do I mean by that? In a letter or document, a word may start on one line, and then, without a dash or any type of punctuation, simply continue onto the next line. So if the letters at the end of the line do not seem to be forming any type of word, remember to look to the next line to see if the word continues there.
8. **Understand the importance of occupations.** Just as one of our first questions for a new acquaintance is "What do you do?", our ancestors also placed a great deal of importance on occupations. Therefore, on any vital record certificate, the occupation of a person was usually listed before the person's name. For example, a certificate may read that "**the farmer Johann Schmidt** appeared before the undersigned registrar", with farmer ("Bauer") preceding the name of the person involved. (In church records, the occupation is often seen after the name as well).

The level of one's occupation was also important. Occupation levels included:

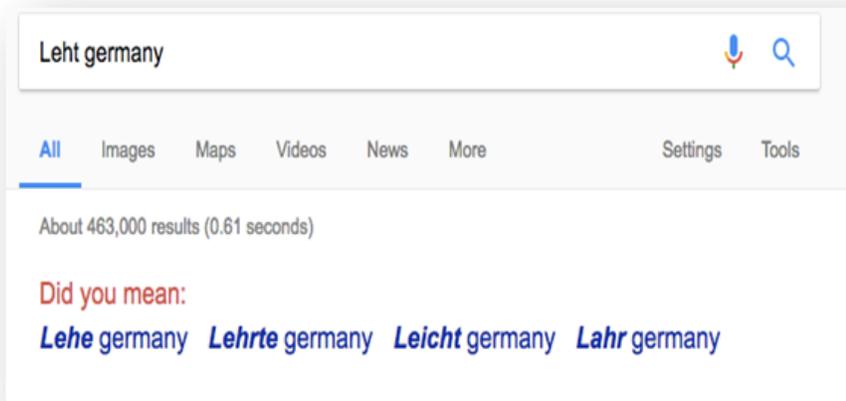
- "**Lehrling**" - apprentice
- "**Geselle**" - journeyman (apprenticeship complete)
- "**Meister**" - master

These levels, if listed, always follow the name of the occupation. For example, "**Schuhmachermeister**" is a person who is a master shoemaker. In the image below, we can see that this was Karl Mohr's occupation, with the word "meister" listed directly after the occupation "Schuhmacher" (Note: The word "Meister" is followed by an "s" in this example to denote a specific grammatical case in German (genitive – possessive)).



Son of the Master Shoemaker, Karl Mohr

9. **Google, google, google.** I can't imagine transcribing without Google's search engine. With the possibility of old fashioned words in historical documents, you may not recognize every word you come across. If you aren't exactly sure of your transcription, try typing variations of the word into Google search to see if the word exists in German and if this word make sense within your document. Google's "Did you mean..." function is also very helpful. For instance, in the example below, I thought the handwritten city I was transcribing was "Leht". I then typed it into Google to make sure this city actually existed, and sure enough, it did not. Google, however, kindly offered me other suggestions with its "Did you mean" tool, and after rechecking the handwritten word and the region the document came from, I was able to deduce that the city was indeed "Lehrte," Google's second suggestion for me.



10. **Always let the document be your guide.** This final tip may be the most important - everyone's handwriting is different, and a certain letter from an 1890 birth certificate may look completely different from the same letter in a World War II military record. If you are able to identify a letter in your current document, remember it, and then look for other occurrences of the same letter throughout the text.

I recently translated a letter in which the "s" looked like our modern "r". Once I finally realized this was an "s" based on my hangman type game (see June article – use the website Wordmine.info to help you fill in the blanks in your word), I was able to easily identify other "s's" in the document and therefore many other words. If you think it will help you, write out an alphabet key for your particular author's handwriting – it may take a few minutes to make, but in the end, it will make your work go much faster. Best of luck, and most importantly, have fun!

Schober is the author of the newly released book, *Tips and Tricks of Deciphering German Handwriting*. Her business is SK Translations, found on the web at www.SKTranslations.com

AUSWANDERER ZUSAMMEN

IMMIGRANT CONNECTIONS

Don't Forget the FAN Club

The majority of my research is conducted with families from several villages in the southwestern Pfalz area of Germany. These families immigrated to America in the mid-1800s. Given the focused nature of the research, I identify immigrants born in Germany and try to discover where they lived in the United States. While this approach is the reverse of how many genealogists search for European origins, the techniques and tools used are generally identical.

