

Germany

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INTRODUCTION

This outline introduces records and research strategies that can help you discover your German ancestors. It teaches terminology and describes the contents, uses, and availability of major genealogical records. You can use this outline to set meaningful research goals and select the records that will help you achieve your goals.

Generally, you must know a specific *town* where a German relative was born or married before beginning your research, because most records were kept locally.

You will need a basic understanding of genealogical research procedures before you begin to look for your ancestors. You may want to read the booklet, *Guide to Research*, which is available at the Family History Library and at family history centers. *Guide to Research* is also available in German.

Genealogical information is available through the Family History Library or by correspondence directly with Germany. In some areas of Germany, however, opportunities for genealogical research are limited for the following reasons:

- Some records have been destroyed.
- Some records are restricted from public use.
- Some records are not easily accessible.
- Some records are hard to use or read.
- Some record keepers may be unable or unwilling to search their records for you.

Despite these obstacles, there are many other sources you can use to find German ancestors. This outline discusses those sources.

Using This Outline

The “German Search Strategies” section of this outline explains how to effectively research your family history. This section is particularly valuable if you are just beginning your research.

The “Records Selection Table” on page 7 helps you select records to search. “Records at the Family History Library” describes the library's collection of German records. The “Family History Library Catalog” section explains how to use the library's catalog to find specific records in the collection.

Beginning on page 10, the outline discusses the major records used for German research, such as “Church Records” and “Civil Registration.” These sections are listed alphabetically, and the section headings are the same as the subject headings used in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog.

Related records and concepts are grouped together under the same heading. For example, information about the history of emigration from Germany, passenger lists, and emigration indexes are discussed under “Emigration and Immigration.”

In this outline, German-language terms are frequently given in brackets and italics after the English terms, such as Marriages [*Heiraten*]. English translations in parentheses follow German-language book, microfilm, or microfiche titles. German spellings are used for German place-names. For example, *Bayern* is used instead of *Bavaria*, and *Preußen* is used instead of *Prussia*.

This outline does not mention all possible genealogical record sources. At the end of the outline, you will find a brief list of additional subject headings under “Other Records” and a short bibliography of sources under “For Further Reading.” For help tracing German emigrants, use the research outlines for the country of arrival and the *Tracing Immigrant Origins* research outline.

GERMAN SEARCH STRATEGIES

Step 1. Identify What You Know about Your Family

Begin your family history research with family and home sources. Look for names, dates, and places in certificates, family Bibles, obituaries, diaries, photographs, and similar sources. Ask your relatives for any information they may have. It is very likely that your second cousin, great-aunt, or other relative already has some family information. Organize the information you find and record it on pedigree charts and family group record forms.

Step 2. Decide What You Want to Learn

First, select a specific German relative or ancestor *for whom you know at least a name, the town or parish where he or she lived in Germany, and an*

approximate date of birth or marriage. It is also very helpful to know your ancestor's religion and the names of other family members born in the same area.

If you do not have enough information on your German relative, review the sources mentioned in step one. The “Emigration and Immigration” section of this outline gives more suggestions for finding an emigrant ancestor's birthplace. The *Tracing Immigrant Origins* research outline may also help.

Next, decide what you want to learn about your ancestor, such as a marriage date and place or parents' names. You may want to ask an experienced researcher or a librarian to help you select a specific research goal that you can achieve.

It is usually best to begin by verifying information about the ancestor for whom you know the most, and then continue searching from there. It is often hard to find an ancestor's records when you know only a name and country of birth. With so little information, your research is limited to a few general indexes like the International Genealogical Index and Ancestral File.

Step 3. Select a Record to Search

Effective researchers begin by obtaining background information about their ancestor. Then they survey previous research in compiled records. Finally, they search original documents.

Background Information Sources. You may need some geographical and historical information. You can save time and effort by focusing your research in the correct place and time period.

- *Locate the town or place of residence.* Examine maps, gazetteers, and other place-finding aids to learn about each of the places where your ancestors lived. Identify the major migration routes, nearby cities, county boundaries, geographical features, and government or ecclesiastical jurisdictions. Place-finding aids are described in the “Maps,” “Gazetteers,” and “History” sections of this outline.
- *Review history.* Understanding Germany's history will help you search because historical events affected the development of records. If possible, study a history of the areas where your ancestors lived. Look for clues about the people, places, religions, and events that may have affected their lives and the records about them. Records with information about settlement patterns, government and ecclesiastical jurisdictions, major migration routes, and historical events are described in the “Church History,” “Gazetteers,”

“Historical Geography,” “History,” and “Periodicals” sections of this outline.

- *Learn about German jurisdictions.* Knowing about past and present German political subdivisions will help you search. See the “Historical Geography” section of this outline for general information. The “Church Records” section tells you how to determine which parish a village was in, and the “Gazetteers” section explains how to find the civil registration office for each town.
- *Use language helps.* German records and histories are usually written in German or Latin. You do not need to speak or read German or Latin to search the records, but you will need to recognize some key words and phrases. Helpful language aids are described in the “Language and Languages” section of this outline.

Previous Research Sources. Most genealogists survey research previously done by others because it can save time and give valuable information. You may want to look for your ancestor in these sources:

- Printed family histories and genealogies
- Biographies
- Local histories
- The International Genealogical Index
- Ancestral File
- The Family Group Records Collection

Records containing previous research are described in the “Biography,” “Genealogy,” “History,” “Periodicals,” and “Societies” sections of this outline. Remember that previous research may contain inaccuracies, so you should verify the information whenever possible.

Original Records. After surveying previous research, you will be ready to begin research in original documents, which are usually handwritten in the native language and are often available on microfilm or microfiche. These documents can provide primary information about your family because they were usually recorded at or near the time of an event by a reliable witness. To do thorough research, search records of:

- Each *place* where your ancestor lived.
- Each religious *parish* or congregation in which your ancestor lived.

- The *time period* when your ancestor lived there.
- All *jurisdictions* that may have kept records about your ancestor (town, parish, province, state, and nation).

Many types of original documents are described in this outline. In German genealogical research, most family information is found in the records described under “Church Records” and “Civil Registration.”

Step 4. Find and Search the Record

Suggestions for Obtaining Records. You may obtain the records you need from the following sources:

- *Family History Library.* You are welcome to use the records available at the Family History Library. The library is open to the public, and there are no fees for using the records. If you would like more information about the library and its services, write to the following address:

Family History Library
35 North West Temple Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84150
USA

Or check our website at: www.familysearch.org

- *Family history centers.* Copies of most of the records on microfilm at the Family History Library can be lent to more than 2,000 family history centers. There are small duplication and postage fees for this service.

The library cannot lend its books to the centers, but copies of many books not protected by copyright are available on microfilm or microfiche. For a list of the family history centers near you, write to the Family History Library or check our website at: www.familysearch.org.

- *Archives and local churches.* Most of the original documents you will need are in Germany at state, church, and local archives or in local parish offices. Although the Family History Library has many of these records on microfilm or microfiche, others are available only at these archives (see the “Archives and Libraries” section of this outline).

You can write to archives and local parishes to request information, but be careful not to ask for too much. An archive can briefly answer questions about which records are in its collection. If a parish

or archive is reluctant to do research, ask for a referral or a list of local researchers you could hire to search the records. Complete instructions on how to prepare a genealogical letter in German are given in the Family History Library publication, *German Letter-Writing Guide* (34066).

- *Libraries and interlibrary loan.* Public, academic, and other research libraries may have some published sources for German research. Your local public library may provide interlibrary loan services that allow you to borrow records from other libraries. The Family History Library does not participate in the interlibrary loan system.
- *Professional researchers.* You can hire a private researcher to search records for you. Many researchers specialize in German records. Lists of qualified professional researchers and a four-page guide, *Hiring a Professional Genealogist*, are available from the Family History Library and family history centers. Local churches in Germany may provide names of individuals who can search their records for you.
- *Photocopies.* The Family History Library and some other libraries offer limited photoduplication services for a small fee. You must specify the exact pages you need copied. Books protected by copyright cannot be copied in their entirety. However, a few pages can usually be copied for personal research. The library does not copy large portions of microfilm. The archives that have the original records usually do not offer this service either.

