

# Der Kurier

VOLUME 37, NUMBER 3 / SEPTEMBER 2019

**Taking it to the street (or subway):** Professor Roger Minert describes his study of the abilities of modern Austrians and Germans to read the old script of the German language (**Page 85**) and Katherine Schober illustrates the valiance of its vowels (**Page 98**).



**Hallo aus München:** MAGS President Dr. Ken Heger details the copious and insightful records created by the American consulate in Munich (*München*) that are currently held at the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, MD. **Page 111.**

## ABTEILUNGEN

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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**

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](mailto:newsletter@magsgen.com)

**VOM HERAUSGEBER****FROM THE EDITOR**

## For Everything There Is A Season

**T**here's a sense of nostalgia beginning to kick in for me as the transition continues this year that will conclude with my *Der Kurier* role changing to Editor Emeritus and Sean Kessler becoming the Editor of this publication. Truth be known, this issue has been a teeter-totter point with Sean doing considerably more work than I did!



**James M. Beidler**

I talk about a sense of nostalgia because, in a story I've repeated a number of times, *Der Kurier* was my first contract when I left full-time, year-round employment in 2003. I had no idea then that the gig would last 16 years and that I'd have the opportunity to double the size of the publication during my tenure.

I recall that it began with a phone call from John T. Humphrey, then the MAGS President, saying that the board had voted to seek a paid Editor for *Der Kurier*, and did I have anyone I would recommend? I truthfully have no idea whether John was fishing to see whether I was interested, and much to my chagrin, John died 7 years ago, so there's no way to ask him now.

But I told him on the phone, throwing modesty out the door, that I was available and that he didn't need to make any further calls! I travelled to John's office the next week and we sealed the deal with a handshake.

Over the years, we've published a variety of articles, including some from heavyweights in the German genealogy field such as the late Corinne Earnest, Fritz Juengling, and Roger P. Minert (an article from the latter being in this very issue!).

A few times I've "called my own number" and written articles, getting the opportunity to put some of my own experiences into print, but the MAGS Board and other members have been exceedingly productive and never left me short of copy over the years.

We've transitioned to a digital-default model that's in full color (still with the option to receive a mailed black-and-white copy) and membership for the organization, as President Heger notes in his column, is on the rise!

As I opined at the board meeting this summer, MAGS was a "model society" at the International German Genealogy Conference in Sacramento in June.

And at the recent Federation of Genealogical Society Conference in Washington, DC, we again had a table in the exhibit hall and also sponsored a luncheon, at which I gave another nostalgic nod, this one to that selfsame late MAGS President John T. Humphrey who first hired me.

Since John has been gone now more than 5 years, he is eligible to be nominated for consideration for entry into the National Genealogy Hall of Fame. MAGS has committed to being the lead nominator and is seeking the support of other societies for this endeavor.

When John died at age 64, many of us felt a good life was cut far short. He was someone who always had a kind word for others. Selfishly, many of us believed that we'd have another 20 years to pick John's brain!

At the luncheon, for which I had the honor of being the speaker, I noted that, "For those of us who write, who lecture, and who research German genealogy, we all still walk in John's shadow. But it is a shadow with the warmth of sunshine."

## VOM PRÄSIDENT

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

## A Productive Quarter

**H**ere we are at the end of summer. I'm happy to say, your Society has kept up the pace it began at the start of the year and has been very productive. Our regular columnists provided informative articles helping you with German spelling, German grammar, how to understand DNA testing as a tool in your family research, and how to combine traditional research with online resources. MAGS excelled in providing you with new sources of records you might want to explore and added lengthy research guides to the MAGS website. Our focus to ensure that each issue of *Der Kurier* contains color images and color maps increased the journal's value and enhanced its look. MAGS increased its reputation as a go-to source for records documenting German-Americans, including those who were not permanent residents of the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States.



**Kenneth W. Heger**

None of this was lost on the attendees of the recent International Germanic Genealogical Partnership conference in Sacramento. MAGS members spoke to large audiences; I have it on good authority that those who attended MAGS sessions ranked your representatives among the best at the conference. Attendees stopped by the MAGS table in large numbers to learn more about the Society. Many of those people were so impressed that they joined MAGS; we gained over 30 new members. Those new members put us on the doorstep of reaching our goal of having 500 members. Help spread the word about MAGS.

We hope to build on this progress at the Federation of Genealogical Society's conference in Washington, DC. By the time you read this issue of *Der Kurier*, that conference will have taken place. Several MAGS members are lecturing; several MAGS members are speaking at more than one session. MAGS is also sponsoring a luncheon. FGS conference leaders told us prior to the conference that our luncheon was the most subscribed. Those facts will raise MAGS's profile, hopefully resulting in new members.

We are not resting on our laurels. We have great plans for 2020 to add significant content to the website and host exceptional speakers at our conferences. Keep your eyes open for the December issue of *Der Kurier*. It will include a list of projects the Society is working on and when they will be uploaded to the Society's website. Remember to keep your membership current to take advantage of these new products. If you are interested in helping MAGS with a special project, please contact a board member and let us know. We plan in the coming months to develop a list of projects so you will have a clearer idea of where your Society can use help.

Don't forget about our fall conference. Carol Carman and Jackie Curro found us a great hotel in the eastern panhandle of West Virginia. They tell us the property is lovely and there's a nice breakfast included with the room for those of you who stay overnight. If you've not already signed up for the workshop and conference, take a look at the MAGS website for additional information and consider attending.

Finally, by now you've all received a blast email about MAGS Board elections. It's that time again. Please read the email and when the email comes to prompt you to vote online, please do. We will announce the results at the fall conference. Enjoy this issue of *Der Kurier* and we hope to see you in Martinsburg, WV, at the fall conference.

## Pardon me, sir! Can you read this handwriting?

BY PROFESSOR ROGER P. MINERT, PH.D., A.G.

**D**uring presentations I have made on the topic of old German handwriting over nearly four decades, I have often been asked whether modern Germans and Austrians can read the alphabets officially called *Deutsche Schrift* in Germany and *Kurrent* in Austria. My standard answer reflects what I wrote in a book on that topic a dozen years ago, namely that I believed that less than one percent of adults in those countries could read the old handwriting (as shown in documents before 1900) proficiently.<sup>i</sup>

Being one who believes in a put-up-or-shut-up approach to such questions, I recently designed a method to test my theory. The opportunity presented itself when I learned that five of the students of my fall 2013 study abroad group in Vienna, Austria (sponsored by Brigham Young University), would have sufficient conversational skills to carry out a simple survey. I searched for a beautiful handwriting sample of unpredictable content to present to adults randomly selected at public venues in the capital city of Austria. My choice was a 1901 report written in excellent characters by a Catholic priest in the province of Upper Austria to his bishop in the city of Linz.<sup>ii</sup> The priest produced letters of such consistency and uniformity that I felt that our task of finding proficient readers would be simplified. The five students—Katie Adams, Rachel Epps, Kelsee Jackson, Mara Lemesany, and Klint Metcalf—had seen many original Austrian documents and agreed that the letter I selected featured very easy-to-read handwriting.<sup>iii</sup>

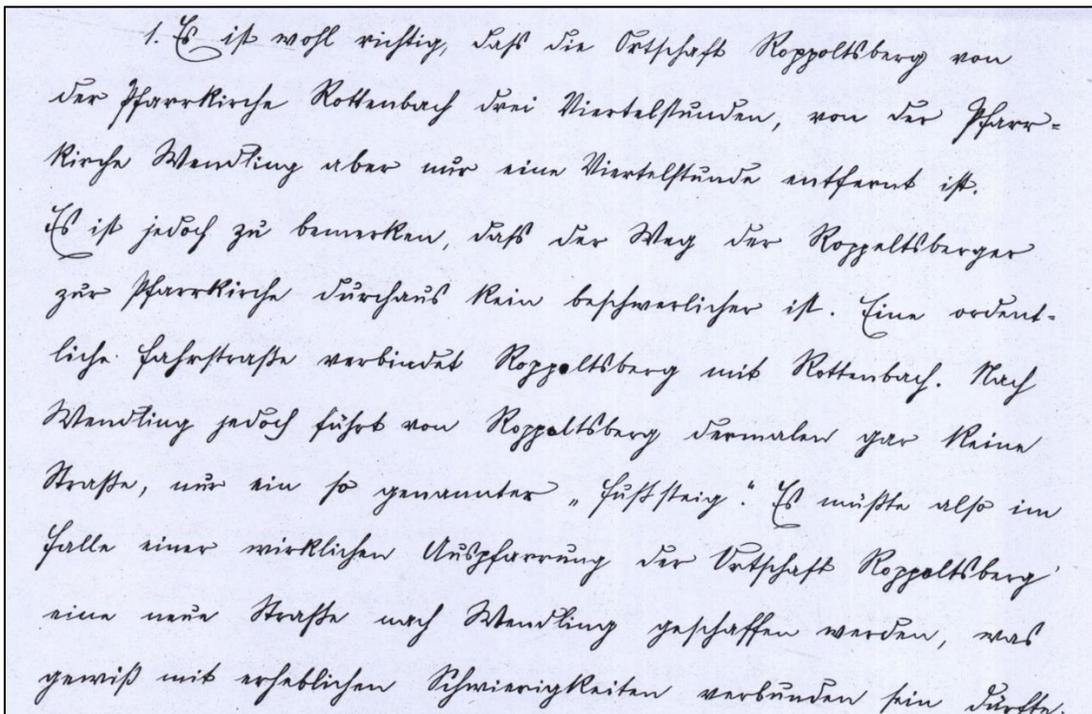


Figure 1 This text was used in the survey. The actual width was seven inches.

I had decided that one hundred interviewees would represent a minimal sampling of the population of native-born Austrians and Germans. To find those one hundred candidates, I decided to place my team at four different subway stations, with instructions to interview only Austrians and Germans and to look for persons apparently twenty years of age or older. Most of the Vienna subway stations are underground and there is little to see or hear (read: distractions) while one is waiting for the train. We decided to avoid approaching anybody if the digital readout indicated that the train would arrive in two minutes or less. The locations chosen were Friedensbrücke, Schwedenplatz, Karlsplatz, and Volkstheater. Approximately one-fourth of the interviews were held at each of those locations.

We attempted to distribute our questions evenly by gender and over generations, estimating the age of each interviewee within a ten-year range immediately after the interview. The following results were achieved:

Nationality	Gender	Age						Knew alphab. name	Tried to read text	
		20-30	31-40	in	51-60	Years	71-80			81+
Austria 91	F = 45 M = 46	8	6	11	14	8	1	0	28	F = 10 M = 12
Germany 9	F = 4 M = 5	11	3	10	13	8	6	2	32	F = 1 M = 2
Total 100	F = 49 M = 51	19	8	21	27	16	7	2	60	F = 11 M = 14
										25%

We anticipated speaking with a few Germans who might be in Vienna on business or as tourists and we did indeed learn that nine of our random subjects were German citizens. The nearly even distribution over gender in our sample was truly coincidental. There was also no attempt to seek out persons between the ages of forty and sixty, but nearly one-half of the interviewees were in that age range (as best as we could guess ages).

Slightly more men than women were able to identify the old handwriting as *Kurrent* or the *Deutsche Schrift*. All of them were Germans, and only a few Austrians had heard the term *Deutsche Schrift*. Of those interviewees who knew the name of the old alphabet, most of them indicated having seen it in public school. Several were taught the letters by a teacher bent on having them form their characters with precision (*Schönschreiben* = similar to calligraphy). Quite a few of those who could not name the alphabet at least recognized the handwriting as that used by their parents or grandparents.

Everybody who looked at the text for more than a few seconds or with apparent interest was asked to read whatever they could. Many who tried gave up in a moment when it turned out that they had overestimated their abilities. Several were able to read a bit and some remained at the task longer if they quickly recognized several words. The table below represents our attempt to classify readers by the degree of perceived accuracy in reading our test document:

Nationality	Gender	0-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%
Austria	F = 9		2	2		1	1	1	1	1	
	M = 12	3	3	3					1	1	1
Germany	M = 2					1					1
Total	23	3	5	5	0	2	1	1	2	2	2

Only two of the one hundred persons we interviewed were able to read the text with total or near-total accuracy—the best of them was a 76-year-old man from the province of Tyrol in western Austria. When asked to explain his expertise, he stated that he had learned the *Kurrent* alphabet (that he also identified as *Deutsche Schrift*) in school as a child. He was quite pleased to exhibit his skills and spoke with us for some time after the reading trial.