Based on research by a German colleague, I tried to find the family of Adam Bauer, born 1845 in Herschberg to Adam Bauer and Julianna Oster. He apparently left Germany to avoid military service. Many church records from this area are indexed at FamilySearch.org. (The church records of Herschberg are available on Archion (Zentralarchiv der evangelischen Kirche der Pfalz, Pirmasens, Herschberg) at <https://www.archion.de/>. My transcription of the Herschberg church records (1755-1839) is available from FamilySearch.org at <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/1246419>) I used that site to search for children of this couple. They had four children baptized in Herschberg between 1845 and 1858. Adam was the oldest.

Next, using Ancestry.com, I searched for the family in passenger lists. It was relatively easy to find Adam Bauer who arrived 24 September 1860 in New York on the ship Caroline Tucker. With him were his wife, Julie and their children Adam, Elise (Elisabeth), Jacques (Jacob), and Charles (Karl). The names and ages matched those in the baptism records.

Knowing for certain when the family arrived in the United States, I next used Ancestry to search for census and other records to find where they settled. That was a bit more challenging, as Adam Bauer is a common German name. However, using details such as ages and family names, I was not able to find them in the 1870 U.S. Census, but I discovered them living in Cincinnati, Ohio in the 1880 census. The family consisted of Adam and Julia with their youngest son Charles. Julia died in Cincinnati in 1888 and Adam in

1902. Their sons Jacob and Charles married and remained there. I could not determine whether Elisabeth died young or married after their arrival. Their son Adam married in Cincinnati and then moved to Kansas City, Missouri by 1880, to Oklahoma by 1910, and finally to Santa Clara, California, where he and his wife died.

You may be aware of the commonly used phrase “FAN club” in genealogy. The phrase is used to remind us to search not just for our ancestors, but also for their Friends, Associates, and Neighbors. Frequently, by taking the effort to research these additional people, we can discover more information about our ancestors. In the process, we can begin to construct larger family groups and round out the story of their lives.



Bob Greiner

Adam Bauer, (1819 – 1902)
+Julianna Oster, (1821 - 1888)
— Adam Bauer, (1845 – 1920)
— +Barbara Peter, (1850 – 1924)
— Elisabetha Bauer, (1848 - ?)
— Jacob Bauer, (1856 – 1939)
— +Elizabeth Eckert, (1864 – 1928)
— Karl Bauer, (1858 – 1912)
— +Johanna Josephine Buckley, (1857 – 1912)

As I looked again at the Caroline Tucker passenger list, I noticed that just following the Bauer family was the family of Adam and Ottilia Fischer. Both families were from Bavaria (recall that during the 1800s the Pfalz was administratively a part of Bavaria), while adjoining families were from other German states. Although Fischer is another common German surname, it is also seen frequently in Herschberg records.

I went back to the Herschberg church book to look for evidence of Adam and Ottilia Fischer. I quickly found an 1855 marriage for Adam Fischer and Ottilia Bossert. A son Adam was born in 1854 (before their marriage) and Jacob in 1857. Those same children were also on the passenger list. The evidence was fairly conclusive that this was the correct family. The fact that they emigrated with others of the same village further strengthens the argument. Being aware of associated families enabled me to discover another set of emigrants from Herschberg.

It should be no surprise that the Fischer family also settled in Cincinnati. The census records from 1870 and later show that the Fischers had two more daughters after they arrived – Louisa and Amalie. All their children married and remained in the Cincinnati area. One other surprise remained, however.