Photocopying facilities are not always available in Germany. Archives and parish offices rarely offer photographic prints of records. When they do, the costs may be relatively high.

When requesting photocopies and other services from libraries or professional researchers, you will have more success if your letter is brief and very specific. Cite the record, person, event date, and, if possible, page number you want. Do not ask for too much at once. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped, long envelope when writing *within your own country*.

Suggestions for Searching the Records. Follow these principles as you search the records for your ancestor:

- *Search for one generation at a time.* Do not try to connect your family to others with the same surname who lived more than one generation before your proven ancestor. It is much easier to prove parentage than descent.

- *Search for the ancestor's entire family.* When you find information about an ancestor, the record may include clues for identifying other family members. In most families, children were born at regular intervals. If there appears to be a long period between some children, reexamine the records for a child you may have overlooked. Consider looking at other records and in other places to find a missing family member.
- *Examine a copy of the original record.* In some cases, transcripts of the original records are available. These may be easier to read, but they may be less accurate than the original records.
- *Search each source thoroughly.* A minor detail in a record may be the clue you need to find an ancestor or trace a family further. Note your ancestor's occupation and address and the names of witnesses, godparents, neighbors, relatives, guardians, and others. Also note the places of origin of these additional people.
- *Search a broad time period.* Dates obtained from some sources may not be accurate. Search records from several years before and after the date you think an event took place.
- *Look for indexes.* Many records have indexes that may help you find an ancestor quickly. These indexes are usually located at the beginning or the end of a record. However, many indexes are incomplete. They may include only the name of the specific person the record is about. They may not include parents, witnesses, or other incidental persons. Also be aware that the original records may have been misinterpreted or names may have been omitted during indexing.
- *Search for information about prior residences.* Information about previous residences is crucial to successfully continuing research into earlier generations.
- *Watch for spelling variations.* Spelling was not standardized until the late nineteenth century, and names were often written phonetically. Many names were spelled differently than they are today. You may find a surname spelled differently for each member of the family.
- *Record your searches and findings.* Make copies of the information you find, and keep detailed notes about each record you search. These notes should include the author, title, location, call number, description, and results of your search (even if you find nothing). Many researchers use a research log for this purpose.

Step 5. Use the Information

Evaluate the Information You Find. Carefully evaluate whether the information you find is complete and accurate. Ask yourself these questions:

- Who provided the information? Did that person witness the event?
- Was the information recorded near the time of the event or at a later date?
- Is the information consistent and logical?
- Does the new information verify the information found in other sources? Does it differ from information in other sources?
- Does the information suggest other places, time periods, or records to search?

Share Your Information with Others. Your family history can become a source of enjoyment for you and your family. You can submit your family history information through the Internet site: www.familysearch.org. You may want to compile your findings into a family history and share it with family members, the Family History Library, and other archives.

If you are a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, be sure to submit information about your deceased family members so you can provide temple ordinances for them. Your ward family history consultant or a staff member at the Family History Library or your family history center can help you. You can also use the booklet, *A Member's Guide to Temple and Family History Work*, available through Church distribution (item number 34697).

RECORDS AT THE FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY

Microform Records

The Family History Library presently has more than 100,000 microfilms and microfiche containing information about people who lived in Germany. Most of the library's records have been obtained through an extensive and ongoing acquisition program. The library has copies of records found in government archives, church archives, and private collections.

These records include the following:

- Church and civil birth, marriage, and death records.
- Passenger lists.
- Family histories and genealogical collections.

The library has an extensive collection of genealogical sources for some areas of Germany. For example, the library has a large percentage of the birth, marriage, and death records for Rheinland, the Pfalz (Palatinate), Baden, Württemberg, and Mecklenburg.

The library also has records from many areas that were once part of Germany that now belong to a neighboring country. These include:

- Records from the province of Elsaß-Lothringen (Alsace-Lorraine), which is now part of France.
- Records from the eastern provinces of Preußen (Posen, Pommern, Ostpreußen and Westpreußen, Schlesien, and parts of Brandenburg), which are now part of Poland, Lithuania, and Russia.
- Records from the northern portion of Schleswig-Holstein, which is now part of Denmark.

The library does not have records for every time period or locality in Germany. For example, the library has few records from Hannover, Oldenburg, Bayern, and Sachsen. Most library records are for the years before 1875.

Printed Records

The library has thousands of books and other printed materials helpful for German research. Copies of some of these books are also available in microform. The library's collection includes such books as:

- Atlases and maps.
- Church inventories.
- Family histories.
- Gazetteers.
- Handbooks and manuals.
- Histories (national, regional, and local).

- Lineage books.
- Village lineage books.

FAMILYSEARCH™

FamilySearch is a powerful computer system that simplifies family history work. The FamilySearch system includes the following:

- *Computer programs* designed to work on personal computers
- *Computer files* of information drawn from family history records gathered by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The main FamilySearch computer program helps a user search for ancestors in FamilySearch files. When the name of an ancestor is typed at the keyboard, FamilySearch quickly searches through millions of names and finds any that match. It matches last names that are spelled differently but sound the same. It can guide users from the matches they find to full screens of information—dates and places of birth, marriage, and death; and names of parents, children, and spouses.

The Family History Library and some family history centers have computers with FamilySearch. FamilySearch is a collection of computer files containing several million names. FamilySearch is a good place to begin your research. Some of the records come from compiled sources; some have been automated from original sources.

An increasing number of family history centers have access to the Internet. These services are also available at many public libraries, college libraries, and private locations.

The following FamilySearch files are useful for German research:

- *Ancestral File*. This file contains family history information linked in family groups and pedigrees. The file contains the names of over 36 million persons.
- *Family History Library Catalog*. This is an automated edition of the Family History Library's catalog. By using the catalog on FamilySearch, patrons may easily find information about the library's holdings and call numbers.
- *International Genealogical Index*. This file provides names and vital information for over 23 million deceased persons who lived in Germany. This valuable research tool lists birth, baptism, or marriage dates. The index for Germany includes

names extracted from parish registers by volunteers and names submitted by other researchers.

Other files will be added to FamilySearch as they become available.

THE FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY CATALOG

The key to finding a record in the Family History Library's collection is the Family History Library Catalog. The catalog describes each of the library's records and provides the call numbers. The catalog is available on compact disc as part of FamilySearch and also on microfiche. It is at the Family History Library and at each family history center.

Catalog entries for German records are usually written in German. The description of each record includes a brief English summary of the record's content. The key German words used in the catalog are found in the Family History Library publication *German Genealogical Word List* (34067).

The Family History Library Catalog on compact disc has five types of searches:

- Locality Search
- Locality Browse
- Surname Search
- Film Number Search
- Computer Number Search

The Family History Library Catalog on microfiche has four major divisions:

- Locality
- Subject
- Surname
- Author/Title

To find the records described in this outline, you will most often use the Locality Search, which organizes entries on geographic levels. Records relating to the entire country are listed under GERMANY. Most records are listed under a specific town or city. You may need to look at each geographic level (area, country, state, province, and town) to find all the records that apply to the locality in which you are interested. Look in the Locality Search for the following:

- The *place* where an ancestor lived, such as:

EUROPE
GERMANY (country)
GERMANY, WÜRTEMBERG (country, state)
GERMANY, WÜRTEMBERG, ULM (country, state, town)

- Then the *record type* you want, such as:

EUROPE - **NOBILITY**
GERMANY - **HISTORY**
GERMANY, WÜRTTEMBERG - **GAZETTEERS**
GERMANY, WÜRTTEMBERG, ULM - **CHURCH RECORDS**

The record types (or *topics*) used in the Locality Search of the catalog are the same as the subject headings used later in this outline (such as “Church Records”).

A list of German states and provinces as they appear in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog is found on page 35.

Towns in Preußen (Prussia)

Because Preußen was so large, all towns in Preußen are listed in the catalog after their *state and province*, as in this example:

GERMANY, PREUßEN, RHEINLAND, THÜR
(country, state, province, town)

The provinces of Preußen were Brandenburg, Hannover, Hessen-Nassau, Hohenzollern, Ostpreußen, Pommern, Posen, Rheinland, Sachsen, Schlesien, Schleswig-Holstein, Westfalen, and Westpreußen.