Figure 2 The survey team in Vienna (from left): Klint Metcalf, Kelsee Jackson, Katie Adams, Mara Lemesany, Rachel Epps, and Roger P. Minert (courtesy of Monika Ottehenning)

The second-best reader was a German man in his sixties. He too claimed some exposure to the alphabet in grade school, but also recalled reading for a number of years the letters his grandmother wrote him in the *Deutsche Schrift*.

Two more readers achieved scores of 90%—a woman in her sixties and a man aged 82. Both tried to blame their mistakes on small idiosyncrasies of the penman. It is also possible that those two readers would have scored higher if given another few minutes to study the entire text.

Among the one hundred persons randomly surveyed in Vienna, we found only two older adults who could read our simple text correctly. Only eight other persons were able to read at least one-half of the text—sometimes only syllables. Most of those eight would likely have failed a test employing a text from (for example) a church marriage book of the seventeenth century. None of the persons interviewed indicated that her/his expertise was gained through family history study or another academic pursuit outside the school environment.

If this unsophisticated study is any basis for prognostication, typical adult Austrians are not capable of reading church records written in what they call the *Kurrent* alphabet. In that country as well as in Germany, that alphabet was officially replaced by the Latin alphabet (beginning) in 1941—during the reign of one of the most notable Austrians of all time—Adolf Hitler.<sup>iv</sup>

My findings in this rudimentary survey are congruous with the opinion of script historian Karl Glad: “The unfortunate generation who were in school when the ominous ruling was made are hardly able to read Fraktur [typeset] now and are totally helpless when confronted by the Gothic script.”<sup>v</sup> He would have even less confidence in the Austrians and Germans who began school over the next seventy years.

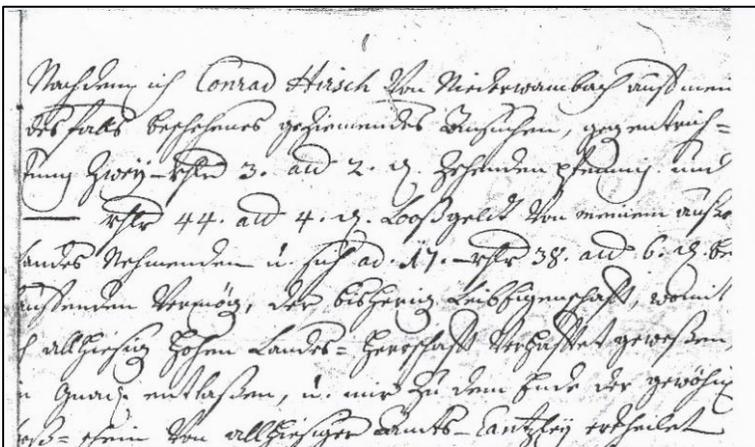


Figure 3 This contract was written in Niederwambach, Rhineland in 1740.

Although my long-time estimate seems to have been very reliable among this small sample, it is not impossible that the scores of the interviewees in the 70-90% categories would have been slightly higher if the test had been administered under laboratory conditions (i.e., with minimal ambient noise and additional time, with interviewees sitting at a table). In any case, the ability to read correctly old German documents is rare and those non-Germans who gain this ability have reason to feel very good about the achievement.

<sup>i</sup> Roger P. Minert, *Deciphering Handwriting in German Documents* (Woods Cross, UT: GRT Publications, 2001), 6.

<sup>ii</sup> Karl Schöffecker to Diocesan Office in Linz, April on April 16, 1901. Diözesanarchiv Linz, Pers-A/2, Sch.77, Fasz. S/102.

<sup>iii</sup> The text reads as follows: *1. Es ist wohl richtig, daß die Ortschaft Roppoltsberg [sic] von / der Pfarrkirche Rottenbach drei Viertelstunden, von der Pfarr= / kirche Wendling aber nur eine Viertelstunde entfernt ist. / Es is jedoch zu bemerken, daß der Weg der Roppoltsberger [sic] / zur Pfarrkirche durchaus kein beschwerlicher ist. Eine ordent= / liche Fahrstraße verbindet Roppoltsberg [sic] mit Rottenbach. Nach / Wendling jedoch führt von Roppoltsberg [sic] dermalen gar keine / Straße, nur ein so genannter „Fußsteig.“ Es müßte also im / Falle einer wirklichen Auspfarung der Ortschaft Roppoltsberg / eine neue Straße nach Wendling geschaffen werden, was / gewiß mit erheblichen Schwierigkeiten verbunden sein dürfte.*

<sup>iv</sup> *Der Grosse Duden* (Leipzig, Germany: Bibliographisches Institut, 1941), 4.

<sup>v</sup> Karl Glad, *Deutsche Schriftfibel* (Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck u. Verlagsanstalt, 1976), 15. Translation by the author.

# Walter von Bodecker's Journey to America

## Part 2

BY BOB GREINER

The first part of this article described Walter von Bodecker's ocean journey from Hamburg, Germany to Colon, Panama in 1902. He had graduated from an agricultural college, the German Colonial School in Witzenhausen, Germany, and was on his way to Finca Covadonga, an experimental farm in the mountains of southern Mexico. After he arrived, Walter sent a letter describing his amazing experiences to the director of the school, and it was published in the school newsletter – *Der Deutsche Kulturpionier*. The first half of his letter was published in the previous article, and we will now hear about the second half of his journey.

After arriving by train on the Pacific coast of Panama, Bodecker and his companions took a steamer up the coast toward Mexico. The ship probably stopped at several ports along the way, but Bodecker did not mention them. They finally disembarked at Champerico, Guatemala on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1902 and took a train to the town of Retalhuleu, about 24 miles inland. Their intent was to continue into southern Mexico by train.

From their hotel that evening they noticed dark clouds and a strange thunderstorm surrounding the mountain to the north of town. They awoke early on the morning of the 25<sup>th</sup> to find that they were in the midst of a volcanic eruption. The dormant Santa Maria volcano had suddenly awoken and soon pumice and ash began to fall. In an attempt to move on toward their destination, the travelers took a train to Caballo Blanco, but found worsening conditions there, so they returned to Retalhuleu.<sup>1</sup>

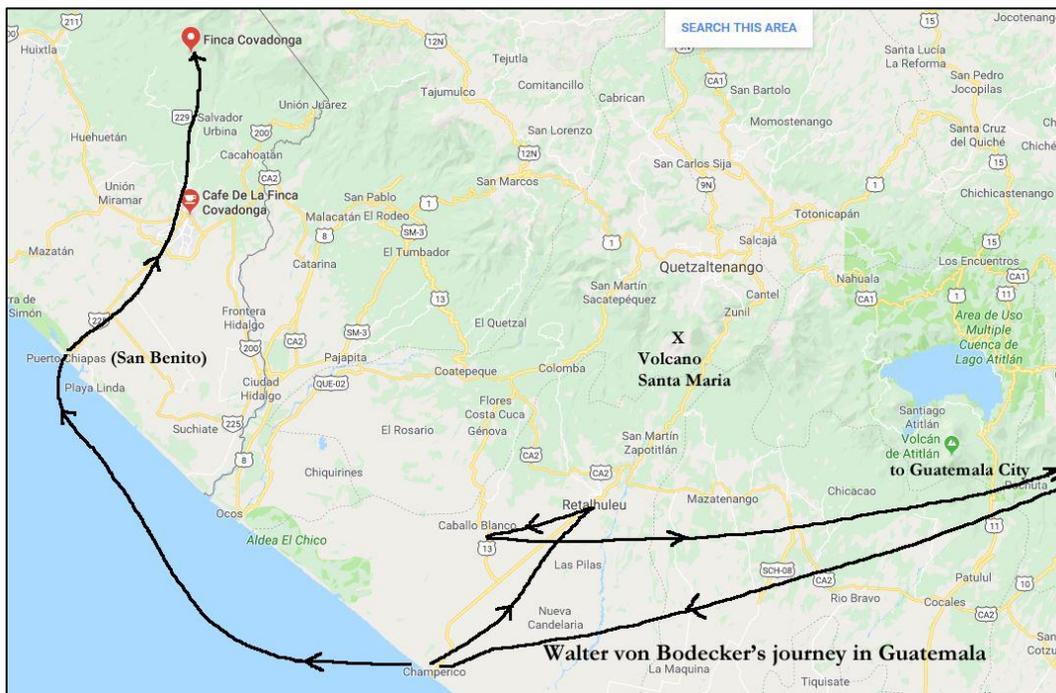


Figure 2- Map data (c) 2008 Google, INEGI

The following day the group again traveled to Caballo Blanco, where they stayed for the night. The ash fall was everywhere, covering land and water with a gray blanket. They attempted to continue their journey by mule, but found the roads to be impassible.

At this point Bodecker and his colleagues decided their best option would be to return to Champerico and await the next steamer to take them to a Mexican port. Since the ship was not scheduled to arrive for eight days and the coastal weather was unbearably hot, they decided to go to Guatemala City instead, which was not affected by the volcano.

After a week of sightseeing in the city, they finally left by ship from Champerico and were delivered to the Mexican port of San Benito. They arrived at Finca Covadonga on November 11<sup>th</sup> after a two-month journey. Three days later Walter von Bodecker began writing a letter to the director of the German Colonial School describing his journey from Germany.

Over the next few months Bodecker wrote several more letters to the director, which were published in the school newsletter. He described the experiments they were doing at the farm with artificial fertilizer. After observing the beneficial effect on the crops from the volcanic ash that fell in Mexico, he sent a sample of the ash to the school for analysis in their laboratory.

For the next three years Bodecker apparently worked hard on the Covadonga and neighboring farms. The biannual school newsletters continued to list his address as Finca Covadonga. The next reference to Walter von Bodecker was the winter issue of 1905-1906. It was his obituary.

Tragically, Walter died of dysentery surrounded by his comrades on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1905 – his 24<sup>th</sup> birthday. He was buried in the farm cemetery. Amazingly, his Mexican death certificate can be found on Ancestry.com.<sup>ii</sup> It correctly listed the date and place of his birth in Germany, as well as the names of his parents. His colleagues witnessed the document.

Finca Covadonga still exists today and can be found using a search for that name on Google Maps. It is a coffee plantation. Other fincas nearby have been converted to high-end resorts, with spas and first-class restaurants. Visitors can hike in the mountains, visit the coffee plantations, or just relax in the refreshing mountain air.<sup>iii</sup>

The letters below, as well as Bodecker's obituary, can be found in several issues of *Der Deutsche Kulturpionier*, which has been completely digitized and published online.<sup>iv</sup> The letters were translated by the author and are presented here so you can read about Walter von Bodecker's journey to America in his own words. After the first part of this article was published in June 2019, the author received a copy of Bodecker's original, handwritten letter. The school in Witzenhausen maintains a file for each former student and Bodecker's file still contained the original letter. Some excerpted images are included below.

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<sup>i</sup> See this website for a description and photographs of the Santa Maria eruption.

<https://blogs.agu.org/magmacumlaude/2012/10/26/october-24-1902-santa-maria-erupts/>

<sup>ii</sup> [https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/60480/004925298\\_02460?pid=2650159](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/60480/004925298_02460?pid=2650159)

Ancestry.com. *Chiapas, Mexico, Civil Registration Deaths, 1861-1987* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA:

Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2015.

Registros civiles del municipio de Tapachula, Chiapas, 1862-1990, Defunciones 1976, 1978 -- Nacimientos 1892-1908 (incluyen actas de matrimonio y defunción) -- Expedited matrimoniales 1898, 1903, 1908 -- Defunciones 1897-1909, 1912, 1914, 1934, 1936, microfilm #1995761, image 2460 of 2946, Walterio von Bodecker, www.familysearch.org.

iii See <http://www.finchahamburgo.com/> as one example.

iv See <http://www.jarts.info/kulturpionier/>. The letters were published in issue 1903, Jahrgang 3, Nr.3-4, [http://www.jarts.info/former/03-1903\\_3-4\\_complete/vol03\\_3-4\\_p50-58\\_nachrichten-kameradenkreise-2-brief-bodecker-covadonga.pdf](http://www.jarts.info/former/03-1903_3-4_complete/vol03_3-4_p50-58_nachrichten-kameradenkreise-2-brief-bodecker-covadonga.pdf). The obituary was published in issue 1905/06, Jahrgang 6, Nr.1, <http://www.jarts.info/former/jahrgang-05-06-nr1/11.pdf>.

PDF images of the original publications were published online by the *German Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture* in Witzenhausen under the [Creative Commons license](#). The images used in this article are courtesy of the Institute. Walter von Bodecker's letters and his obituary were translated from the original German by the author, with the welcome assistance of MAGS member Kenneth Weaver.