New York, Passenger Lists, 1820-1957 for Adam Bauer

Roll > M237, 1820-1897 > Roll 205

No.	Name	Age	Sex	Origin
8	Dorothea	23	f	
9	Mathias	24	m	
100	Clara	25	f	
1	Wilhelm	10	m	
2	Bauer Adam	20		Bavaria
3	Julie	20	f	
4	Adam	11	m	
5	Elisa	9	f	
6	Jacques	8	m	
7	Charles	10	m	
8	Fischer Adam	20		
9	Ottilie	23	f	
140	Adam	6	m	
1	Jacques	27	m	
2	Burhard Joseph	25		Wuerttemberg
3	Maier Leonhard	19		

Figure 1- Bauer and Fischer passenger list, New York, 24 September 1860, Ship Caroline Tucker

In 1882 Louisa Fischer married Adam Weber in Cincinnati. They had several children and remained in Cincinnati, where they both died. Weber is another common name in Herschberg. Adam's 1925 Ohio death certificate (from FamilySearch) indicated that he was born 15 December 1859. A check of the Herschberg church records showed a child Adam born to Adam Weber and Philippina Jacob on that exact date. Adam arrived in 1882 at age 23 without his parents. Here was another immigrant from Herschberg! In fact, Philippina was a sister of Otilia Bossert, so Adam and Louisa were first cousins. Do you see how the *FAN club* works?

One more point should be made. While the tie between the families in Cincinnati with their origin in Herschberg seems strong, it is always good to look for more validation. Adam Weber's birth date is such an example. Along with the other relationships, it strongly supports the fact that the Adam Weber found in Cincinnati was born in Herschberg.

What about the other families? Jacob Bauer's Ohio death certificate listed his birth date as 11 January 1856. That is the same date recorded at his baptism in Herschberg. His brother Charles (Karl) was born on 5 January 1858. The date recorded on his death certificate was 6 January 1857. That is an acceptable margin of error, given that many people of that era did not concern themselves about their exact birthday. These

Adam Weber	
+ Philippina Jacob, m. 1850	
—	Philippina Weber, (1851 – 1856)
—	Karl Weber, (1853 - ?)
—	Elisabetha Weber, (1856 - 1858)
—	Anna Maria Weber, (1858 - ?)
—	Adam Weber, (1859 – 1925)
—	+Louisa Fischer, (1862 – 1913)
—	Friedrich Weber, (1862 - ?)
—	Louisa Weber 16 Feb 1864, (1864 - ?)
—	Emma Weber, (1867 - ?)

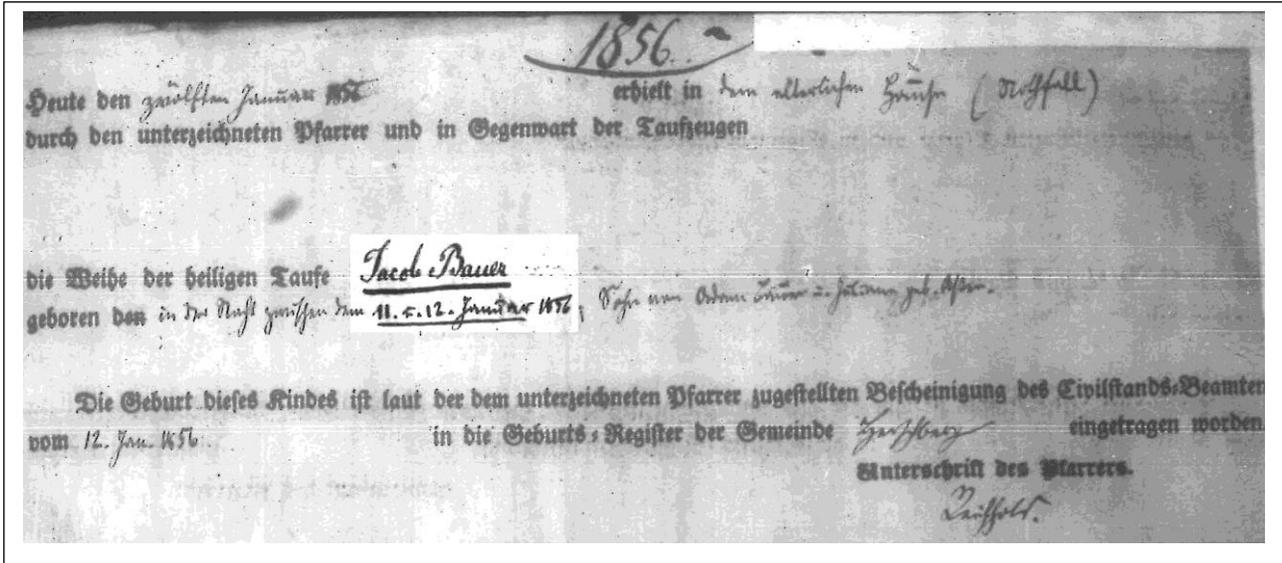


Figure 2- Baptism record of Jacob Bauer, b. 11 January 1856, Herschberg, Germany

additional facts establish with certainty that I identified the correct Bauer family in Cincinnati.