Whenever this outline suggests you look under GERMANY, [STATE] - [TOPIC], Preußen records are under GERMANY, PREUßEN - [TOPIC] or GERMANY, PREUßEN, [PROVINCE] - [TOPIC].

Towns in Thüringen (Thuringia)

Records for towns in Thüringen are listed twice: once under Thüringen and once under the specific duchy or principality the town belonged to. For example, a record listed under GERMANY, THÜRINGEN, SULZE (country, state, town) is also listed under GERMANY, SACHSEN-ALTENBURG, SULZE (country, duchy, town).

The duchies and principalities of Sachsen (Thüringen) were Reuß ältere Linie, Reuß jüngere Linie, Sachsen-

Altenburg, Sachsen-Coburg-Gotha, Sachsen-Meiningen, Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach, Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt, and Schwarzburg-Sondershausen. The Coburg part of Sachsen-Coburg-Gotha joined Bayern in 1920 and is listed under Bayern instead of Thüringen in the catalog.

Places Now Outside of Germany

German states, provinces, and counties have changed many times. The Family History Library Catalog lists records according to the jurisdictions of the German Empire (1871-1914). Records of places that were formerly part of Germany but that now belong to other countries are listed under *both* Germany and the other country in the Family History Library Catalog. For example, if a place is listed in the catalog under GERMANY, PREUßEN, SCHLESILIEN, BRESLAU, it is also listed under POLAND, WROCLAW, WROCLAW.

This rule applies to former German territories that are now part of France, Belgium, Denmark, Lithuania, Poland, and Russia. For more information about jurisdictions, see the “Gazetteers,” “Historical Geography,” “History,” and “Maps” sections of this outline.

This outline provides the library's call numbers for some of the listed sources. These numbers are preceded by *FHL*, the abbreviation for the Family History Library. The outline also provides Family History Library Catalog computer numbers for some sources. These numbers are preceded by *computer number*.

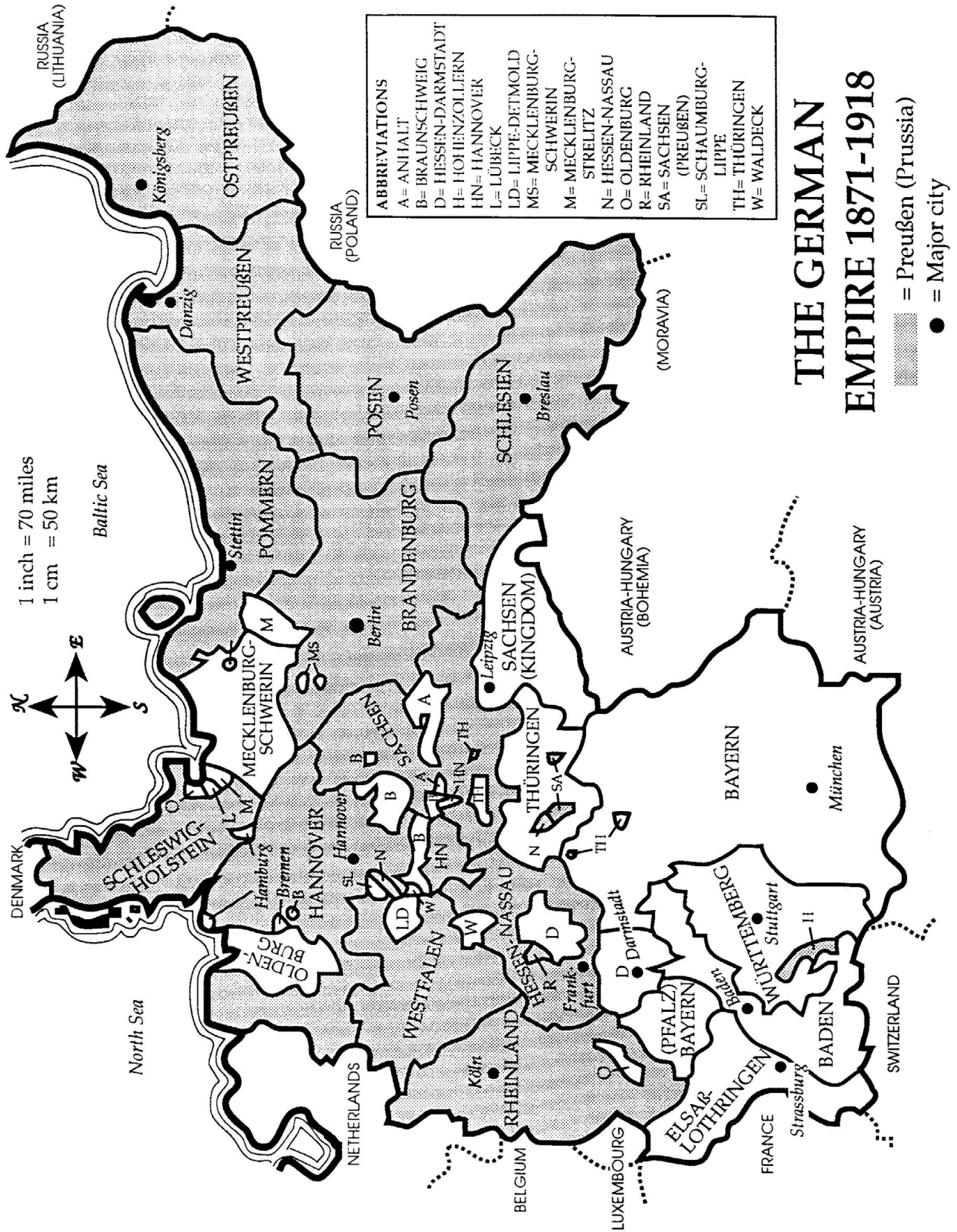
If you need help with the Family History Library Catalog, the Family History Library and Family History Centers have a short video program, written instructions, and staff members that can answer questions.