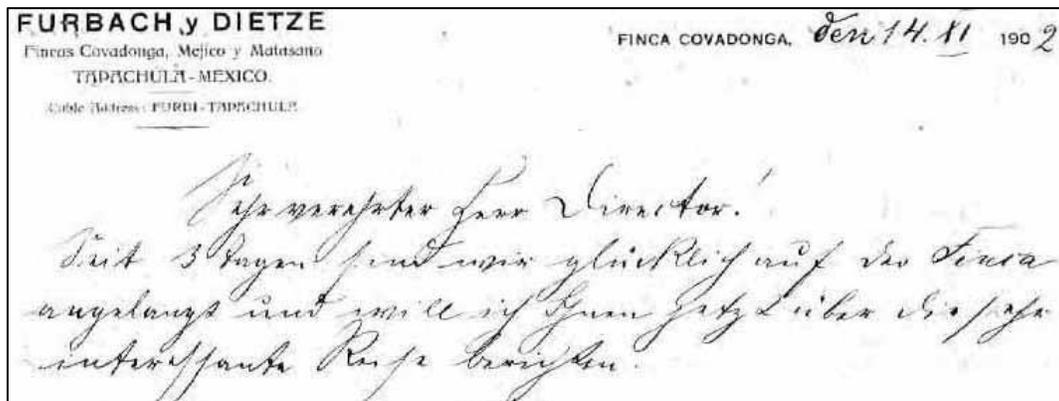


Figure 3- Letterhead and first sentence of Bodecker's original letter

Finca Covadonga [Covadonga Farm], Nov. 14th. 1902

Dear Mr. Director!

[Continued from previous article]

*On the morning of the 23rd we landed at 6 AM in Champerico [Guatemala]. (We had to take this port, unfortunately, because the steamer did not dock in San Benito [Mexico].)*

*Fortunately, we had calm seas and so the disembarkation went very smoothly from the steamer to the "caula", i.e. a gondola, in which the passengers had to be lifted from the ship to the launch, and from this to the point. The process at the customs office also went smoothly. Nothing was complained about except my saddle, for which I had to pay 62 pesos of customs (about 32 Marks), and we took the train leaving at 12 AM from Champerico, so we could be in Retalhuleu at 3:30. Retalhuleu is about 27 leagues from Champerico at 800 feet elevation. The train continues to St. Felipe and Mazatenango. In Retalhuleu in the evening in our hotel we received the news that the next day our animals would be in Caballo Blanco, which is a railway station halfway to Champerico, so we packed our luggage for the mule transport the next day, in the good hope to be on the Finca in 5 days.*

*But things would turn out differently.*

*In the afternoon, the cone of the Santa Maria, which is about 25 kilometers north of Retalhuleu, was still clearly visible. Later, as it seemed, a thunder storm arose, which remained stalled around the Santa Maria. In the evening we saw from our hotel window how the dark cloud, which lay around the summit of the volcano, continually produced strange flashes and fireworks. The variety of color and shape was striking, as was the fireball, which shot vertically into the air. In the beginning some people still believed that it was a strong thunderstorm, because one heard nothing of the subterranean roar and thunder. We lay down to bed relatively peacefully and strangely woke up at 5 o'clock in the morning when the volcano was already going strong. We dressed in our clothes a little faster than usual and our first look was to the Santa Maria. The cloud had spread completely, lit up at any moment by lightning and fire, each one cracking the so-called retumbos (rumbles) with such sharpness that one would have thought that hundreds of cannons had been fired at once. The air pressure was so strong that we noticed the flame of a candle, after every strong thrust, bent over to one side.*

*At 8:45 AM the first small stones fell, about the size of a pea, which soon shrank to coarse sand. Our train from St. Felipe, which was to take us to Caballo Blanco, arrived an hour late, full of people fleeing. At 10 o'clock we went to Caballo Blanco. On the way it became darker and darker, the ash rain stronger, and when we arrived in Caballo Blanco, it became very dark, as if it was night. The only remedy for people to numb their fear seemed to be alcohol, which unfortunately seems to play the first role in any particular casual work, and in fact, I have seen more drunks here in those few days, than during my whole life in Germany. Of course, we had to give up on our journey for the time being, as our way led close to the area of Santa Maria. We drove back to Retalhuleu at half-past two in the afternoon. Halfway it became lighter, less ashes, and when we arrived in Retalhuleu we saw an ash layer of about fifteen centimeters. The thunder and din had subsided. There was a great deal of excitement in the city. There were processions through the streets, and many people in the market had lain down in tents, since they did not feel safe enough in the houses. The earthquake had almost completely subsided; one only noticed loose-hanging doors, which were constantly trembling, to show that the earth was in motion. We did not feel the first really strong impact until about 4 o'clock. We were sitting in the hotel under a light wood construction, when suddenly the whole thing wobbled back and forth for a few seconds, each of which was a bit odd. At night, the retumbos (rumbles) increased again, but we slept quite well until the next morning, after a good dinner with a most gracious German gentleman. We were only disturbed by some stronger shocks, which were probably without danger, since we ourselves were under a solid wooden structure that had endured a lot without being damaged; you just do not put the bed very close to massive walls in case they should collapse.*

*The next morning we went back to Caballo Blanco, as the cost of food in Retalhuleu went up considerably. In any case, we satisfied ourselves with canned food and at 11:30 we were*

*back in Caballo Blanco. The plantations looked bleak; the ashes had pushed everything to the ground and crumbled the previously very beautiful jungle, which was covered with a dirty gray blanket. The river Ocosito was an eerie, interesting picture. It originates from the slope of the Santa Maria northeast of the eruption site (it is known that the eruption is not at the top of the mountain, but at the foot, northeast of a small side cone) and goes past Caballo Blanco to Ocosito. Instead of water this river was comprised of a mass of pumice stones and ashes, trees, beams and so on; all moving slowly forward, taking everything with it. Of course, the fish and crabs were all on top, and we were able to prepare a dinner with them, which tasted excellent after all the hardships.*

*We were very pleased when the long night was finally over. You could not sleep very well, as ashes continued to trickle down through the miserable thatched roof and the bedsteads kept going back and forth. The next morning we got four animals together, and with only the most necessary luggage, we set off, hoping to get through. The further we rode, the darker it became, until finally some ashes fell again. We then met Finceros [farm laborers?] who came from Coatepeo. From these we heard that the ashes there had reached 1 meter in height and the paths were of course impassable: there was nothing left but to stop.*

*We thought it best to go to Champerico and await the next steamer for San Benito. This was the Cosmos steamer going on the 8th of November. Since it was impossible to spend 10 days in the hot Champerico, we went to Guatemala, the capital city. After we had thoroughly seen it in 8 days and made a 4-5 hour daily walk in the magnificently beautiful surroundings, the "Amasis" brought us to San Benito. From there it was a 1 1/2 day trip to the finca, where we happily arrived on the 11th.*

*The ashes have done far less harm here in Mexico. Especially the high-altitude fincas, like ours, have not suffered so much, as the heavy rains have washed away almost all the ashes, and everything thrives better and stronger than before. At the same time it would probably be of interest to send a sample of ashes for investigation in the laboratory,*

*Covadonga is wonderfully beautiful; when everything is green and new again, it must be heavenly here. The magnificent panoramic view of the Guatemalan volcanic chain - the Tacana and Tacumulco just peek out from behind a mountain - continues to the right across the land to the sea. The sunrises and sunsets are unique, and I guess I chose Mexico for a reason. The climate is better than anywhere else; the soil supports everything, so that one will rarely find such a richly varied menu. We are now in the middle of the harvest. Unfortunately, some of the people who were scared by the catastrophe are still missing, (Covadonga had 38 hours of night; the wind had driven everything to the northwest) but they are slowly returning more or less voluntarily. Another injustice is that the heavy rains destroy the toma [water intake] almost every day. Toma is the name of the pipe that collects the water from the mountains and brings it to a basin, from where the water goes through a 6 inch tube to the Pelton wheel, which drives the machines. Of course it's always a big*

*annoyance and a problem for coffee when it has to stay in the tank at night without being shelled and when the dryer doesn't work.*

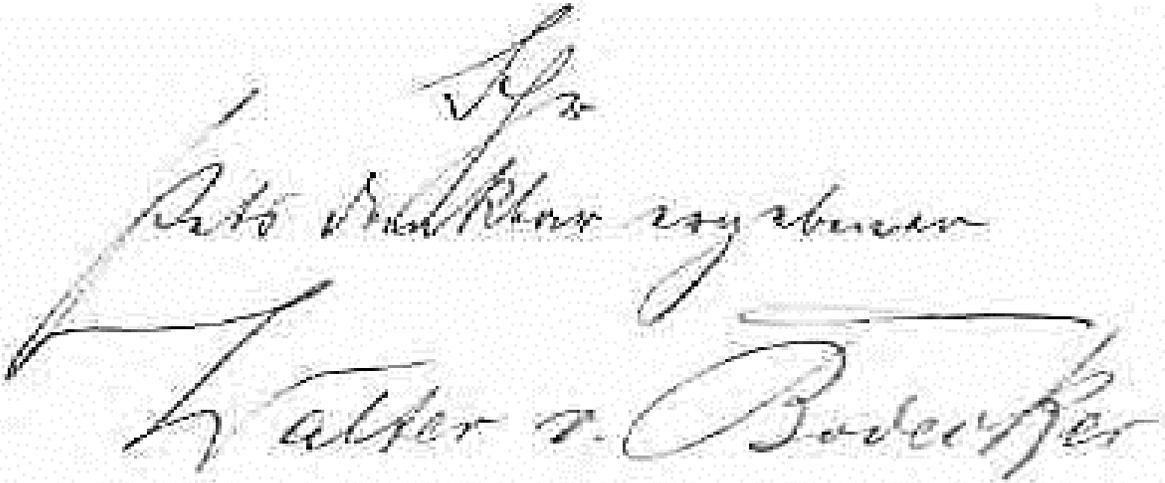
*The earthquakes of spring and autumn have caused great disorder and devastation here, and it will certainly take some time before everything is back on track. I would like to send you a more detailed report on the work and other circumstances here, dear Herr Director, as soon as I have more time available.*

*I ask you to greet the comrades and gentlemen teachers warmly. Unfortunately, through Katzer, I learned today about the sad accident of Mr. and Mrs. Professor Fesca and I sincerely wish them a speedy recovery.*

*I extend my warmest greetings to you, dear Director, and your esteemed family.*

*Your always thankfully devoted*

*Walter v. Bodecker*



The image shows a handwritten signature in cursive script. The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored, textured background. The name 'Walter v. Bodecker' is clearly legible, though the 'v.' is written as 'von'. There is a large, sweeping flourish at the end of the signature.

*Figure 4- Bodecker's original signature*

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*Finca Covadonga [Covadonga Farm], March 9, 1903.*

*Dear Mr. Director!*

*Many thanks for sending the latest issue of the "Cultural Pioneer", which I studied with great joy. I had been missing news from Witzenhausen for a long time and therefore I was very satisfied to learn something again.*

*On the one hand, yesterday on the flower Sunday of Covadonga we saw that the ashes had a decidedly beneficial effect. Gorgeous trees! It would be desirable that the harvest will bring what promises to bloom. After the evil last year, we might need it.*



*Batios und Wohnhäuser einer Finca in Mexiko.*

*Figure 5 – Terraces and houses on a farm in Mexico*

*We are currently working efficiently with fertilizer, namely using tree pulp, manure and ½ pound of artificial fertilizer (ratio 14.3 double superphosphate, 33.3 chlorinated potassium and 52.4 ammonium sulfate and 40 grams of lime). Other plants then received only manure, pulp and 20 grams of lime. In any case, the plants and experiments fertilized in the previous year have shown the great advantage and success*

*that can be achieved with artificial fertilization, applied correctly.*

*Our harvest on the farm is unfortunately still not very fruitful. I believe and hope that we will start on the 15th of this month on the neighboring Finca San Antonio. It might be too much to wish, especially since later in the rainy season, the transport to the port of many rivers is very difficult. The sugar cane field on our other Finca Mexico has recovered very well after the ashes. Despite the dryness it is as fresh as ever. A Trapiche (i.e. a sugar cane squeezer) has already been ordered, and we will soon make the sugar ourselves.*

*I would just like to reassure you, dear Director, how happy and content I am here. I could not have done better than this. The beginning certainly did not look like it, as on the second day of my arrival I had ash rain on my head. I had not thought in those days that everything would turn out so well.*

*I enclosed some pictures of Covadonga which may be interesting to you and the comrades. (By the way, I'm not in Tapachula, as it is stated in the "Cultural Pioneer". The latter is a hideously hot and unhealthy place to live on, I thank you very much).*