Proof for the Fischer family was not as easy to find. The parents – Adam and Otilia – died before 1912, when the issuance of death certificates in Ohio began. Birth and death records for Cincinnati for the period 1865 – 1912 are available online from the University of Cincinnati (See the website at <https://drc.libraries.uc.edu/handle/2374.UC/2032>). Information typed on 3x5 cards includes name, age, date of death, residence, and more. However, an exact birth date is generally not given. A card was found for both Otilia (d. 1897) and Adam (d. 1897). Thus, these cards could not be used to verify their exact date of birth.

No death record was found for their son Jacob, who died in 1898. However, I discovered another fruitful source. A search of the FindAGrave website for Cincinnati revealed an entry for Jacob Fischer (1858 – 1898). He was buried in Spring Grove Cemetery. The cemetery website allows you to search its burial records (The Spring Grove Cemetery search page is at <http://www.springgrove.org/geneology-search.aspx>). A search for Jacob Fisher (not Fischer) yielded a typed 3x5 card with a bit more information than the Cincinnati death records contained.

Jacob's birth date was recorded as 3 May 1858 on the cemetery record. His birth date recorded in the Herschberg church book was 5 May 1857. As before, this is close enough to prove with a high degree of certainty that Jacob Fischer of Cincinnati was the same person who was born in Herschberg. The additional facts discovered and family relationships make this assumption even more certain.

These examples were meant to demonstrate two points. First is the value of researching beyond just your own direct ancestors to siblings as well as friends, associates, and neighbors. By doing that, I discovered two additional immigrant families besides the one I began researching.

Second, when attempting to tie ancestors to their ancestral home, it is important to find some fact to make that connection irrefutable. That can be difficult sometimes. Often just the similarity of names and approximate ages is the best we can do. But if you can find the name of an ancestral village in United States records, or a precise birth date to match a German church record, then you have a more substantial proof of the family connection.

RECEIVED
DIVISION OF VITAL STATISTICS
CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

1. PLACE OF DEATH
 County: *Cincinnati* Registration District No. *198* File No. *64073*
 Township: *Loveland O.* Primary Registration District No. *2192* Registered No.
 or Village: No. St. Ward
 or City of: (If death occurred in a hospital or institution, give its NAME instead of street and number)

Length of residence in city or town where death occurred: yrs. mos. ds. How long in U. S., if of foreign birth? yrs. mos. ds.
 2. FULL NAME: *Jacob Bauer* Did Decedent Serve in U. S. Navy or Army?
 (a) Residence No. (Usual place of abode) St. Ward. (If nonresident give city or town and State)

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS				MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH	
1. SEX: <i>Male</i>	4. COLOR: <i>White</i>	3. SINGLE, MARRIED, Write the word Widowed or Divorced: <i>Widower</i>		21. DATE OF DEATH (month, day, and year): <i>Nov 4 1939</i>	
5a. If Married, Widowed or Divorced, Husband of (or) Wife of: <i>Elizabeth Ecker</i>				22. I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from <i>June 20 1939</i> to <i>Nov 4 1939</i> . I last saw him alive on <i>Nov 27 1939</i> death is said to have occurred on the date stated above at <i>739</i> .	
6. DATE OF BIRTH (month, day, and year): <i>Nov 15-1856</i>				The PRINCIPAL CAUSE OF DEATH and related causes of importance in order of onset were as follows: <i>Senile myocarditis</i>	
7. AGE (years) Months Days: <i>83 9 9</i> If LESS than 1 day, hrs. or min.				Date of onset	
8. Trade, profession, or particular kind of work done, as spinner, sawyer, bookkeeper, etc.: <i>Retired - Sawyer</i>				93	
9. Industry or business in which work was done, as silk mill, saw mill, bank, etc.: <i>X.V.V.</i>				CONTRIBUTORY CAUSES of importance not related to principal cause:	
10. Date deceased last worked at this occupation (month and year):				11. Total time (years) spent in this occupation:	
12. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or country): <i>Germany</i>					
13. NAME: <i>Adam Bauer</i>					