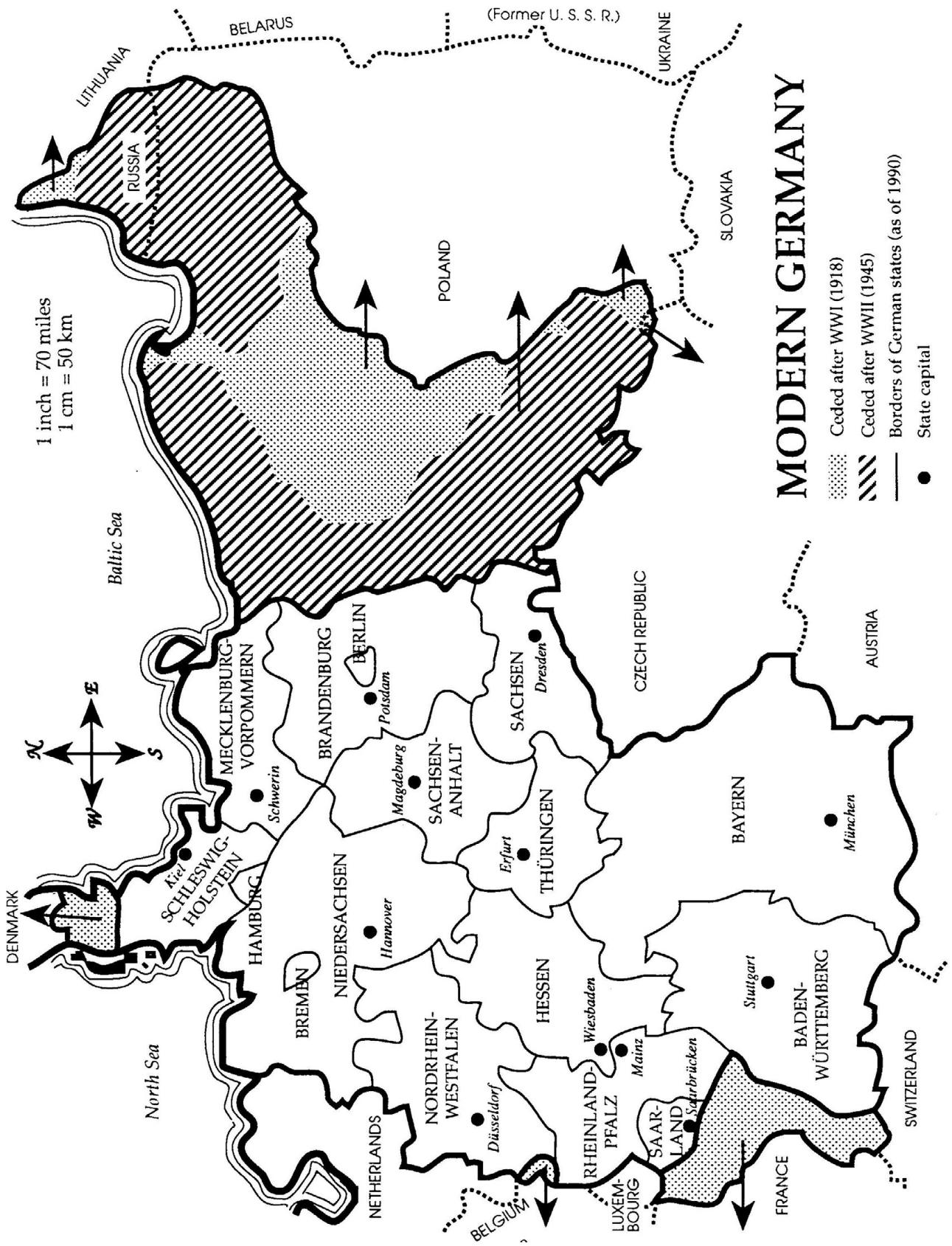
RECORDS SELECTION TABLE: GERMANY

This table can help you decide which records to search. In column 1, find the goal you selected. In column 2, find the types of records that are most likely to have the information you need. Then turn to that section of this outline. Additional records that may also be useful are listed in column 3.

The terms used in columns 2 and 3 are the same as the subject headings used in this outline and in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog. Records containing previous research (biography, genealogy, history, nobility, periodicals and societies) could provide information for most of the goals. These have not been repeatedly listed unless they are especially helpful for the goal.

1. If You Need	2. Look First In	3. Then Search
Age	Church Records, Civil Registration, Jewish Records	Obituaries, Naturalization and Citizenship, Schools
Birth date	Church Records, Civil Registration, Jewish Records	Obituaries, Occupations, Census
Birthplace	Church Records, Jewish Records, Census, Obituaries	Occupations, Naturalization and Citizenship, Schools, Military Records
Boundaries (parish, district, or county)	Gazetteers, Church History	Maps, History, Historical Geography
Death	Church Records, Civil Registration, Jewish Records, Obituaries, Newspapers	Probate Records, Court Records, Occupations, Cemeteries
Emigration information	Emigration and Immigration, Societies, Military Records, Periodicals, Newspapers	See the research outline for the country to which the ancestor immigrated
Historical background	History, Church History	Societies
Language helps	Language and Languages	Handwriting
Living relatives	Directories, Genealogy	Societies, Periodicals
Maiden name	Church Records, Civil Registration	Jewish Records, Obituaries
Marriage	Church Records, Civil Registration, Jewish Records	Genealogy, Periodicals, Nobility, Newspapers
Naming customs	Names (Personal)	Genealogy, Periodicals
Noble families	Nobility, Heraldry	Biography, Periodicals
Occupations	Church Records, Occupations, Directories, Population	Naturalization and Citizenship, Census, Church Directories, Dwellings
Parents, children, and other family members	Church Records, Civil Registration, Obituaries, Jewish Records	Probate Records, Land and Property, Naturalization and Citizenship
Physical description	Military Records, Biography	Genealogy, Emigration and Immigration
Place-finding aids	Gazetteers, Maps	Historical Geography
Places of residence	Population, Church Records, Emigration and Immigration, Directories, Jewish Records, Military Records	Biography, Genealogy, Census, Dwellings, Land and Property, Periodicals Names (Personal)
Previous research (compiled genealogy)	Genealogy, Periodicals, Societies	History, Biography, Nobility, Dwellings
Record-finding aids	Archives and Libraries, Church History, Church Directories	Societies, Periodicals





ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

Archives collect and preserve original documents from organizations such as churches or governments. Libraries collect mostly published sources, such as books, maps, and microfilm. This section describes Germany's major repositories of genealogical and historical records and sources.

If you plan to visit one of these repositories, contact the archive or library and ask for information about its collection, hours, services, and fees. Also ask who may use their facility.

Although the original records you need may be in an archive or library in Germany, the Family History Library may have a microfilm copy of them. Check the Family History Library Catalog before writing to or visiting archives in Germany.

German archives and parishes often refer family history letters to historical or genealogical societies. Members of these societies can usually search the local archives. Sometimes the archive will recommend other archives to which you can write. You will usually find what you need more quickly by contacting local parish or civil archives before larger state archives or libraries.

When writing to a German-speaking archive or library, it is best to write in German. For help in writing a letter in German, see the publication *German Letter-Writing Guide* (34066) available at the Family History Library and at family history centers.

There are six major types of genealogical repositories for German records:

- State archives
- German Center for Genealogy
- Archives outside of Germany
- Civil registration offices and town archives
- Church parish offices
- Historical and genealogical societies

“Deutsche Archive in Internet” (German Archives in the Internet) provides links to various archive web sites. Archives are sorted by type (state archives, communal archives, church archives, etc.).

www.uni-marburg.de/archivschule/fv61.html

State Archives

The German federal archives have very few records helpful to family historians. However, each modern state archive preserves useful records, including church records, civil registration records, court records, military records, emigration lists, and land records. German state archives are generally open to the public.

If the Family History Library does not have the records you need, you can contact the state archive for the area in which your ancestor lived. The archive will briefly describe its collections and provide a list of researchers you can hire to search the archive.

Addresses and websites for state archives in areas of heavy emigration are listed below.

- For Baden, write to:

Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe
Nördliche Hildapromenade 2
76133 Karlsruhe
GERMANY
e-mail available through www.Lad-bw.de

- For the Pfalz (Palatinate), write to:

Landesarchiv Speyer
Otto-Mayer-Str.9
67326 Speyer
GERMANY
e-mail: posta@Landesarchiv-speyer.de
website: <http://landeshauptarchiv.de/speyer/>

- For Rheinland (Rhineland), write to:

Landeshauptarchiv Koblenz
Postfach 201047
56013 Koblenz
GERMANY
e-mail: posta@Landeshauptarchiv-ko.de
website: <http://landeshauptarchiv.de>

German Center for Genealogy

The German Center for Genealogy [*Deutsche Zentralstelle für Genealogie*] was founded as an archive for genealogical materials. It has an extensive collection of German church records from Posen, Ostpreußen, Westpreußen, Pommern, and Schlesien (now in Poland, Russia, and Lithuania), and it has many records of German settlements in eastern Europe. The Family History Library has microfilms of these records, but if you need more information, you can contact the center. For a fee, employees of the center will try to find genealogical

sources. But as a general rule, research must be done in Leipzig by the researcher.

The address is:

Sächsisches Staatsarchiv Leipzig
Abt. Deutsche Zentralstelle für Genealogie
Schongauer Strasse 1
04329 Leipzig
GERMANY

Archives Outside of Germany

The Family History Library has on microfilm many German records from areas now in Poland, France, Denmark, Belgium, Russia, and Lithuania. If you cannot find the records you need in the Family History Library Catalog, you can write the parish where your ancestor lived, the German Center for Genealogy, or the archives of the country. The main archives outside of Germany are described below.

Poland. The Polish State Archives may be able to help you with records from Ostpreußen, Westpreußen, Pommern, Posen, Schlesien and other areas now under Polish jurisdiction. You may write in English, but it is better to write in Polish. There is a fee for any work done.