*Many warm greetings to you, dear Director, your dear family, the teachers and all comrades.*

*Your always thankfully most devoted*

*Walter v. Bodecker*

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*Finca Covdonga [Covadonga Farm], May 31, 1903.*

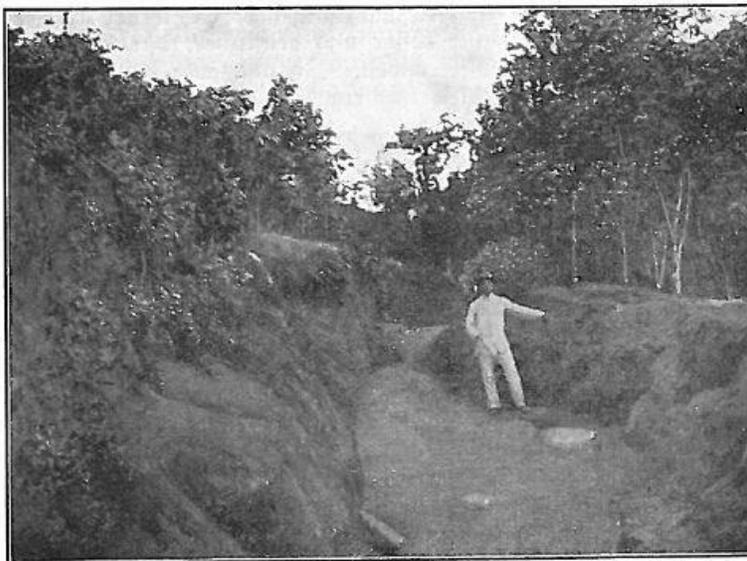
*Dear Director!*

*Excuse me, please, if today I only answer your kind letter of 5 March and thank you very much for sending the "Cultural Pioneer".*

*For six weeks I was lying in bed with a bad case of malaria, which I had contracted by imprudence. There was such an abundance of work right away, as my co-worker had managed the farm for six weeks alone and had to catch up with a lot of the books. My boss was struggling with severe malaria during that time, so we were glad when he finally recovered. He is currently on a recreational trip to San Francisco, from which he will return to teach in about 2 months.*

*Now that more interest is being devoted to Spanish, I read with pleasure. I would like to order a Spanish newspaper and send it to you regularly.*

*The employment of Bindel, Kracke and Seitz has also pleased me. Kracke is definitely a good mission merchant. Hopefully they will tell you what they are doing and how satisfied they*



*Aschenschicht nach dem Ausbruch des Santa Maria in Mexiko*

*Figure 6 - Ash layer after the eruption of Santa Maria in Mexico*

*are in their positions. The prospects for the comrades here are not very great. Because of the catastrophes in Guatemala, there is a large supply of job seekers, and I hardly believe that this will change so soon.*

*Did you receive the sample of ashes I sent?*

*I hope that you, dear Director, as well as your dear family, are well and healthy.*

*For today I want to close and remain with best regards to you, your dear family, the teachers and the comrades,*

*Your always devoted*

*Walter v. Bodecker*

**Memorial for Walther v. Bodecker from Gemirren  
b. December 10, 1881, d. December 10, 1905**

*Again, death snatched one of our comrades from us unexpectedly, the first who died abroad in the midst of the work of our profession, as it were in the field of struggle.*

*We are most saddened by this loss of the dear, most faithful comrade Walther v. Bodecker, all the more so as shortly before the arrival of the news of his death we received a hint from a friend of Klimowitz that he was ill, but without thinking of any serious danger. On his birthday, Sunday the 10th of December, 1905, in the morning, after an intestinal disease and a short but difficult sickbed and after seemingly bitter suffering in the last days, he finally became still and peacefully fell asleep in the arms of his coworker and comrade Quantz, after his struggle with pain was over.*

*He had hoped to be able to return home in the winter for a longer rest and to conclude special plans for life, where we hoped to welcome him again here in Wilhelmshof, to which he was wholeheartedly attached. But, "man thinks, God directs", so he has instead entered into the other, eternal home and has in the last hours of life well - like his words hint "Do not bother me, I am having such a beautiful dream!" In his childishly pious heart he felt something like the words of Jung-Stilling: "Blessed are those who are homesick, for they are to come home".*

*With his superiors, and especially the Furbach family, who painfully lamented his death, and with all his comrades who knew him and were close to him, we must say: One of our best and most efficient has been snatched from us. It is difficult to humble oneself to the question, "Why this?" With grave silence and devoted faith in God, we know that we are not here for the sake of our latter days, but that our work and inner growth is the purpose of our existence and that we have an eternal task and an eternal goal.*

*Blessed is he who as a young man, or at least in the prime of his years, departs with sure signs of the fruit of life! It is good that we can look at him, our dear comrade, with thanks, yes, with a certain pride, in the recollection, that his and his family also, should not be ashamed in the memory of death, and that, despite his youth, the word of our Master applies: "Oh, you pious and faithful servant". For he was as faithful as gold, hard-working and reliable, and above all, inwardly serious and noble-minded. Yes, in addition to his outward prowess and quiet amiability, which was the best thing about him, and which at a young age gives a man double value, he had ideals and an inner joyful devotion to the eternal purposes of life.*

*It was unforgettable for this dear, faithful comrade to be among us!*

*Ave pia anima! [Farewell, devout soul!]*

*Herr Director Fabarius  
Witzenhausen a / Werra  
German Colonial School*

VORSCHRIFT IST VORSCHRIFT

STICK TO THE SCRIPT

# The Valiant Vowels of the Old German Script

**T**he old German handwriting can be overwhelming to many genealogists, and for good reason – *Kurrentschrift*, as the old script is called, is unique!

That being said, if we know what characteristics to look for in each letter, the old handwriting becomes a lot easier for us to decipher. Today, we are going to take a closer look at the lowercase vowels in the old German script, which, *Gott sei Dank*, are actually pretty similar to our cursive letters that we learned in school. Let's get started!

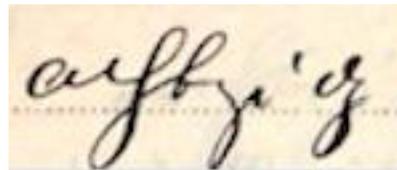


Katherine Schober

**a:** The letter "a" looks very similar to our cursive "a", and thus should be relatively easy to recognize. In the old German handwriting, the letter "a" is rounded, has either a closed or slightly open top (see how the letter is slightly open in the word "achtzig" below), and finishes with a downward stroke to the right. This downward stroke then connects to the next letter.



The letter "a"



"achtzig" ("eighty")

While "a" is usually one of the easier letters to recognize, it can sometimes be confused with the letter "o." (You didn't think you were getting off that easy, right?). See the section on the letter "o" for what to do if this is the case.

**e:** While "a" is relatively simple, the letter "e", unfortunately, is not. The lowercase "e" is one of the more difficult letters in the old German handwriting, as it is very similar to the *Kurrentschrift* "n".

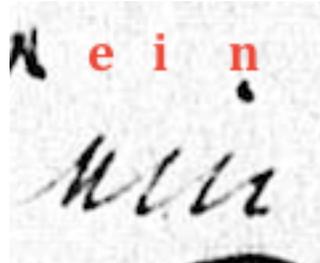
So how can you tell these tricky letters apart? The "e" is more *rounded*, written with two downward lines *close together* from the midline, while the "n" is more *jagged and spread apart* than the narrow "e". Can you tell the difference between the two in the word "ein"?



The letter "e"



The letter "n"

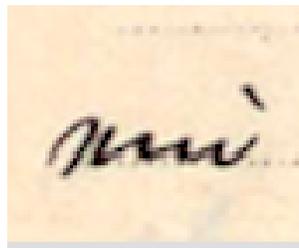


The word "ein" ("a"). Notice how the "n" at the end of the word is more spread out than the narrow "e" at the beginning. The dot above the letter "n" actually belongs to the "i", which we will talk about in the next section.

**i:** Like the letter "a", the "i" clearly resembles its counterpart in our cursive handwriting – therefore, this letter should be a piece of cake! As mentioned above, however, the dot of the letter "i" is usually slightly to the right of the letter itself, so don't get your "i" confused with the letter next to it. Take note of the dot in the example below.



The letter "i"



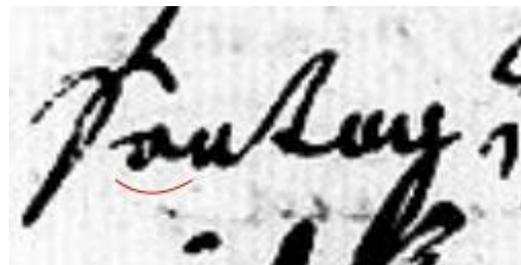
Another example of the word "ein" ("a"). Notice how the dot for the "i" is very far to the right, all the way over after the "n". The same phenomenon occurs in the separate example of the word "ein" in the section on the letter "e" above.

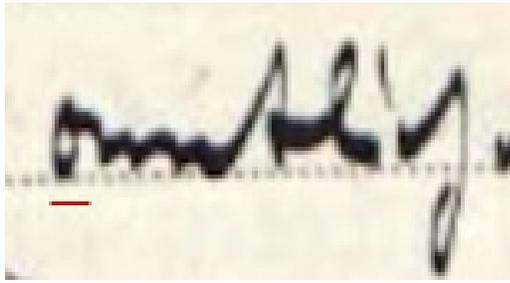
**o:** The letter "o" is usually also easy to decipher, as it is yet another vowel that resembles our cursive version of the letter. However, as I mentioned above, the "a"s and the "o"s can often get confused with one another in *Kurrentschrift*.

This confusion occurs if the author did not bring his final line of the "a" down to the baseline before starting the next letter, resulting in both letters ending with a horizontal hook to the right. If this is the case, and you can't tell if the letter is an "a" or an "o", try swapping out one letter for the other (if "a" doesn't work, try an "o", and vice versa). With the old German handwriting, it's always good to know what letters look alike – then it's easy to make the swap so your word makes sense!



The letter "o"



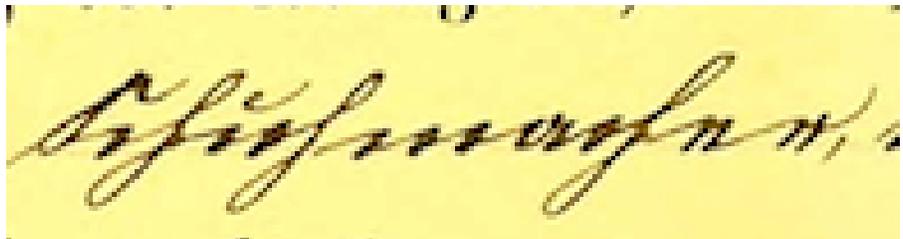


Notice how the "a" in the word to the left "amtlich" ("official") and the "o" in the word on the previous page "Sontag" [sic] ("Sunday") look very similar. If you were not familiar with German, and originally thought the word was "omtlich", you would find out that this word is not in the dictionary. However, as you now know the "a" and the "o" can look similar to one another, you could try replacing your "o" with an "a". You would then get the word "amtlich" – which is actually a word in the dictionary!

**u:** The "u" is one of my favorite letters, as it has a telltale characteristic that gives it away to its readers. This telltale sign is what I like to call the "u-swoop", a rounded mark above or slightly to the right of the letter itself.



The letter "u"



Notice the swoop above the letter "u" in the word "Schuhmacher" (shoemaker) above.

This swoop usually looks like the bottom part of a smiley face, although some authors did write the swoop sideways or upside down (everyone's handwriting is slightly different, after all). However, if there is any type of swoop - whether it be sideways, upside-down, or written "normally" – that means the letter "u" is below.

As you can see, the vowels in *Kurrentschrift* either strongly resemble our cursive versions of the same letter, or, if not, they have very distinctive characteristics that allow us to decipher them more easily. Not as scary as we thought, right? Stay tuned for future articles on how to recognize additional letters in the *Kurrentschrift* alphabet. Until then, happy transcribing!

#### Additional German Vowel Facts:

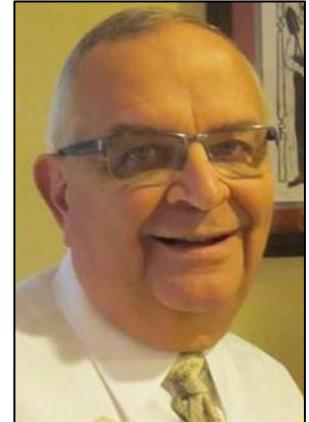
- "e" and "i" are the most common vowels in the German language, followed by "a", "u", and then "o".
- Vowel combinations in German include "ei" (pronounced *aye*), "ie" (pronounced *ee*), "ai" (pronounced *aye*), "au" (pronounced *ow*), "äu" (pronounced *oy*) and "eu" (pronounced *oy*).
- If a word has an umlaut, and the writer did not want to use the umlaut in writing, he may have replaced the umlaut with an "e" after the formerly umlauted vowel ("ae", "oe" or "ue").