Figure 3- Death certificate of Adam Bauer, d. 4 November 1939, Loveland, Ohio

Journal reports for these families are available on the MAGS website at this URL:

- [https://magsgen.com/upload/files/German Family Connections/Adam Bauer family.pdf](https://magsgen.com/upload/files/German_Family_Connections/Adam_Bauer_family.pdf)
- [https://magsgen.com/upload/files/German Family Connections/Adam Fischer family.pdf](https://magsgen.com/upload/files/German_Family_Connections/Adam_Fischer_family.pdf)
- [https://magsgen.com/upload/files/German Family Connections/Adam Weber family.pdf](https://magsgen.com/upload/files/German_Family_Connections/Adam_Weber_family.pdf)

Ethnicity, Admixture

More Sizzle Than Steak

Certainly, the most popular aspect of DNA testing is the ethnicity piece provided by the testing companies. This is driven by the prevailing company advertisements, as well as individuals' search for cultural roots. But much of this hype is misleading, inconsistent, and perhaps offensive (would you ever give up your lederhosen?). It is the least reliable information gleaned from a person's DNA results. It is important to understand the strengths and weaknesses of these predictions to appreciate what they can reveal about our ancestor origins.

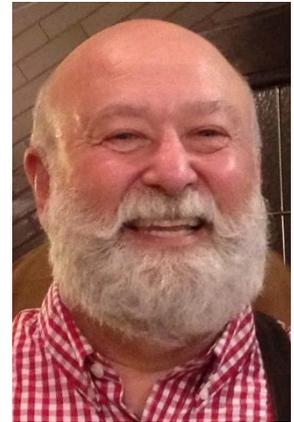
This article is about the ethnicity predictions from the autosomal DNA (atDNA) tests, not the haplogroup origins that come from Y-DNA and mitochondrial DNA. Haplogroups reveal deep ancestry, thousands of years old. Based on the allele mutations that form each branch of the human tree, they are the record of our ancient ancestors' migration route out of Africa and across the globe. But they represent only a single patrilineal or matrilineal line, about 1% of our total genome. Instead, this article discusses the DNA contributions of more recent ancestors passed in the autosomal chromosomes from multiple ancestral lines.

Every test company offers autosomal testing and provides your ethnicity and admixture predictions based on the results. Predictions vary based on different company's reference population models, algorithms, thresholds, and methodologies. There is not even consensus about the meaning of the terms ethnicity and admixture. Ethnicity is sometimes confused with race. "Although race and ethnicity are related, race refers to a person's physical appearance, such as skin color and eye color. Ethnicity, on the other hand, refers to communality in cultural heritage, language, social practice, traditions, and geopolitical factors. Genetic ancestry inferred using ancestry informative markers (AIMs) is based on genetic/genomic data."

(From: <https://humgenomics.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40246-014-0023-x#Sec3>)

The term "biogeographical" is also used by scientists to define ancestral origins; being more definitive but a mouthful to say repeatedly. Despite these differences, we'll use ethnicity to mean the geographical/political/cultural pedigrees and admixture as the various fractional portions that make up the whole.

Autosomal DNA comes from the other 22 pairs of chromosomes, which excludes the sex chromosomes Y- and X-DNA. These autosomes carry your genetic traits, equally contributed from each parent. The remarkable thing is the recombination of their DNA into a new and unique recipe in us. DNA may follow the general rule of average half-lives where each generation's DNA contribution is halved again and again going backwards in time. But more likely each ancestor's DNA segments begin to recombine randomly into smaller segments reducing earlier ancestors' impact on your genome. So, a parent's input is 50%, a grandparent's subset is on average 25%, a great-grandparent's is 12.5% and so on. But what begins to happen is that some ancestors' segments



Andrew Hochreiter

may “stick” together better and get passed along while others get reduced or replaced. That, of course, is why a sibling’s results may not resemble yours – both of you inherited various segments from each parent, and perhaps very different segments from each grandparent. Full siblings can share between 32% and 50% in matching DNA. But remember that you can only inherit what DNA segments your parents had. If they didn’t inherit a certain segment from their parents, it will not magically reappear in your genome.