The address is:

Naczelna Dyrekcja
Archiwów Państwowych
Ul. Długa 6, skr. poczt. 1005
00-950 Warszawa
POLAND
Fax: 48-22-31-75-63

Addresses for State Archives in Poland can be found at:

www.rootsweb.com/~polwgv/addresses.html

Archives are arranged alphabetically by name of archive. E-mail addresses are included.

The State Archives hold civil registration records more than 100 years old.

France. For information from Elsaß-Lothringen (Alsace-Lorraine), contact one of the following archives:

- Archives départementales du Bas-Rhin
5, rue Fischart
67000 Strasbourg
FRANCE
e-mail: archives@cg67.fr

- Archives départementales du Haut-Rhin
Cité administrative
3, rue Fleischhauer
68026 Colmar Cedex 3
FRANCE
e-mail: cdhf@telmat-net.fr
Internet: <http://cdgf.telmat-net.fr>
- Archives départementales du Moselle
1, allée du château
57070 St. Julien-les-Metz
FRANCE
Internet: <http://www.archives57.com>

The French archivists will not do research, but they will help you determine what records are available. For help writing in French, see the Family History Library publication *French Letter-Writing Guide* (34059).

Archive information, including internet and e-mail addresses, for France are found at:

www.genealogy.tn/fr/archives/archives.html

Denmark. If your research is in Schleswig-Holstein, Oldenburg, Lübeck, or the part of Hamburg that was once part of Denmark, you may be able to hire a researcher through the Danish archive. You may write in English.

The address is:

Landsarkivet i Aabenraa
Haderslevvej 45
6200 Aabenraa
DENMARK
e-mail: mailbox@Laa.sa.dk
Website: <http://wnn.sa.dk/Laa>

Civil Registration Offices and Town Archives

In most areas, local governments began recording births, marriages, and deaths between 1792 and 1876. Although most records are kept in local offices, a few have been turned over to the state archives.

People who lived in small communities or villages usually registered in the nearest town, city, or municipality. Large cities and metropolitan areas are divided into civil registration districts. Civil registration records are not open for public inspection, but abstracts or photocopies are issued to direct descendants. If a particular archive does not have the records you seek, it will usually refer you to the correct archive. For more information about civil records, see the "Civil Registration" section of this outline.

Church Parish Offices

Most church records are kept at local parish offices. Some are sent to the area's central archive. If the Family History Library does not have the records that you need, you should first write (in German) to the local parish in the town where your ancestor lived. If the records have been moved, the local parish can usually tell you which archive currently has the records, and you can then write to that archive. See the "Church Records" section of this outline for more information.

Historical and Genealogical Societies

Dozens of German historical and genealogical societies exist in Germany and elsewhere. These groups have libraries or archives that collect valuable records. For more information, including addresses of the more prominent societies, see the "Societies" section of this outline.

Archive Addresses

The following are good directories of German archive addresses:

International Directory of Archives = Annuaire international des archives. München: K. G. Saur, 1992. (FHL book 020.5 Ar25 v. 38; computer number 36460.) You will need to update the postal codes in this directory by using the postal code book cited in the "Gazetteers" section of this outline.

1993 Updated Addresses to German Repositories. Burbank, Calif.: Immigrant Genealogical Society, 1993. (FHL book 943 D27gr 1993; computer number 712482.) Alphabetical by city.

Web sites that give archive addresses:

www.uni-marburg.de/archivschule/fv61.html

Web addresses by town & archive type:

www.ghi-dc.org/guide13/germarch.heml

State Archives of Baden and Wuerttemberg:

<http://www.Lad-bw.de/fr-sta.htm>

E-mail can be sent under "Kontakt" to each archive.

Inventories, Registers, Catalogs

Some archives have catalogs, inventories, guides, or periodicals that describe their records and how to

use them. If possible, study these guides before you visit or use the records of an archive so that you can use your time effectively.

The following source is an overall guide to the collections of archives and libraries in Germany:

Minerva-Handbücher. Archive: Archive im deutschsprachigen Raum (Minerva handbooks, archives in German-speaking areas). 2 vols. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1974. (FHL book 943 A5m 1974 Vol.1-2; computer number 245597.)

For a much shorter but more current list:

Pies, Eike. *Aktuelle Adressen und Informationen für Familienforscher* (Addresses and information for genealogists). Solingen: Verlag E. & U. Brockhaus, 1993. (FHL book 943 D24pe; computer number 720664.) Mainly includes German state archives, state-wide church archives, and genealogical society archives.

These guides are available at the Family History Library. They may also be available at your public or university library or through interlibrary loan.

The Family History Library has copies of some published inventories as well as guides, catalogs, and directories for other libraries. The following are examples of such sources:

Wermes, Martina, et al. *Bestandsverzeichnis der Deutschen Zentralstelle für Genealogie Leipzig* (Inventory of the German Center for Genealogy in Leipzig). 2 vols. Neustadt/Aisch: Degener, 1991-1992. (FHL book 943 D25gi vol. 24-25m; computer number 332537.)

Hope, Anne, and Jörg Nagler. *Guide to German Historical Sources in North American Libraries.* Washington, DC: German Historical Institute, 1991. (FHL book 970 A3ho; computer number 625316.)

These types of records are listed in the Family History Library Catalog under one of the following headings:

GERMANY - ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES - INVENTORIES, REGISTERS, CATALOGS
GERMANY, [STATE] - ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES - INVENTORIES, REGISTERS, CATALOGS
GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES - INVENTORIES, REGISTERS, CATALOGS

BIOGRAPHY

A biography is a history of a person's life. In a biography you may find birth, marriage, and death information and the names of parents, spouses, children, or other family members. Use information from a biography carefully because it may contain inaccuracies.

Many brief biographies have been gathered and published in collective biographies, sometimes called *biographical encyclopedias* or *biographical dictionaries*. These works usually include only biographies of prominent or well-known German citizens. Other collective biographies feature biographies of specific groups of people, such as merchants or students of an academy.

The source below is a collection of 263 important German biographical works published between 1700 and 1910:

Deutsches biographisches Archiv = The German Biographical Archive. München: K. G. Saur, 198-? (FHL fiche 6,002,159.) This work, on 1,447 microfiche, refers to about 225,000 eminent Germans.

An index to this collection is listed below:

Koch, Hans-Albrecht. *Deutscher Biographischer Index* (German biographical index). 4 vols. München: K. G. Saur, 1986. (FHL book 943 D32k Vol. 1-4; computer number 288688.) Available on the Internet at: www.biblio.tu-bs.de/wbi_en/

There are several other major collections of German biographies. Listed below are two important collections:

Führende Persönlichkeiten (Leading personalities). See the "Genealogy" section of this outline.

Neue Deutsche Biographie (New German biography). Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1953-. (FHL book 943 D3nd; computer number 227435.) The first 16 volumes, published through 1993, include the surnames Aachen to Melanchthon.

Collective biographies at the Family History Library are usually listed in the Locality Search of the catalog under:

GERMANY - BIOGRAPHY
GERMANY, [STATE] - BIOGRAPHY

You will also find some biographical information in German encyclopedias.

CEMETERIES

Most older German graves have been replaced with recently deceased persons and new tombstones. However, copies of some old tombstone inscriptions are available, especially for private or church cemeteries and crypts. Parish register burials, funeral sermons, bell tolling accounts, and civil registration death records are easier to find than tombstone inscriptions.

Cemetery records may include the deceased's name, age, death or burial date, birth year or date, and marriage information. They may also provide clues about military service, religion, occupation, place of residence at time of death, or membership in an organization, such as a lodge.

The Family History Library has copies of a few German cemetery records. They are most frequently found under the name of the town. These are listed in the Locality Search of the catalog under:

GERMANY, [STATE] - CEMETERIES
GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] -
CEMETERIES

CENSUS

A census is a count and description of the population. A few censuses have been taken by the various German states, provinces, or cities and by some ecclesiastical officials. Censuses were taken primarily for taxation or military purposes.

German censuses may not be as helpful as censuses from other countries because better sources, such as church records and civil registration, are available for Germany.

Censuses were not taken nationally in Germany and therefore exist for only a limited number of places and times. Only the compiled statistical information that was gathered from the censuses is generally available. Census records of some towns and regions may be accessible at various archives, but most are presently not available to researchers.