**Schober is the author of the book, *Tips and Tricks of Deciphering German Handwriting*. Her business is *SK Translations*, found on the web at [www.SKTranslations.com](http://www.SKTranslations.com).**

## UNSERE SPRACHBLÄTTER

## OUR LANGUAGE LEAVES

# What's in a Name?



Ken Weaver

In the past two issues of *Der Kurier* I discussed German surnames, and believe it or not, as involved as that topic is, the topic of German first or given names is even more complex and obviously they predate surnames by numerous centuries. My hope is to make some sense of the vast history of German given names in one relatively short newsletter column, although the topic itself is sufficiently deep to produce a doctoral dissertation or two. The study of names is called onomastics and is an area of major interest for most linguists.

Like surnames, German given names are impacted greatly by **time**, **place** and **history**. It is very easy to do a quick internet search and discover that the most frequent German given names used in 1890 are very different than those used in the year 2010s. Carl/Karl, Wilhelm, Otto, Heinrich, Friedrich, Paul, Hans, Gustav, Max, and Ernst were the most popular male names 1890, while in the year 2014, Ben, Luis/Louis, Paul, Lukas/Lucas, Jonas, Leon, Finn/Fynn, Noah, Elias, Luca/Luka made the list. As social customs and norms have changed over time, so have changed names that are used. (Notice the more English-like names used in 2014.) But, more importantly perhaps, is the fact that the German language of 1890 differs greatly from today's, as did the language of the Germanic tribes of centuries ago from what was used in the 1500's.

Place also has had a major impact on given names. Because of the vast dialectal differences in the German-speaking areas, names of the north differ greatly from names used in the south. Northern names may be influenced by the language spoken in nearby Denmark or Holland, and it is no secret that one from the north speaking Plattdeutsch has a difficult time understanding one from Munich speaking Bairisch and vice-versa. Those place driven language issues greatly impact name-giving.

Obviously, the events of the day that tie the concepts of time and place together have an impact. Was it peacetime? Was there war? Who were the famous citizens who had an impact on the events of the day? For instance, it has been noted that the given name Martin was a popular one in the post-Reformation era in predominantly Protestant areas, but is rarely, if ever, found in Catholic locations. Just as with surnames, there are some general statements that can be made about given names. First of all, there are basically two main types: ones that came from the ancient Germanic tribes and ones with Biblical references. Those names that came from the tribes are typically related to the Germanic love of war and northern mythology and have roots that relate to fighting, protection, and fame (on the battlefield). In the post-Reformation era, there was a divergence in names used in Catholic regions (typically saints) and those used in Protestant areas (typically Old Testament-based).

As with all genealogical endeavors, we are at the mercy of available records! Written documentation of the names used when Charlemagne was crowned in 800 AD is virtually non-existent, so determining what were the most common names in any given era before about 1200 is an extremely difficult task. Once records were kept, the study of names, both given and family, becomes considerably easier.

Space in *Der Kurier* obviously prohibits my writing a doctoral dissertation on the subject, so I believe the best way to help inform you, the reader, on this very interesting topic is to point out some readily available resources that will help to expand your knowledge of German given names.

The first is a book by Dr. George F. Jones entitled *German-American Names*, published in 1990 by Genealogical Publishing Company. The first chapter gives a relatively easily understood explanation of the various German sound changes that occurred over time that impacted given names, as well as some of the many early war-related roots that helped to form names.

Probably one of the more comprehensive books on the issue of name-giving is one published in 1908 by Dr. Karl Heinrichs. It is entitled *Studien über die Namengebung im Deutschen seit dem Anfang des XVI. Jahrhunderts (Studies Regarding German Name-Giving Since the Beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century)*. Unfortunately, the book is written in German, but it contains information on names from tax rolls and other records from before 1500. It is available for download as a Google Book.

*The Encyclopedia of German American Genealogical Research* by Clifford Neal Smith and Anna Smith, published in 1976, has a short two-page article that illustrates the extensive information available in the Heinrichs book. Heinrichs focuses on various regions of the German-speaking lands in this era, noting whether they were Catholic, Protestant or a mix. He uses a variety of available records to detail the frequency of names in many regions.

Another, probably less helpful resource are the first name charts found in Ernest Thode's *Atlas for Germanic Genealogy*, published in 1983. He provides two maps, one for male names and one for female, showing geographically what names were most prevalent in that area. Unfortunately, there is no indication of when these names were the most frequent, so one has to assume it was in the 1980's.

And finally, a website to check out: Medieval Names Archive, <https://www.s-gabriel.org/names/german.shtml>. Here you will find a list of numerous websites with German first names, including very extensive lists of names on tax rolls in 1497 in Nürnberg (Nuremberg) with all the many variations, among other things. In my next article for *Der Kurier*, I will expand on the information found in the Heinrichs book to show more detail on how names changed over time and varied by region and religion, as well as take a look at some of the linguistic origins of given names. In the meantime, please email me with any questions or ideas.

**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. E-mail suggestions to [kenneth.n.weaver@gmail.com](mailto:kenneth.n.weaver@gmail.com).**

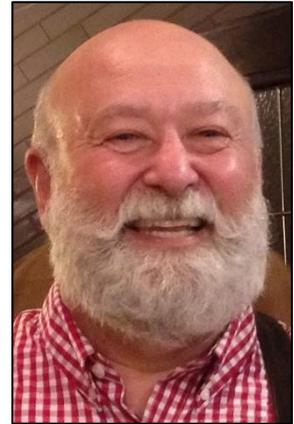
## DNA-ENTDECKUNGEN

## DNA DISCOVERIES

# What to do with a DNA Match

## Part 1

**A**s DNA testing for genealogy has become more popular, the size of participant databases has grown, offering increased matching to unknown relatives. But how can these matches benefit your genealogical research and help break down brick walls? In this article, we will look at autosomal results since this test offers the widest range of connections to potential cousins. Autosomal DNA (atDNA) tests are offered by all the test companies. Its advantage lies in the fact that both men and women can take this test and compare results for relatedness. A disadvantage is that atDNA is inherited randomly from ancestors and can disappear from some ancestors over time (usually 6-8 generations).



Andrew Hochreiter

After your atDNA results are sequenced, the company compares your results with others in the database. If enough DNA is shared, you and that person become a match. This is shown in various ways by the different test companies. Some matches may be close but most are distant matches who share only a small segment of DNA. Many people who take a DNA test may not realize that a list of DNA matches is generated. When they do, they may be overwhelmed by unfamiliar surnames and not know how to get started to utilize the results. Some first and second cousins may appear, but distant ones will be more common. Most people know their first and second cousins, but the acquaintance with more distant relatives and surname recognition fades.

Although the presentation of results and tools vary between test companies, some general rules should be followed that apply regardless of the platform. There is commonality in the approach when confronting long lists of matches. A couple of key actions should be taken beforehand to fully exploit the potential value of the match list. The first is to upload a family tree which has been developed as completely as possible. Displaying a tree that is purposely limited to a couple generations is extremely inadequate to help with researching relationships. Some people such as adoptees will not know much about their tree and cannot provide much information. But those who can, should. Remember that atDNA testing is also called a “Cousin Test” because it encompasses *all* of your ancestors back several generations. As you try to identify a common ancestor with a more distant cousin, you must reach back farther to earlier ancestors. With the exception of immediate family, DNA can tell that you are related to someone but not necessarily how. Traditional research must be used together with DNA testing to find a common ancestor and define the specific relationship between two matches. A robust tree is crucial to making sense of relationships to your DNA matches. A critical step is to link your DNA results to yourself in a public family tree. This will assist in finding out how you are related to DNA matches.

Some common steps can be followed regardless of the test company. A preliminary review of your match's tree (if one exists) includes looking for common surnames and ancestors. Locations are an important element to consider as well, especially when surnames or ancestors fail to appear. You may need to build out a match's tree yourself if it is small or lacks a connection to your own. If there is no linked tree to the DNA match, you should search for an unlinked tree. Sometimes the match has not taken the extra step to link their DNA results to their tree. Attempt to determine which DNA matches are on your father's side or your mother's side using the family trees, surnames, or locations. If your parents have specific ethnicities (i.e., one is Irish and one is Italian), comparing your match's ethnicity may also indicate which parental side the match is on.

The DNA match list is organized by the predicted or estimated relationship. Each company provides a predicted relationship using their own "bucket" designators. These can be indicated as Immediate Family such as full siblings. Close Family can be half siblings, full aunts/uncles and grandparents. Cousin categories can include first through fourth or more distant relationships. Your closest relatives are listed first followed by more distantly related ones. You will want to examine your match list and focus on the closest matches first, which are second cousins or closer. The predicted relationship with your match may indicate the generation of the common ancestor, such as First Cousin: Grandparents, Second Cousin: Great Grandparents, Third Cousin: 2G Grandparents, Fourth Cousin: 3G Grandparents, and so on. As you proceed down your list to third and more distant cousins, you may find it more difficult to determine the relationship or common ancestor. You have a good chance of finding your common ancestor and relationship with a First or Second Cousin match, a decent chance with a Third or Fourth Cousin match, and a somewhat smaller chance for Fifth Cousin matches and beyond.

Next you will want to examine how much DNA is shared with your match. Although company-predicted relationships are helpful, they tend to be broad, lacking more specific selections. The amount of shared centimorgans (cMs) is more illuminating than the testing company predictions. Using the amount of shared cMs to evaluate the relationship takes some analytical effort because multiple relationship types can be implied by the same amount of shared DNA. For example, 800 cMs of shared DNA can indicate Great-Grandparent, Great-Aunt / Uncle, Half Aunt / Uncle, or First Cousin, in addition to a few others. A most useful site is the Shared cM Project 3.0 tool v4 at [DNA Painter](#). The advantage of this tool is that it gives the probability of each relationship type. The 800 cM example can be typed into the Filter box and it displays the odds of the most likely options.

**Filter**

Enter the total number of cM for your match here:

800

show %

Then any relationships that fit will stand out below

[Click here for a sharable link to the cM amount above](#)

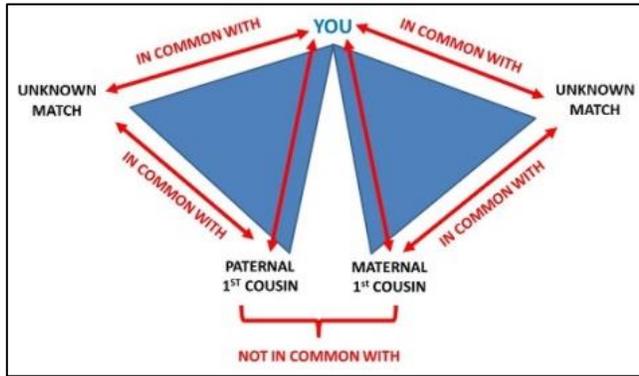
**Relationship probabilities (based on stats from The DNA Geek)**

<b>94.38%</b>	Great-Grandparent    Great-Aunt / Uncle Half Aunt / Uncle    1C    Half Niece / Nephew Great-Niece / Nephew    Great-Grandchild
<b>5.62%</b>	Half Great-Aunt / Uncle † Half Great-Niece / Nephew † Great-Great-Aunt / Uncle    Half 1C    1C1R Great-Great-Niece / Nephew

† this relationship has a positive probability for 800cM in thednaageek's table of probabilities, but falls outside the bounds of the recorded cM range (99th percentile)

*An example predicted relationship calculation based on 800 shared cMs of DNA*

One challenge with atDNA results is that the test company cannot distinguish between the paternal and maternal contributions. This is evident when comparing chromosome segments between



matches. A significant functionality that is generated for two matches is their **Shared Matches** or **In Common With** list. This list contains the names of other test takers who share DNA with both you and your match. It is an extremely useful way to associate matches with paternal and maternal sides or shared common ancestors. If you are fortunate to test a parent, this will generally resolve any question about which side the match is related on. Exceptions

may occur within endogamous groups or when parents are related. But if you cannot test a parent, “target testing” known cousins on both sides will help identify paternal versus maternal relatives. This is a form of triangulation where a match to you and your paternal or maternal cousin identifies the parental side relationship. Some test companies provide the capability to categorize matches into specific groups according to shared family lines. Another benefit to finding shared matches is that they may have family trees with additional information to fill in missing branches between you and your match.