This is one of the principles that governs the effectiveness of both cousin-matching and ethnicity predictions. It is because of this rule of “diminishing returns” that atDNA is limited in finding relatives greater than fifth or sixth cousins. The DNA segments from an earlier common ancestor become smaller and smaller or even eliminated, so that a reliable match cannot be made. A person’s ethnicity and admixture are based on the same characteristics. In other words, your Cherokee ancestor from seven generations ago (~175 years) may not show in your ethnicity predictions because his or her DNA segments did not pass down.

In addition to the biological laws of DNA, ethnicity and admixture estimates are affected by the testing companies’ methodologies. This includes three factors:

- How the company analyzes the data in different ways (algorithms)
- What different pools the company uses for its analysis (reference populations)
- How the company sets its own criteria for determining ethnicity (thresholds)

Each company maintains a database of reference populations that your results are compared to for ethnicity markers. Some populations are drawn from public sources, such as the Human Genome Diversity Project. Another method is by inference. The large participant databases at Ancestry and 23andMe allow these companies to produce proprietary models. This process uses the members’ pedigree charts to infer common location for 4 grandparents concluding that individual’s DNA as “native” to that location. Ancestry used 3000 samples for 26 geographic locations in their new ethnicity predictions. Each company displays the regional and sub-regional areas that their estimates are drawn from. Using these, you can see how each company carves up the world and why differences are created between their estimates. Imprecisions occur when sample population numbers are low such as the Pacific Islands.

Company algorithms and thresholds also affect ethnicity and admixture predictions. Companies collect different markers for their analysis. For example, 23andMe concentrates on medically significant markers but Family Tree DNA avoids them. AncestryDNA, MyHeritage and Family Tree DNA use what may be called a holistic approach, while 23andMe analyzes DNA segment-by-segment. The holistic method means that the company looks at the entire DNA result and then breaks it down into ancestral components, similar to reverse engineering a recipe into ingredients. 23andMe separates DNA into 100 marker segments and compares them to reference populations to determine what populations that segment is most likely from. Therefore, 23andMe can offer the chromosome painter for Ancestry Composition that shows ethnic origins. Cutoff thresholds also vary so a 7 centimorgan segment associated with Irish heritage may be ignored by one company but reported by another, which can lead to the question “Where’s my Irish ancestry?” AncestryDNA uses a tool called *Timber* to filter out short segments of shared DNA that may be false positives. Using a filter like *Timber* leads to finding shared DNA that is more likely from recent common ancestors. But it also may eliminate ancestral markers from earlier ancestors and ethnic lines. AncestryDNA and 23andMe have white papers that explain their methodologies:

AncestryDNA: <http://www.ancestry.com/cs/dna-help/ethnicity/whitepaper>

23andMe: https://www.23andme.com/ancestry_composition_guide/

Ethnicity estimates are generally reliable at the global regional level. But they become more unreliable at the sub-regional levels. Companies are getting more specific with their predictions based on additional studies. Sometimes results are unexpected even at continent level. These are from ancient population mixing and migrations, not recent admixture. For example, the Celts, from Germanic areas of Europe also settled in the British Isles. The Huns of Asia invaded and settled in areas of Germany and eastern Europe, which present incongruous results. Ethnicity tests are unreliable in consistently detecting minority admixture, generally less than 5%. A problematic population is Native Americans, where most data is from Canada and South America. But at one time, this population was only predicted Asian based on their ancient origins! Challenging areas of Europe include past admixing of Scandinavians with other Northern European populations and the changing borders of France and Germany.