Use census information carefully since accurate information may not have been given to or understood by the census taker.

Census Records at the Family History Library

The census records of several areas have been microfilmed and are available at the Family History

Library. The 1819 census of Mecklenburg-Schwerin and various census records for Schleswig-Holstein are the most significant censuses available at the library.

Mecklenburg-Schwerin. The library has the 1819 census on 60 rolls of microfilm, but the 1860 census is not available. The 1819 census gives information about all those who lived in a particular household, including age, sex, birthplace, parish to which the birthplace belongs, marital status, and occupation. It also gives the length of residency and some additional comments. The census is arranged by district and city, and records are available for almost every town in Mecklenburg-Schwerin.

An index to the 1819 census is:

Schubert, Franz. *Mecklenburg-Schwerin Volkszählung 1819: Register der Familiennamen*. Berlin; Göttingen: Dittterich: Im Selbstverlag, 1981-1986. 2 vols. in 5. (FHL book 943.17 B4s ser. 4.) The indexes are bound at the back of each volume.

The index is also found on microfiche 6,001,784-788.

This census is listed in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY, MECKLENBURG-SCHWERIN - CENSUS

Schleswig-Holstein. Denmark ruled all of Schleswig-Holstein, including Lübeck and parts of Hamburg and Oldenburg, until 1864. Denmark took several censuses of this area. The first census was made in 1769, and subsequent censuses were taken in 1801, 1803, 1834, 1835, 1840, 1845, 1850, 1855, and 1860. The censuses are written in either German or Danish, sometimes with both on the same page. The information contained in the censuses varies according to which year it was taken:

- *1769.* This census names the head of each household and the number of people in the house, grouped by age and sex.
- *1801-1860.* Censuses taken from 1801 to 1860 list each person's name, residence, position in the family, age, marital status, and occupation.
- *1845 and later censuses.* From 1845 on, each census also lists birthplace, the parish of the birthplace, and the length of residency at the census place.

These censuses are microfilmed but not indexed. They are arranged by district and city. These census records are listed in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY, PREUBEN, SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN - CENSUS

The Family History Library has some less significant census records from a number of other German states. These are listed in the Locality Search of the catalog under:

GERMANY, [STATE] - CENSUS

Some indexes now available on-line at:
ddd.sa.dk/kiplink-en.htm

Searching Census Records

When searching census records, remember the following:

- Information may be incorrect.
 - The ages listed may not be correct.
 - A given name may not be the same as the name used in vital records.
 - Names may be spelled as they sound.
 - Place-names may be misspelled.
- Some parts of the census may be illegible.
- If the family is not at the expected location, you should search the surrounding area.

CHURCH DIRECTORIES

A church directory is a list of church officials, dioceses, and parishes. Church directories usually list all the parishes in a diocese, so you can determine if your ancestor's village had a parish church, and many directories list all villages belonging to a parish.

Church directories may include the following information:

- The earliest dates for which the church records of each parish exist. (This is similar to the church record inventories described in the "Church Records" section of this outline.)
- Historical information about each parish.
- A list of parishes by district. (This enables you to easily determine all neighboring parishes.)
- The complete address of the parish churches.
- The address of the diocese headquarters where additional records may be kept.

Roman Catholic Dioceses. Church directories exist for each individual Catholic diocese, but the Family History Library does not have copies of directories for all dioceses. Most of the directories in the library were published before 1960, and some information, such as the priest's name, may be out of date. The addresses and parish histories are usually still valid.

One way to determine which Roman Catholic diocese has jurisdiction over your ancestor's parish is to use the following source:

General-Schematismus der katholischen Geistlichkeit Deutschlands (Directory of the Catholic clergy of Germany). Passau: Verlag der Redaktion des General-Schematismus, 1905-1906. Microfilmed in Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress Photoduplication Service, 1981. (FHL film 1,340,500; computer number 112544.) This book is divided into the 25 German dioceses. The parishes within each diocese are listed in alphabetical order, followed by the pastor's name. There is no general index, so you must guess the diocese to find the parish. It does not mention which villages are in a parish.

A directory of dioceses and parish addresses in Germany is:

http://home.att.net/~local_Catholic/Catholic-Germany.htm

Protestant Churches. For jurisdictions in the Protestant churches, use the following source:

Deutsches kirchliches Adreßbuch (German church directory). Berlin: Evang. Preßverband, 1934. (FHL book 943 K24d 1934; computer number 48585; 1929 edition on film 476,672; computer number 48609.) This source is arranged by denomination and church district. Parishes are alphabetical within each district, and affiliated branches are listed. The place index [*Ortsregister*] at the end lists only parishes, not branches.

It is sometimes hard to determine which of many parishes in a city a family belonged to. The Family History Library Catalog lists directories that contain each city street address and its parish for Berlin, Breslau, Leipzig, and Magdeburg.

Church directories are listed in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY - CHURCH DIRECTORIES
GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN OF DIOCESE]
- CHURCH DIRECTORIES

Internet portal to the Evangelist Lutheran Churches in Germany is:

www.ekd.de/kirche/3218_karte.html

CHURCH HISTORY

Effective research in church records requires some understanding of your ancestor's religion and of the events that led to the creation of church records.

Roman Catholic

The Roman Catholic faith was accepted in parts of Germany from the fifth century after Christ onward. In the 1200s, German Crusaders, called the Teutonic Knights, conquered pagan Preußen and converted it to Catholicism. Catholicism remained the predominant faith of Germany until the 1500s, when the Reformation movements of Martin Luther and the Swiss religious reformers began to take hold.

There was much conflict between Catholics and Protestants. In the 1550s, the Catholic Church began a counterreformation movement. The Thirty Years' War, which swept across central Europe from 1618 to 1648, had its origins in religious conflicts between rulers of parts of Germany and Austria.

After the war, the Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed churches were the only recognized state churches. Smaller religious groups, such as Jews, Mennonites, and Huguenots, were still persecuted by the Protestant and Catholic churches.

Roman Catholics have remained more predominant in southern Germany than in northern Germany.

Evangelical (Lutheran) and Evangelical Reformed

Beginning in the 1500s, many Germans accepted Luther's teachings. The Evangelical, or Lutheran, Church was formally established by 1531. Despite persecution by both the Catholic Church and some governments, the Lutheran Church spread throughout Germany and became a prominent religion. Lutherans are more predominant in northern Germany than in southern Germany.

Protestants who accepted the creed of the Swiss Calvinist reformers became members of the Evangelical Reformed Church. This group was strong in some areas of Germany, especially in the Pfalz, Baden, Hessen, and near the Dutch border, but it had far fewer followers than the Lutherans.

Other Christian Groups

Anabaptists (Mennonites), Huguenots (French Protestants), Waldensians, Moravians, Dunkards, Separatists, and other groups have existed in Germany since the 1500s.

For more information about the history of the Mennonites and Huguenots, see the following sources:

Horsch, John. *Mennonites in Europe*. 2nd ed. Scottsdale, Penn.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1971. (FHL book 940 K21h; computer number 259726.)

Taylor, Charles. *The Huguenots in the Seventeenth Century*. London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent, 1892. Microfilmed by Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1983. (FHL film 1,231,509 item 13; computer number 200906.)

Weiss, M. Charles. *History of the French Protestant Refugees*. New York: Stringer and Townsend 1854. (FHL book 940 W2w; computer number 67063.)

CHURCH RECORDS

Church records [*Kirchenbücher*] are excellent sources for accurate information on names, dates and places of birth, marriage, and death. They are the most significant source of genealogical information for Germany before 1876. Most people who lived in Germany were recorded in a church record.

Records of births, marriages, and deaths are commonly called “vital records,” because critical events in a person's life are recorded in them. Church records that contain vital records were made by pastors and priests. They are often called *parish registers* or *church books*. They include records of births, baptisms, marriages, deaths, and burials. In addition, church records may include account books (which record fees for tolling bells, fees for masses for the dead, and so forth), lists of confirmations, lists of members, and family registers.