Another consideration is that there will be diminishing amounts of DNA shared with more distant cousins. Sometimes different DNA segments from a common ancestor are passed to different descendants. Although these descendants are related through a common ancestor, they will not be identified as DNA matches. You may already know that you are related to someone through 3x great grandparents, but they do not appear on your match list. Your genealogical relationship is fourth cousins but the genetic relationship does not show. The following chart shows the likelihood of matching a known relative. Notice the big drop between fourth and fifth cousins. Each test company has slightly different odds, but the impact of diminishing amounts is universal.

**Odds of Matching a Known Relative**

- 1<sup>st</sup> cousin or closer: 100%
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> cousin: >99%
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> cousin: ~90%
  - 4<sup>th</sup> cousin: >50%
  - 5<sup>th</sup> cousin: >15%
  - 6<sup>th</sup> cousin and more distant\*: <5%
- \*Remember that we all have a large number of distant cousins, so even with these small odds, we will still find many at this level.

Reaching out and contacting a match can be daunting to some people. Non-responses can add frustration or discouragement to the engagement. But this collaboration is a necessary step to advance your family history research. The best advice is to present what you know and offer to assist them in research efforts to build their tree. Offer what you know about shared relatives in exchange for what they have. Whether you find the information with your match or not, maintain the connection to regularly share new information. Be sure to record what you learn in family tree or genealogical notes.

As mentioned, each test company presents your DNA results and matches in various ways. Become familiar with the features where you test in order to capitalize on their resources. Some features may be unique to one company. But many features are similar because the method is effective in handling relationship problems. These features serve the same purpose and functionality. The two major products you receive with your DNA test results are your Matches and your Shared Matches.

The initial list of people are the ones with whom you directly share segments of DNA. These are called DNA Matches at Ancestry, Family Finder Matches at Family Tree DNA, DNA Relatives at 23andMe and DNA Matches at MyHeritage. The other list contains communal matches shared between two matches. These are Shared Matches at Ancestry, In Common With at Family Tree DNA, Relatives In Common at 23andMe, and Shared DNA Matches at MyHeritage.

The second and final part of this article in the next issue of *Der Kurier* will go into detail on the features available for analyzing your DNA and matches at each of the major testing companies.

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**AUSWANDERER ZUSAMMEN****IMMIGRANT CONNECTIONS**

## Searching for the Elusive Caspar Schmidt

**A** patron at my local Family History Center was not able to determine the village of origin in Germany for his immigrant ancestor. Caspar Schmidt and his wife Margaret, with their five children, lived in Newark, New Jersey at the time of the 1860 Federal census. He was a 61-year-old cabinet maker, born in Württemberg. Margaret, age 46, and all the children except the youngest (age 9 months) were also born in Württemberg.<sup>i</sup> The family was still living in Newark in 1870<sup>ii</sup> and Caspar died there in 1873<sup>iii</sup>.



**Bob Greiner**

Margaret and their children were found on a passenger list of a ship arriving in New York City in January 1857.<sup>iv</sup> A family story claimed that Caspar emigrated before them to find a place to live, but I was not able to find him on a passenger list.

The patron's ancestor was the eldest daughter, Barbara Schmidt, who was born in March 1839 according to the 1900 census.<sup>v</sup> She married John König in 1865 and they remained in Newark for the remainder of their lives. The questions to be answered were "Where did Caspar and Margaret come from in Württemberg?" and "Where and when was Barbara born?"

Looking for a Schmidt in Germany is almost as difficult as searching for a Smith or Jones in the United States. I first conducted the obvious searches on Ancestry and FamilySearch for a Barbara Schmidt, born in 1839, with parents Caspar and Margaret. I used variations of the names and dates. I also looked for a marriage of Caspar Schmidt and Margaret. Finally, I looked at a few potential individuals the patron had previously identified.

These searches produced numerous results. I decided to slog through the evidence for each viable candidate, eliminating them one by one using any additional evidence that could be discovered. This did not happen overnight. After several months of searching and rethinking the problem, I discovered a record that looked promising.

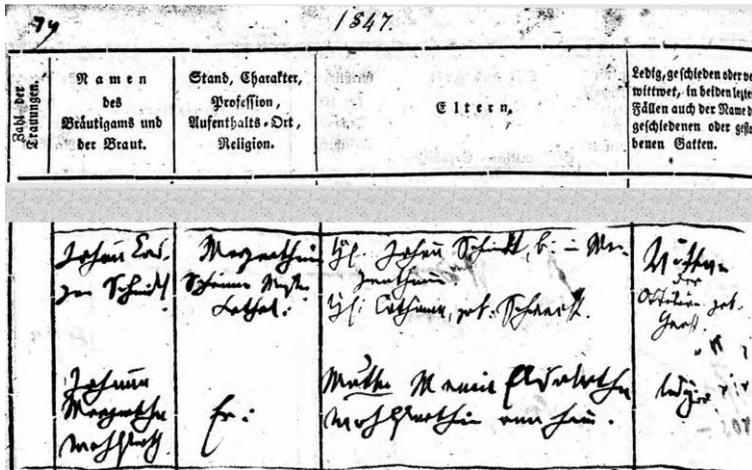


Figure 7- Weikersheim marriage record of Caspar Schmidt and Margaretha Wohlfarth

An entry in the Ancestry database **Württemberg, Germany, Lutheran Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, 1500 – 1985** documented the marriage of Johann Caspar Schmidt and Johanna Margaretha Wohlfarth.<sup>vi</sup> The marriage was recorded on 2 February 1847 in the Evangelical Church records of Weikersheim, Württemberg. On first glance this did not look like a good match, primarily because Margaretha's birth date seemed too late based on what was known from census

records. Secondly, they were married eight years after Barbara's birth. However, once I deciphered the German script to reveal details in the record, the facts began to make sense.

The record showed that Caspar was from the nearby town of Mergentheim (now Bad Mergentheim), born there in 1800. He was a widower, his first wife being Ottilia Hek. His occupation was Schreinermeister – master woodworker – and he was Catholic. Furthermore, the record indicated that the couple

Transcription of Weikersheim marriage record – 1847 #4b		
<b>Names</b>	Johann Caspar Schmidt	Johanna Margaretha Wohlfarth
<b>Occupation and religion</b>	Mergentheim, master woodworker, Catholic	Evangelical
<b>Parents</b>	Johann Schmidt, citizen in Mergentheim Catharina, nee Scherb	Maria Elisabetha Wohlfarth from here
<b>Status</b>	Widower of Ottilia, nee Hek	Single
<b>Birth date and place</b>	29 March 1800 in Mergentheim	15 May 1818, here
<b>Proclamation and Marriage</b>	Three Sundays post Epiphany	Mergentheim on 2 February
<b>Officiant</b>	Herr Vicar Pfitzer	
<b>Family Register</b>	650	

was married in Mergentheim, even though it was recorded in the Weikersheim church book.

Margaretha's birth date of 15 May 1818 was written in the marriage record. Using the same Weikersheim church book images, I found her baptism record.<sup>vii</sup> She was the illegitimate daughter of Maria Elisabetha Wohlfart.<sup>viii</sup> The record listed a page number in the local Familienbuch (family book), but this book was not included with the digitized church records. Instead, Ancestry has another database entitled **Württemberg, Germany, Family Tables, 1550-1985**. You can browse these records by village name. Selecting Weikersheim, there were three books to choose from. I found the referenced page number in the book entitled **Konfirmationen, Seelenregister u Familienbuch 1582-1903**. That page had a family group sheet of Margaretha's family – her grandfather, Johann Christoph Wohlfart, his two wives, and all their children, including Margaretha's mother. A notation on the page indicated that Johanna Margaretha moved to Mergentheim in 1847, the year she married.<sup>ix</sup>

This was now definitely a potential match. It was likely that Barbara Schmidt was a child of Caspar and his first wife Ottilia. Caspar's birth date agreed with the census records and his occupation matched that recorded in the U.S. census. But I still did not have any original sources to prove that theory. I still needed to find records for Caspar, his first wife Ottilia, and daughter Barbara. Since Caspar was Catholic, they would probably not be found in the Württemberg Lutheran records. I used the FamilySearch Wiki to see what Catholic records might be available for Württemberg. An article on Württemberg, German Empire Church Records indicated there were Catholic records online at the Ludwigsburg Archives.<sup>x</sup> A link in the article takes one directly to the website.<sup>xi</sup> The site is quite difficult to navigate, especially if you don't understand German, so I won't try to explain the details here.

The site includes Catholic records for Mergentheim, but only marriages (1825-1873) and deaths (1825-1864) – no baptisms. Using the digital images on the site I easily found the marriage record for Caspar Schmitt and Margaretha Wolfarth in 1847. Note the variant spelling of Caspar's given and surname, as well as the additional name Alois. Since Caspar was born and lived in Mergentheim, the pastor there was probably more aware of his true name than the pastor in Weikersheim.

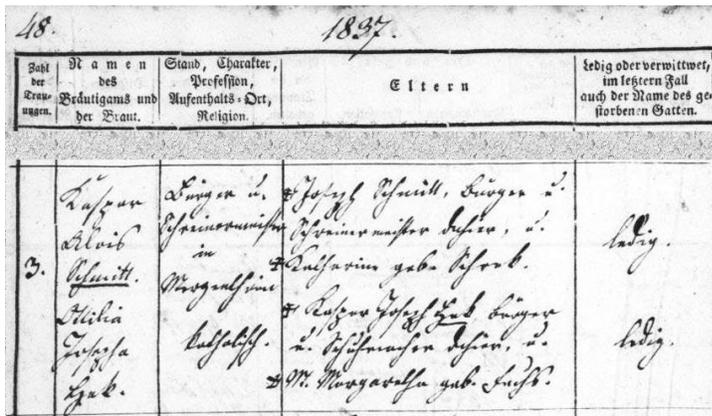


Figure 8 - Mergentheim marriage record for Caspar Schmitt and Ottilia Hek  
Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Abt. Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg, F901, Bd 902, Bild 49

I also found the records of Caspar's earlier marriage to Ottilia Hek in 1837 and her death in 1846. This required searching the church book page by page looking for their names, since I didn't know the exact date of either event. I discovered further information about the couple and their parents in these records.

The additional facts all seemed to fit well, but I still could not prove Barbara as a child, since baptism records were not available on the

archive's website. Not finding anything more online, the only remaining option was to write to the Catholic Church of St. Johannes Baptist in Bad Mergentheim. I found their email address online and constructed a message in German specifically requesting a baptism record for Barbara Schmitt, born to the above couple in March 1839. Within a week I received a reply asking that I redirect my request to the Catholic Diocese archives in Rottenburg, Germany, which I did.

The archive replied by email to say they found the baptism record as well as a Familienbuch page for Caspar Schmitt. They requested payment by bank transfer, but sent the images once I agreed to pay the fee (approximately \$30).

<b>Transcription of Mergentheim marriage record – 1837 #3</b>		
<b>Names</b>	Kaspar Alois Schmitt	Ottilia Josepha Hek
<b>Occupation and religion</b>	Citizen and master woodworker in Mergentheim	Catholic
<b>Parents</b>	Joseph Schmitt, citizen and master woodworker here (dec.) Katharina, nee Scherb (dec.)	Kaspar Joseph Hek, citizen and shoemaker here (dec.) Maria Margaretha, nee Fuchs (dec.)
<b>Status</b>	Single	Single
<b>Birth date and place</b>	29 March 1800, Mergentheim	15 May 1818, Mergentheim
<b>Proclamation and Marriage</b>	1. Feast of Purification 2. Quinquagesima Sunday	7 February 1837
<b>Officiant</b>	Johann Melch. Ahard	
<b>Witnesses</b>	Jacob Dressler, citizen and woodworker here	Conrad Bossler, citizen and weaver here
<b>Dispensation</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> proclamation	31 January 1837
<b>Family Register</b>	428b	

The information in these two records confirmed that Caspar Schmitt and his first wife Ottilia Hek had a daughter Maria Barbara born 24 March 1839 in Mergentheim. The family table showed that the couple had five children between 1837 and 1845, all of whom died soon after birth except Barbara. It also confirmed three children born to Caspar and Margaretha Wohlfahrt before they emigrated. The names of the surviving children match those in the U.S. census records. A note indicated that the family went "nach Amerika". Caspar can be found in the FamilySearch Family Tree as ID #L11M-6FC, under the name Kaspar Alois Schmitt, as found in the family table.

The receipt and transcription of these two records answered almost all the questions about Caspar Schmitt and his family. It was a joyous and successful culmination of a long quest with many dead ends. The only thing I hadn't found was when Caspar emigrated.