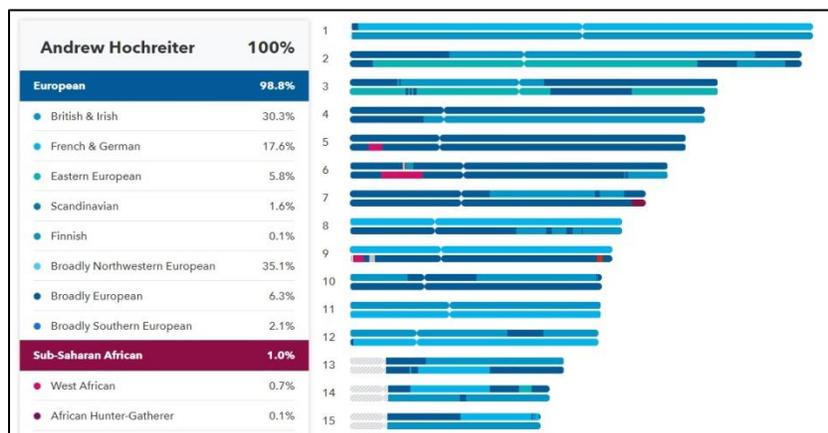
Here is a comparison of my own ethnicity estimates from four companies. My father’s line came from Germany and my mother’s line was from England. This heritage provides a fairly clean separation of the two lines but because of historical admixture and company reference differences, the categories become increasingly unclear at the sub-regional levels.

AncestryDNA		Family DNA	Tree	23andMe		MyHeritage	
Europe West	49%	West Central Europe	80%	British & Irish	30.3%	North & West Europe	65.6%
Great Britain	18%	SE Europe	14%	French & German	17.6%	Finnish	1.8%
Finland/NW Russia	7%	East Central Africa	<1%	Eastern European	5.8%	Iberian	17.4%
Iberian	7%	Finland	<1%	Scandinavian	1.6%	Balkan	15.2%
Europe East	4%	Iberia	<1%	Finnish	0.1%		
Europe South	4%	British Isles	<2%	Broadly NW Europe	35.1%		
Scandinavia	4%	North Africa	<2%	Broadly South Europe	2.1%		
Ireland/Scotland/Wales	2%	South Central Africa	<1%	Broadly European	6.3%		
Africa North	3%			West African	0.7%		
European Jewish	<1%			Africa hunter-gather	0.1%		
Caucasus	<1%			Broadly Sub-Saharan	0.2%		
				East Asian Native Am	0.1%		

Testing Companies’ Ethnicity Estimates

Some companies have more sub-regional divisions than the others. AncestryDNA's "Genetic Communities" is now replaced by their Migrations categories. Based on research from two million customers, AncestryDNA identified historic migration patterns of geographic-based genetic networks. MyHeritage now provides a Balkan component and Family Tree DNA has Sephardic Jewish predictions.

So how can ethnicity estimates be evaluated and used in genealogy? One method is to assign an ancestral line to the admixture percentage, contingent that a specific ancestral origin originates from a single ancestral line. The average atDNA inheritance from each great grandparent is 12.5%, 6.25% from each 2nd great grandparent, 3.125% from each 3rd great grandparent, and so on. So, a prediction of 7% Eastern European would lead you to look for that Polish, Slovakian, or other Eastern European second great grandparent. The chromosome view at 23andMe is especially valuable when your parents are ethnically distinct. I can tell at a glance which side is maternal (distinguished by British ancestry) and which is paternal (Continental European ancestry, mostly German). Large portions of single ancestral origins indicate more recent heritage and smaller portions indicate more distant ancestry. An estimate of the generations to the ancestor with this singular ancestry is possible. The chromosome tool is useful to analyze the origins of the X chromosome for a male on his maternal ancestry. It can also help to determine if minority admixture comes from one side of the pedigree or both.



23and Me Ancestry Composition Chromosome Painting

So a word of caution is required about assigning too much confidence to ethnicity estimates. They should only be considered "estimates." But certain aspects can be useful clues to the origins of more recent ancestors.

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.