Church records are crucial for pre-1876 German research. Since civil authorities in several areas of Germany did not begin registering vital statistics until 1876, church records are often the only sources of family information before this date. Church records continued to be kept after the introduction of civil registration, but the Family History Library has not microfilmed many post-1876 church records. See “Civil Registration” in this outline for more information about post-1876 sources.

General Historical Background

The practice of keeping parish registers evolved slowly. The first surviving Protestant records are from 1524 at St. Sebald in Nürnberg. Lutheran churches in general began requiring baptism, marriage, and burial records in 1540; Catholics began in 1563. By 1650 most Reformed parishes began keeping records.

Many church records were destroyed in the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). In addition, records for some parishes in the Pfalz and Rheinland were interrupted for several years when the French controlled those areas of Germany from 1792 to 1815 and introduced civil registration.

Generally, the earliest church records are in western Germany. The farther east you go, the later the church records begin.

German church records are usually written in Latin or German. Records in German were usually written in Gothic script until as late as the 1930s.

Note the following points about German church records:

- Large cities have many churches, each serving part of the city. Rural churches often serve several villages and hamlets. Parish boundaries often changed, which affected where church records were kept.
- Military churches in garrison towns and cities often kept their own records separate from other parishes.
- In some parts of Germany, the death registers began later than the baptism and marriage registers, especially in Catholic records.
- The registers of baptisms, marriages, and deaths from different geographic areas vary considerably in the amount of information they provide. Each jurisdiction had its own record-keeping rules, and each recorder had his own style.
- In some areas, the records of people of other faiths were kept by the predominant church. The principal churches in Germany were the Catholic and Evangelical-Lutheran churches. For example, Jewish births were occasionally recorded at Catholic parishes, especially in areas where the church was used as the civil registration office.
- Parishes occasionally indexed their records. Indexes are usually filmed at the beginning or end of the record. Moreover, archives sometimes compile indexes of church records. For example, the Lübeck

Stadtarchiv has an alphabetical card index of all names in church records of several parishes at their archive. This index is at the Family History Library on 152 reels of microfilm (FHL films 450,475-626; computer number 356716). Occasionally private researchers create large indexes of church records. An example is the 764-microfilm Brenner collection described on page 38.

For more information, see the “Church History” and “History” sections of this outline.

Feast Dates. Each day of the year had several patron saints and was a feast day to honor those saints. Some vital events are recorded in church records only by the holy day (feast day) on the church calendar. For example, the feast day called “All Saints Day” [*Allerheiligentag*] is “1 November.” To convert feast dates to days of the month for either the Julian (old style) or Gregorian (new style) calendar, use the following book:

Bukke, Inger M., et al. *The Comprehensive Genealogical Feast Day Calendar*. Bountiful, Utah: Thomson's Genealogical Center, 1983. (FHL book 529.44 C738; fiche 6,054,630; computer number 255709.)

Duplicate Church Records

Unfortunately, some of Germany's church records were destroyed in wars or when parish houses burned. Because of concerns about such destruction, authorities in some areas began requiring copies of church books in the 1700s. Copies were either stored separately or sent to a central archive annually. These copies are called transcripts or duplicates [*Kirchenbuchduplikate*], and most are housed in central church archives or state archives. For example, the church record duplicates of 62 parishes in the Sondershausen Evangelical diocese from 1813 to 1846 were all gathered into the diocese's central archive.

Use duplicates, where available, to supplement parish registers that are missing or illegible. Keep in mind that duplicates often differ slightly from the originals.

Information Recorded in Church Records

The information recorded in church records varied over time. Later records usually give more complete information than earlier ones. The most important church records for genealogical research are baptism, marriage, and burial registers. Other helpful church records may include confirmation lists, family registers, lists of pastors, lists of

members, account books, receipt books, and communion records. A detailed discussion of the content and variety of records is found in the following book:

Smith, Kenneth L. *German Church Books: Beyond the Basics*. (See the “For Further Reading” section of this outline.)

Most Catholic records were written in Latin until the 1800s. Protestant records were usually written in German. Local dialects may have affected the spelling of some names and other words in the church records. In German areas under French domination during the early nineteenth century, many church records were kept in French. Sometimes the records combine two languages.

There was no specific record-keeping style for church records. Early records were usually written in paragraph form. As record keeping improved, columns were often used in the entries. However, some places (especially Catholic parishes) used the paragraph format for a long time.

Some areas, such as Bayern and Preußen, often used preprinted forms that required specific information. This format is usually easier to read because the vital information is in the same place in each entry.

Baptisms [*Taufen*]

Children were usually baptized a few days after birth. Baptism registers usually give the infant's name, parents' names, status of legitimacy, names of witnesses or godparents, and baptism date. You may also find the child's birth date, the father's occupation, and the family's place of residence. Death information was sometimes added as a note or signified by a cross.

Earlier registers typically gave less information, sometimes including only the child's and father's names and the baptism date. A few records did not even give the child's name. This problem can sometimes be resolved if the godparents are mentioned in the entry. Boys were often named for the godfather and girls for the godmother. Until the end of the 1700s, pastors in some communities did not name the mother in the birth records, or they included only her given name. Sometimes only the baptism date was recorded, but in later years the birth date was given as well.

Because of social conditions in Germany, the birth of illegitimate children was not uncommon. Illegitimacy is usually noted in baptism records, sometimes by a note in the margin or an upside-down entry.

Marriages [*Heiraten*]

Marriage registers give the marriage date and the names of the bride and groom. The registers may also indicate whether they were single or widowed and give the names of witnesses. Other information about the bride and groom is often included, such as their ages, residences, occupations, birthplaces, and parents' names. In cases of second and subsequent marriages, the registers may include the names of previous partners and their death dates. A note was often made if a parent or other party gave permission for the marriage.

The earliest marriage records may give only the names of the bride and groom and have little or no information about the couple's parents. In some cases, only the names of the bride's parents are recorded. The groom's parents are commonly recorded after 1800. Later marriage records usually give at least the age of the bride and groom. Some even give the couple's birth dates and places.

Couples were often married in the bride's home parish. Typically, girls married for the first time between ages 18 and 25. Men typically married for the first time in their mid-twenties.

Marriage Banns [*Aufgebote*]. For three weeks before the marriage, marriage banns (announcements of intentions to marry) were read or posted in church. This gave other community members a chance to object to the marriage.

The marriage registers of some churches give the three dates on which the marriage banns were announced. The marriage banns themselves may exist in another record. Some parishes kept the marriage banns and other marriage information instead of marriage registers.

Burials [*Begräbnisse*]

Burials were recorded in the parish where the person was buried. The burial usually took place within a few days of death.

Burial registers give the deceased's name and the date and place of death or burial. Often the deceased's age, place of residence, and cause of death and the names of survivors are also given. Occasionally the deceased's birth date and place and parents' names are given. However, information about parents, birth dates, and birthplaces may be inaccurate, depending on the informant's knowledge.

If the burial record mentions a sermon, you may be able to find a printed copy at a local library or archive. Funeral sermons often mentioned several

generations of ancestors. See the "Obituaries" section of this outline for more details.

Some areas began recording burials before births and marriages. Other areas recorded baptisms and marriages for several years before beginning to record burials.

Stillbirths were not recorded the same way in all churches. The pastor or priest often determined how to record stillbirths in his parish. In some areas, stillbirths were recorded in birth records. In other areas, stillbirths were recorded in death records. Some parishes listed stillbirths in both birth and death records. You should check both birth and death records if you suspect that a child was stillborn.

Confirmations [*Konfirmationen*]

Protestants were usually confirmed around age 14, Catholics about age 12. Some confirmation registers merely list the names of those being confirmed and the confirmation date. Other confirmation registers give additional information about those being confirmed, including their ages or birth dates, birthplaces, and fathers' names.

Family Registers [*Familienbücher*]

Some parishes kept family registers that give information about each family group in the parish. Family registers are more common in southern Germany, especially in Württemberg and Baden after 1808. These registers list the names of the husband and wife and their birth dates and places, marriage date and place, parents' names, occupations, and residence. If a second marriage is listed, details about the parents of the new marriage partner are often included.