Ancestry has a database named **Wuerttemberg, Germany Emigration Index**.<sup>xii</sup> The database is based on a set of books published by Trudy Schenk in 1986. The data was extracted from microfilmed emigration applications from Württemberg.

Several Caspar Schmitt's (or variations) appeared in the index, but only one was from Mergentheim. The application date was given as October 1856. The index also indicated a microfilm number. FamilySearch has copies of the original microfilms. Search their catalog for **Germany**,

**Württemberg**, then expand the topic **Emigration and Immigration**. The records for each village are listed separately, but you can use your browser to search for Mergentheim further down the page. You can also use the film number found in the Ancestry index to go directly to the Mergentheim film.

Click on the Mergentheim entry and you will find three films that have been digitized. The notes for film 838303 include the year 1856. The hard part is then searching the images for October 1856. Finally, entry #71, dated October 31, 1856 listed Caspar Schmitt, cabinet maker, with his family from Mergentheim. The record indicates there were three males, two females, and a baby. This corresponds exactly with the known people in the Schmitt family.<sup>xiii</sup>

There is no indication that Caspar emigrated separately from his family. Although I found the passenger list for Margaret and their children, I was never able to find Caspar on a list. Regardless, I now had proof of the relative time frame in which he probably left.

The questions about Caspar Schmidt and his daughter Barbara were not answered quickly. It required much strategizing and many trials to find the right person among many possible candidates. In hindsight, many of the records were there in plain sight from the beginning. It was just difficult to tell whether a record was the right Caspar Schmidt without further examining the details. This illustrates the need to use a variety of sources and to pursue any potential clue until the sources are exhausted or the right record is found. It was also helpful that many Baden-Württemberg records are now online.

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<sup>i</sup> 1860 U.S. census, Essex Co., NJ, population schedule, 6th Ward Newark, p. 118, dwelling 531, family 1056, Caspar Schmidt.

<sup>ii</sup> 1870 U.S. census, Essex Co., NJ, population schedule, 4th Ward Newark, p. 64, dwelling 332, family 504, Casper Smith.

<sup>iii</sup> "New Jersey, Deaths and Burials Index, 1798-1971," database, Ancestry.com (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/fsnewjerseydeath/>), Casper Schmidt, d. 22 Oct 1873.

<sup>iv</sup> "New York, Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957," database and images, Ancestry.com (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/nypl/>), Ship Wm. V. Moses, arrived 3 Jan 1857, Margareth Schmidt.

<sup>v</sup> 1900 U.S. census, Essex Co., NJ, population schedule, enumeration district 77, p. 8B, dwelling 129, family 144, John Schmitt.

<sup>vi</sup> "Württemberg, Germany, Lutheran Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, 1500-1985," database and images, Ancestry.com (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/glutheranwuerttemberg/>), Weikersheim, Heiraten u Tote 1593-1876, p. 79, image 678 of 1171, 1847, #2.

<sup>vii</sup> "Württemberg, Germany, Lutheran Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, 1500-1985," database and images, Ancestry.com (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/glutheranwuerttemberg/>), Weikersheim, Taufen 1801-1876, p. 236, image 245 of 938, 1818, #19.

<sup>viii</sup> Note the various spellings of her surname in different records.

<sup>ix</sup> "Württemberg, Germany, Family Tables, 1550-1985," database and images, Ancestry.com (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/glufamilytables/>), Weikersheim, Konfirmationen, Seelenregister u. Familienbuch 1582-1903, p. 690, image 634 of 1061, Johann Christoph Wolfart family.

<sup>x</sup> [https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/W%C3%BCrtemberg\\_German\\_Empire\\_Church\\_Records](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/W%C3%BCrtemberg_German_Empire_Church_Records)

<sup>xi</sup> <https://www2.landesarchiv-bw.de/ofs21/olf/struktur.php?bestand=18750&klassi=013>

<sup>xii</sup> Note the different spelling of Württemberg, the only such spelling variation in their catalog.

<sup>xiii</sup> Mergentheim (Württemberg). Oberamt, Auswanderungsakten, 1835-1902, F-184 Auswanderungsakten Bd. 320-321a, FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/309481>), microfilm #838303, not indexed, image 76 of 705, Caspar Schmitt, #71.

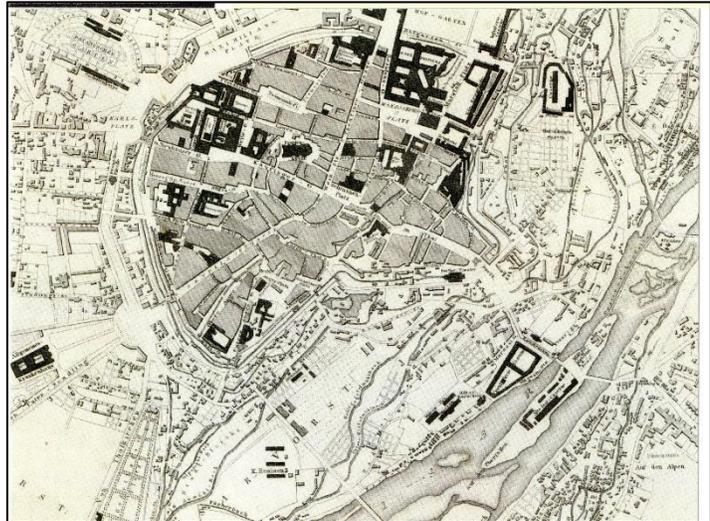
## Researching Bavaria, Part IV: The American Consulate in Munich, 1833 - 1912

BY KENNETH W. HEGER, PH.D.

**T**he Kingdom of Bavaria was the largest, most populous, and richest state in southern Germany. Bavaria was also the source of many immigrants who made the United States their home, a prime vacation spot for Americans traveling abroad, and the site of some of the finest art and music schools in Europe, schools that attracted many American students. With so many factors connecting the people of the United States with Bavaria, records documenting Americans in Bavaria are an important source of research material. This article focuses on the records of the American Consulate in Munich; it is the fourth<sup>1</sup> of a seven-part series discussing the sources at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), that the Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society (MAGS) will describe and index on the Society's website.

### THE CONSULATE IN MUNICH

The Kingdom of Bavaria was a large, constituent state of the German Confederation with its own vote in the Diet, the Confederation's parliament. After the foundation of the German Empire in 1871, Bavaria remained far larger than any other German state other than Prussia and developed into an economic powerhouse. As the seat of Bavaria's government, Munich was an important city, and by the early nineteenth-century it was a hub of commercial activity and a center for the arts. In recognition of Bavaria's status, the Department of State opened a consulate in Munich in 1832 and appointed Robert Rudeoffer to oversee it in July of that year. In 1856 Andrew Ten Brook became the post's second consul; that is when the remaining consular records kept in Munich begin. In 1902, the Department elevated the post to a consulate-general to reflect its significance representing the United States to the government of the Kingdom of Bavaria.



*A map of Munich circa 1830*

In addition to helping American companies do business in Bavaria, the consulate looked after Americans who resided in or traveled through Munich. In 1898, a State Department inspection of the post revealed that Munich's population was approximately 430,000. That report

commented on the large number of Americans traveling through Munich and the surrounding area. The consulate estimated there were 2,500 Americans residing in the consulate's district, a fact that made an impression on the inspector. In his report to the Department of State, the inspector stressed that many of these 2,500 were young people. He wrote that "hundreds of American students resided in Munich, many of whom are young ladies in attendance of schools of music and painting, and all of whom need and should have refuge and moral support of a United States Consulate."<sup>iii</sup>

## THE RECORDS

The consulate's records reflect the range of its activities. They are a gold mine for family historians and there are a lot of records. There are 244 bound volumes, 4 boxes, and 13 rolls of microfilm. You can find extensive reports on Bavaria's social, political and economic conditions, the kind of data you need to put your ancestor's life in context. Perhaps of greater value to genealogists are the hundreds of records relating to individual people. These documents include death reports, protection of American citizens, marriage contracts, and assistance to American pensioners living in the district. One key detail is the records' date range. Except for the despatches the consulate sent to Washington, D.C., the records the post generated during Rudeoffer's tenure (1832-1855) no longer exist.

### Note on the Geographic Area the Records Cover

Although the records the Munich post created pertain primarily to southern Bavaria, it is common to find documentation of other geographic areas. Located in the capital city, the consulate had frequent contact with the Kingdom's government. As such, the consulate often handled matters dealing with the northern portions of Bavaria, the exclave of the Bavarian Palatinate (located west of the Rhine River), and even matters relating to Americans in the Austrian Empire, located just to Bavaria's south.

## THE MAGS GUIDE TO THE MUNICH CONSULAR RECORDS

Before giving some examples of the information you can find among the documents, a few words about the new MAGS Guide to the Munich consulate records are in order, which your Society has posted to the members-only portion of the MAGS website. If you have an ancestor whom you think might have interacted with the consulate in Munich, you should make time to access and read through the document. In fact, *Using the Records of the American Consulate in Munich for Family History, 1833-1917* might be your best friend as you begin your research.

The nearly 100-page guide is divided into five parts: An introduction to the consulate to put the records in context; A section discussing the records the Department of State filed in its office in Washington, D.C.; A section discussing the records the Consulate kept onsite in Munich; How to access the records at NARA; and Five appendices. The guide includes the information you need if you want to request copies from or examine the documents at NARA and if you cite them in your research notes. Be sure to note that information as you do your work.

To further tempt you to examine the guide, note that the section discussing the despatches the consulate sent to the Department of State in Washington, D.C. contains an extensive list of specific despatches that focused on individuals. Those despatches are divided into categories. The primary categories are: Birth Reports; Death Reports; Estate Matters; Passport and Citizenship Matters; Protection of Americans Who Had Not Served in the Bavarian Military; Pensioners; Inquiries for Whereabouts of People; Cases of Wayward Clergy; Validity of a Citizen's Marital Status; Arrests and Assaults on Citizens; and Artists.

You should pay attention to the appendices. Each one delves deeply into a discrete series of records, extracting names of individuals documented among the records, thereby creating a rudimentary index. These lists make your research a snap. The appendices are:

- Appendix A – Names Registered at the Consulate 24 November – 30 December 1881 (Despatch 3 January 1882; No. 43)<sup>iii</sup>
- Appendix B – Guide to Instructions and Despatches from the Department of State, January 1898 – July 1912
- Appendix C – Calendar of Documents in Official Letters Sent (Vol. 1G) dated October 1866 – May 1867
- Appendix D – Estate Case Files, 1892 – 1904
- Appendix E – Names Indexed in the Miscellaneous Record Book (Vol. 1F) 1856 – 1899

Remember, this research tool is available only to MAGS members at [www.magsgen.com](http://www.magsgen.com).

## DEATHS OF AMERICANS

Death reports serve as a great example of the value of consular records. They are a key record type for genealogists; fortunately, reporting the deaths of American citizens abroad was a key duty of American foreign service posts. Most of the reports include the deceased's age, date and place of death, and the cause of death. Some reports contain residences and names of relatives in Germany, names of family members traveling with the deceased, and next-of-kin in the United States, 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 reports include official death notice documents, such as the German *Sterbekunde* or the Department of State's standard form 192, *Report of the Death of an American Citizen*.

### Despatches, Instructions, Miscellaneous Notes, and Special Case Files

Munich's records are noticeably rich in documentation about Americans who died in Bavaria. They include death reports for Americans from all parts of the United States, perhaps reflecting the number of Americans who hailed from or traveled through the area. Information about deceased Americans can be in several record series.

There are despatches the consulate sent back to Washington, D.C.; communications from the Department of State in Washington, D.C. to Munich; notes the consulate made in miscellaneous records volumes; and an entire series of case files about estates of deceased Americans the consulate helped settle. Naturally there are not records for every deceased American in each category. A few examples are in order to illustrate the value of the records. Keep in mind the guide on the MAGS website contains scores of additional examples and tells you in which record series the consulate filed the reports.



*The Marienplatz in Munich. The image is from the author's collection.*

### **Death Reports for Americans from the Mid-Atlantic**

Despatch 23 February 1875; No. 174 reported the death of Miss Marie L. Peshine, of Newark, NJ. Miss Peshine was the daughter of John S. Peshine. She died on 22 February 1875 in Munich where she had been a student in at the German-American Academy.

Despatch 7 September 1889; No 78 reported the death of Frederick Weber of Philadelphia, PA. He died on 14 August 1889 in Kaiserslauten in the Bavarian Palatinate.

Despatch 26 March 1890; No. 95 reported the death of George Russell Craig. The 26-year old from Pittsburgh, PA died on 10 March 1890 in Munich.