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DER KALENDER

THE CALENDAR

2018

Sept. 13-15. New York State Family History Conference, Tarrytown, NY, sponsored by the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society. The 2018 conference features two-and-a-half days of lectures, workshops, and field trips, as well as a vibrant exhibit hall. More info: <http://www.nysfhc.org/>

Sept. 22. "Researching Pennsylvania Germans, presented by South Central Pennsylvania Genealogical Society and York County History Center, York, PA, With keynote speaker June Burk Lloyd presenting "The Pennsylvania German World of Lewis Miller." Other speakers include: Jonathan Stayer, Jerry Smith, Richard Konkell and James M. Beidler. More info: <http://www.scpqs.org>

Oct. 5-6. "Searching for Your Ancestors in the Hills of Virginia," Virginia Genealogical Society. Friday: Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia, 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Library staff and experienced researchers will be available to answer questions concerning the Library's collections and their use. Saturday: The Inn at Darden, 100 Darden Blvd., Charlottesville, VA, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tracks: "Virginia Gems" presented by Barbara Vines Little, and "German Settlers and Migration Routes" with Dorothy Boyd-Bragg and Ashley Abruzzo. More info: <https://www.vgs.org/conferences>

Oct. 12-13. MAGS Workshop and Conference, DoubleTree by Hilton, Lancaster, PA. Saturday conference theme: "Mid-Atlantic History and Resources" with speakers Nicholas Fessenden ("History of Baltimore Immigration") and Debra A. Hoffman ("Sister Ports: Philadelphia &

Baltimore," "Columbia Institution: Its History & Records" and "History & Records of the German Aid Societies (NY, PA, MD, SC)") Friday workshop: "Analyzing Documents: A Hands-on Workshop" with Angela Packer McGhie, CG. More info: www.magsgen.com/

Oct. 27. Ohio Chapter Palatines to America Fall Seminar, Der Dutchman Restaurant, 445 Jefferson Ave., U.S. Route 42, Plain City, Ohio. Theme: "Coming to America: Where, How and Why They Came" presented by D. Wolfgang Grams, from Oldenburg, Germany. With talks: "Where Did They Come From?"; "Ohio's Immigrants And Their German Homelands, 'Hurra Wir Fahren Nach Amerika!' "; "Travel Patterns During The Age Of Sail"; "The Pursuit Of Happiness: Faith, Land, And Hope"; "German Resources To Trace Your Roots" Online registration: <https://oh-palam.org/registernow.php> or: make check payable to Ohio Chaptel – Palam and mail to: Joe Stamm, 3930 Lander Road, Chagrin Falls, OH 44022-1329, questions? lindabelle@lcs.net

Oct. 27. Fairfax (VA) Genealogical Society Fall Fair, Dunn Loring Volunteer Fire Station Hall, 2148 Gallows Road, Vienna, VA. Speaker: James M. Beidler with three presentations on "Genealogy in the Digital Age," including "By the Book: Digital Databases Bringing Libraries to Your Desktop," "An 'Average' Ancestor Seen Through Newspapers," and "Headlines to Bylines: Using ALL the Newspaper in Your Genealogy. More info: <https://fxqs.org/>

2019

March 28-30. Lancaster Family History Conference, sponsor: Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society. Vendors, speakers, trips. More info: <https://www.lmhs.org/>

May 1-4. Ohio Genealogical Society, Great Wolf Lodge in Mason, Ohio. "Building a Heritage." Speakers, vendors, workshops. More info: <http://www.ogsconference.org/>

May 8-11. National Genealogical Society, "Journey to Discovery," family history conference, St. Charles, MO. More info: <https://conference.ngsgenealogy.org/>

May 30-June 2. Southern California Genealogical Society's 50th Annual Jamboree, Burbank, CA. Including: SCGS Genetic Genealogy Conference and Family History Writer's Conference, DNA Workshops, presentations, exhibits. More info: <http://www.genealogyjamboree.com/>

June 15-17. International German Genealogy Conference, Sacramento, CA, second-ever biennial conference being sponsored by the International German Genealogy Partnership (coordinated by Partner groups) with theme of "Strike It Rich: with Connections 2 Discoveries." Headlining presenters will include Fritz Juengling, Michael Lacopo and Roger P. Minert. There will be an exhibit hall and many special events. Registration expected to open Nov. 1, 2018. More info: <https://iggpartner.org/cpage.php?pt=73>

Aug. 21-24. Federation of Genealogical Societies, Annual Conference, Washington, DC. More info: <https://fgs.or>

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.

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(*Bohlsen*)

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(*Trimbur, Oswald, Goebel, Woolensack*)

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JOHN WOLF of FORT MYERS, FL
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Corinne Earnest, ed.	\$13.50 / \$15.00	Mary E. Wuest	\$9.00 / \$14.00
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