Despatch 13 July 1891; No. 24 reported the death of Eva Rumpp, nee Schimmuer. She died in Memmingen on 29 June 1891. She had lived in Trenton, NJ.

Despatch 24 October 1895; No. 35 reported the death of Neville Craig. The 36-year old native of Brownsville, PA died in Munich on 17 September 1895.

Despatch 11 December 1897; No. 6 reported the death of Friedrich Johann Bussmann. He died on 29 September 1897 in Munich. The despatch listed his parents as Franz Heinrich Bussmann and Sopie Bussmann, nee Hiller, of Pittsburgh, PA.

Despatch 14 September 1904; No. 12 reported the death of William Edward Alcock of Baltimore, MD. Alcock died on 6 September 1904.



- Despatch 19 March 1903; No. 144 acknowledged the consulate had a copy of Duncan's will and made references to Duncan's connections to Pennsylvania and California.

**Instructions (Despatches) from Washington, D.C. to Munich**

- 22 January 1903; Despatch No. 104 and 2 March 1903 are two short reports concerning Duncan's death and her estate the Department provided the consulate, including suggestions on how to proceed in the matter.

**Estate Case File**

- Munich's records include a four-box series of records containing records relating primarily to litigation concerning the settlement of estates. The documents can include letters, telegrams, press copies of outgoing correspondence, printed documents, etc. They can be in English or German. Box 1 contains a large file pertaining to Duncan's estate.

**In-Depth Look at the Miscellaneous Records Book, 1856 – 1899**

The Munich consulate's Miscellaneous Record Book deserves special attention. Although the consulate only used 233 of this volume's 600 pages, it is a gold mine of information. It includes letters sent, marriage contracts, oaths, birth and death reports, powers of attorney, citizenship status for individuals, and other matters. The documents are handwritten and often difficult to read. Some documents are in German. There is an index in the volume's final pages. Remember, Appendix E of the MAGS Guide to the Munich records is a typed version of the volume's handwritten index. The typed list is easier to use.

**Examples** (the text extracted from the volume is in italics to indicate an exact quotation; it has no other significance.)

**Morris Eising and Sophie Eising – Citizenship and Marriage**

*30 May 1884 (p. 205)*

*Marriage paper for Morris Eising, who received his admission as a U.S. Citizen October 17<sup>th</sup>, 1873 at the Circuit Court of Maryland and who desired to marry Sophie Eising of Wallerstein, Gericht Nördlingen (September)*

**Algernon Sydney Carpenter and Caroline Emma Krauss – Marriage**

*16 June 1885 (p. 210)*

*Marriage paper for Algernon Sydney Carpenter of Philadelphia, PA, U.S.A. who is unmarried and intends to marry Caroline Emma Krauss of Leipzig, whose mother is living.*

**George H. Baumann – Transportation of Books**

*30 September 1885 (p. 212)*

*George H. Baumann of Wilmington, Delaware takes books with him to America which are for his use there and not for sale.*

### **Henry Barkhaus – Death of American Citizen**

*2 October 1886 (p. 218) - The consulate transcribed an outgoing letter.*

*To Whom it May Concern*

*The accompanying letter from Mr. F.W. Barkhaus, father of Joseph Henry Barkhaus, recently deceased in Munich authorizes Mr. Walter E. Stevens to receive all the effects left him and he is thereby the proper person to receive them.*

*7 October 1886 (p. 218) – The consulate noted it completed a certificate to ship Barkhaus' body back to San Francisco.*

The citation is: **RG 84, Records of Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State; Records of the American Consulate in Munich Germany; Miscellaneous Record Book; Volume 1F; NAID 1327645**. At the time of this article, the volume is digitized and the scans in the archive's custody. The plan is to post the volume online in the course of business; when that happens you can access the images on NARA's website ([www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)) using the NAID on the *Research Our Records* page on NARA's website. That process will take time. In the meantime, if you find a reference to your ancestor, contact the archive and they can provide you with a copy of the documents you request for a fee. The guide on the MAGS website will give you the information you need to request a specific page from the volume.

### **ACCESSING THE RECORDS**

Because the records of the consulate in Munich are not digitized<sup>iv</sup>, you 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. Consult NARA's website [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov) for additional information on hours of operation and research room rules prior to your visit.

For additional details and guidance, you should consult the Guide to the Records of the American Consulate in Munich in the members-only section of the MAGS website. The guide provides additional information about the consulate, more details about the records, and supplemental lists of names.

### **FUTURE ARTICLES IN THIS SERIES**

This series of articles will continue in upcoming issues of *Der Kurier*.

- Part V: The Consulate in Nürnberg
- Part VI: The Bavarian Palatinate
- Part VII: Other Sources Available on the MAGS Website About Bavaria (This will include visuals, quick facts sheets, and additions to the searchable database)

<sup>i</sup> You can find the first three articles: Kenneth W. Heger. "Researching Bavaria, Part I: Introduction and Augsburg." *Der Kurier: Quarterly of the Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society* December 2018 (Vol. 36, No. 4): 127-137; Kenneth W. Heger. "Researching Bavaria, Part II: The American Consulate in Bamberg, 1890-1908." *Der Kurier: Quarterly of the Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society* March 2019 (Vol. 37, No. 1): 6-14.; and Kenneth W. Heger. "Researching Bavaria, Part III: The American Consulate in Fürth, 1872-1898." *Der Kurier: Quarterly of the Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society* June 2019 (Vol. 37, No. 3): 67-73.

<sup>ii</sup> Inspection Report 26 March 1898, Inspection Reports of U.S. Consulates, 1896 – 1902, pp. 62-65, Vol. 3, Entry 867, NAID 1229805, NARG 59.

<sup>iii</sup> I thank MAGS member Gunter Schanzenbacher for his work extracting the names from this list and putting them in a searchable database.

<sup>iv</sup> Note the impending exception of the Miscellaneous Record Book.

## DER KALENDER

## THE CALENDAR

### 2019

**October 12. Ohio Chapter, Palatines to America**, Plain City, Ohio, Fall Seminar: "German Roots and Records" with James M. Beidler, Der Dutchman Restaurant, 445 Jefferson Avenue, U.S. Route 42, Plain City, OH, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Room block available at Hilton Garden Inn, 500 Metro Place North, Dublin, OH 43017; (614) 766-9900 – Group Code SMERF. Online registration at the website: <https://oh-palam.org/registernow.php>

Or: make check payable to Ohio Chapter – Palam and mail to: Joe Stamm, 3930 Lander Road, Chagrin Falls, OH 44022-1329, questions? [lindabelle@lcs.net](mailto:lindabelle@lcs.net)

**Oct. 25-26, Mid-Atlantic German Society workshop and conference**, Martinsburg, WV. <https://magsgen.com> Friday workshop: Bob Greiner on maps: Speakers for Saturday's "German Migration in the Mid-Atlantic States" are: Karen Good Cooper, Debra A. Hoffman, Kenneth W. Heger.

### 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.

SUE & GEORGE ANTHONY of OLEAN, NY  
(*Anthony, Kohl, Lass, Fowler*)

DORIS BAGLIONE of WHITESTONE, NY  
(*No Names*)

JOYCE BAUMBACH of PLANO, TX  
(*Rödel, Schablik, Kaufmann, Karsten*)

CAROLINE BAXTER of HARTLY, DE  
(*Eberspacher, Kuebler, Eiermann, Groskauf*)

PAMELA BLAHA of POLK, OH  
(*Wohnsiedler, Diehl, Hunsberger, Wolfe*)

TAMARA COMPTON of SILVER SPRING, MD  
(*Lucas, Warns, Moses, Rosenboom*)

SUZETTE CORRADO of SADDLE RIVER, NJ  
(*Bender*)

LINDA G. DARBY of LARKSPUR, CA  
(*Fritz, Schleicher, Cramer, Nicolas*)

HELENE D'AURIA of WOODLAND HILLS, CA  
(*Houseal/Hausihl, Galheber, Starke*)

RALPH ECKARD of GRANITE BAY, CA  
(*Eckard, Eckert, Weber*)

PATRICIA EMSLIE of PALO ALTO, CA  
(*No Names*)

- MICHELLE ENKE of WICHITA, KS  
(*Enke, Buchholz, Borlish, Poppenhouse*)
- ROBERT FOWLER of WESTMINSTER, MD  
(*No Names*)
- BARBARA GIMPERLING of CROFTON, MD  
(*No Names*)
- LISA S. GORRELL of MARTINEZ, CA  
(*Hork, Wollenweber, Sievert, Schotts*)
- KATHRYN GRATOP of RENO, NV  
(*Cook, Koch, Janson, Heinz*)
- JENNIFER HARRIS of PORTOLA VALLEY, CA  
(*Schmidt, Mueller, Hoenicka, Mayer*)
- ELEANOR HEDENKAMP of MENLO PARK, CA  
(*Hedenkamp, Schlackhuber, Köpke/Köpcke, Eckhof*)
- DAVID HEEREN of PLACERVILLE, CA  
(*Heeren, Tammeus, Harrenstein, Dieken*)
- ELIZABETH NITSCHKE HICKS of HOUSTON, TX  
(*Nitschke, Meissner, Haase, Richter*)
- LINDA & ARTHUR JENNE of WESTMINSTER, MD  
(*Nelson, Weibel, Poole, Wagner*)
- BERTRAM LATTIMORE of LEXINGTON, MA  
(*No Names*)
- JAMES LAUR of LOS ANGELES, CA  
(*Laur, Lawr, Lewman, Luman*)
- MARY LEB of LOMIRA, WI  
(*Eirschele/Jirschele, Mistele, Leb, Zimmer*)
- NANCY LENEIS of SACRAMENTO, CA  
(*Vogt, Rorbach, Leneis, Grossmann*)
- JOANNE LUETHY of SACRAMENTO, CA  
(*No Names*)
- LISA McCOWN of MALABAR, FL  
(*Stelljes, Monsees, Kuck*)
- BILL McDOWELL of CUMMING, GA  
(*No Names*)
- SCOTT MILLER of ALLISON PARK, PA  
(*Miller, Algire, Zimmermann, Overly*)
- GORDON MULL of HAYMARKET, VA  
(*Mull, Moll, Schiereck*)
- SUE NAEGELI of RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, CA  
(*No Names*)
- ANN & JOHN ROEDER of NEW WINDSOR, MD  
(*Roeder, Zeidler, Krauss, Tamm*)
- MARIE ROPER of ANNAPOLIS, MD  
(*Bowman/Bauman, Margraff, Resh, Sigler*)
- CHRISTIANNE OFF of MISSION VIEJO, CA  
(*Off, Staub*)
- BARBARA KAETZEL ROW of BEDFORD, PA  
(*Kaetzel, Bovey, Sheetz, Kearns*)
- JANET RUPERT of ZION GROVE, PA  
(*Rupert, Mensinger, Sauters/Saulters, Beutel/Beitel*)
- DOUGLAS & PATRICIA SAATHOFF of CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA  
(*Hess, Saathoff, Schindler, Bennett*)
- WILLIAM SCHWETKE of WARRENTON, VA  
(*Schwetke/Schwetje/Schwetye, Brinkmeier, Nürge Kobusch*)
- KATHLEEN SHANNON of YUBA CITY, CA  
(*Vawter, Schedler, Leibnitz*)
- JEFFREY SHARON of UPPER ARLINGTON, OH  
(*Zerbe, Kobel, Mumma, Brensinger*)
- PAMELA SHERLOCK of CUMMING, GA  
(*Steark, Von Thar, Hermesdorf, Borscha*)
- JOHN SHOCK of BETHEL PARK, PA  
(*Schauck/Schaak/Shock, Hetrick/Hetterich, Ebaugh/Ybach*)
- MICHELLE STARKS of BALTIMORE, MD  
(*Kuhn, Gephard*)
- MARGIE SZYMANSKYJ of CRYSTAL LAKE, IL  
(*Klinke, Klinikovska, Karweleitis, Bohse*)
- CAROLINE TASSEY of BURLINGTON, VT  
(*Sensabaugh, Shryock*)
- KATHERINE WENNING of CINCINNATI, OH  
(*Weddle, Songer, Hughes, Martin*)
- TRACY WINKLER of CERRITOS, CA  
(*Frenz, Juhl(s), Baer, Hartig*)
- KAREN ZIMMERMAN of INDIANAPOLIS, IN  
(*Euler, Merkle, Knoos, Schriver*)



# The Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society

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How did you hear about MAGS?

\_\_\_\_\_

List four names you are researching.

\_\_\_\_\_

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New members joining anytime during the  
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