Children are usually listed in chronological order. Names, birth dates, confirmation dates, marriage dates, and death dates may be listed. In some registers, when a child married and remained in the same parish, the register gives a "see" reference and a page number where that particular child appears as the head of a household.

Some family registers indicate whether the family moved to another village or emigrated to another country.

The information in family registers was compiled from other church books or obtained from the head of the household, and it is subject to error. Whenever possible, you should confirm all information found in family registers with baptism, marriage, and burial records.

Parish Genealogy [*Ortssippenbuch*]

Pastors or genealogists sometimes compiled a village lineage book [*Ortssippenbuch*], which included each family in a parish. For details see the “Genealogy” section of this outline.

Locating Church Records

Church records were kept in the local parish of the church. The term *parish* refers to the jurisdiction of a church minister. Parishes are local congregations that may have included many neighboring villages in their boundaries.

To use church records, you must know both your ancestor's religion and the town where he or she lived. You must also determine in which parish the town was located.

Some gazetteers indicate parish jurisdictions. For more information, see the “Gazetteers” section of this outline and the section below that discusses church record inventories.

A small village that did not have its own church was usually assigned to a parish in a nearby larger town. Consequently, your ancestor may have lived in one village but belonged to a parish in another town. Some parishes had branch churches in neighboring towns. Over time, some villages may have belonged to several parishes as jurisdictions changed. In Schleswig-Holstein, each local district parish office [*Kreis Pfarramt*] has custody of Protestant records.

The Family History Library Catalog refers to parishes by the town in which the parish church was located, unless there was more than one church in the town. In large cities, there may be many parishes for each religion. Church buildings were often named for saints, so the catalog uses the church name (such as Sankt Pauli Bremen) to distinguish between different parishes in the same city.

Church Record Inventories

Church record inventories are essential tools for finding German records. They identify what records should be available for a specified parish and where to write for information on these records. They list the church records, their location, and the years they cover. Sometimes inventories explain which parishes served which towns at different periods of time. For example, an inventory may state that the village of Schönberg belonged to the parish in Prinzbach before 1696 and to the parish in Schönberg after that date. For more information, see the “Church Directories” section of this outline.

The following source contains a helpful list of German church record inventories with Family History Library call numbers and English annotations:

Blodgett, Steven W. *Germany: Genealogical Research Guide*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1989. (FHL book 943 D27bs; film 1,573,115 item 2; fiche 6,001,630; computer number 543018.)

Church record inventories are available for most areas in Germany. They are listed in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY - CHURCH RECORDS -
INVENTORIES, REGISTERS, CATALOGS
GERMANY, [STATE] - CHURCH RECORDS -
INVENTORIES, REGISTERS, CATALOGS

Records at the Family History Library

The Family History Library has many German church records on microfilm. Most are from the southwestern states of Germany, including Baden, Westfalen, Rheinland, the Pfalz, Hessen, and Württemberg. The library has fewer church records from the states farther east and north, though this collection continues to grow as new records are microfilmed.

The Family History Library has mostly pre-1875 church records. Use the catalog to determine whether the library has records for the place your ancestor came from. The library *does not* have records that were not available in the archive at the time of microfilming, were not microfilmed, or were restricted from public access by the laws of the country.

If you are using the computer version of the catalog on FamilySearch, search for the name of the town where the parish was located (not necessarily the town where your ancestor lived). In the microfiche catalog, look under:

GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - CHURCH
RECORDS

New records are continually added to the Family History Library collection. The catalog is updated annually, so check it every year for the records you need.

Locating Records Not at the Family History Library

If the records you need are not at the Family History Library, you may find baptism, marriage, and burial records by contacting or visiting German parishes or archives.

Germany has no single repository of church records. The present location of a church record depends on several factors, including national borders, religion, and local history. Records may be located in one or more of the following places:

- *Local parishes.* Most church registers are still maintained by the parish. You might obtain information by writing to the parish. Parish employees will usually answer correspondence written in German. Your request may be forwarded if the records have been sent to a central repository.
- *State archives.* Duplicate records from some parishes are in the state archives. Many of these records have been microfilmed and are available at the Family History Library. However, for records that are not microfilmed, you can sometimes write to the state archives to request searches of the duplicates. For more information, see the “Archives and Libraries” section of this outline.
- *Central church archives.* In a few parts of Germany, church records or duplicates have been gathered from the local parishes into central archives. Some gaps in the church records of local parishes could be filled using these records. Church archives are often unable to handle genealogical requests, but they can determine whether they have specific records you need, or they may recommend a researcher who can search the records for you.

Correspondence. Suggestions about how to write to local parishes for genealogical information are given in the Family History Library publication *German Letter-Writing Guide* (34066). The postal code book is cited in the “Gazetteers” section of this outline.

If your request is unsuccessful, search for duplicate records that may have been filed in other archives, church registers, or in civil registration offices.

Search Strategies

Effective use of church records includes the following strategies in addition to the general strategies found in the “German Search Strategies” section of this outline:

- Search for the relative or ancestor you selected in step 2. When you find his or her birth record, search for the births of brothers and sisters.
- Next search for the parents' marriage date and place. The marriage record will often lead to the parents' birth records.

- You can estimate the ages of the parents and search for their birth records.
- Use the above three strategies for both the father and the mother.
- If earlier generations are not in the record you are using, search neighboring parishes and other denominations.
- Search the burial registers for all family members.

CIVIL REGISTRATION

Civil registration records are vital records kept by the government. Records of births, marriages, and deaths are commonly referred to as “vital records” because they refer to critical events in a person's life. Civil registration records [*Zivilstandsregister* or *Personenstandsregister*] are an excellent source for accurate information on names and on dates and places of births, marriages, and deaths.

Civil authorities began registering births, marriages, and deaths in different time periods in various areas

of Germany. The earliest true civil registration records began in 1792. Since 1876 civil registration records have been kept for almost everyone who was born or married or who died in Germany.

Because they cover such a large part of the population and often provide more information than church records, civil registration records are important sources for German genealogical research.

For birth, death, and marriage records created before civil registration began, see the “Church Records” section of this outline.

General Historical Background

Civil registration developed slowly in Germany. In most areas, the earliest vital records were made by the churches. As early as the 1400s, particular cities recognized the need to make vital records for court, military, or taxation purposes. However, these records are incomplete. Records of marriage contracts are the most common early government or court records. Comprehensive, modern German civil registration began with the French Revolution.

The first German area to start statewide civil registration of births, marriages, and deaths was Elsaß-Lothringen under French rule in 1792.

Between 1792 and 1876, most German states or provinces developed their own separate laws and civil registration systems. Some registration offices were established later than others. Therefore, the date a particular state began civil registration is only a general guideline and does not always apply to every town within its borders. In 1876 civil registration began in all of Germany, and since 1876 almost every German has been registered with the local civil government authorities.

Regional Differences

Between 1792 and 1798, when France occupied the area west of the Rhein River, the government began civil registration in parts of the Pfalz, Oldenburg, Hessen, and Rheinland west of the Rhein. These records are usually written in French until about 1815. Hamburg began keeping civil registration records in 1799. As France's influence increased in Germany through the Confederation of the Rhein, the states of Braunschweig, Hannover, Westfalen, Bremen, Lippe, more of Hessen, the rest of Oldenburg and Lübeck established civil registration between 1808 and 1812. But when Napoleon's power began to fade in 1814, many of these states suspended civil registration.

By 1838 most of the province of Waldeck was recording marriage contracts. The prime minister of Preußen, Otto von Bismarck, instituted civil registration in all the provinces of Preußen in 1874. The remaining states—Anhalt, Bayern, Lippe, Mecklenburg, Sachsen, Schaumburg-Lippe, Thüringen, and Württemberg—began requiring civil registration in 1876.

In areas under French influence, especially Elsaß-Lothringen, ten-year indexes were usually kept. Duplicate copies of civil registers were also made. The mayor's office [*Bürgermeisterei*] kept the original copy, and the duplicate was sent to the court [*Landesgericht*] or another central archive. For example, most of Westfalen and Lippe sent their duplicates to Detmold, and most of Rheinland sent theirs to Brühl.

Information Recorded in Civil Registers

The information recorded in civil registration records varies slightly over time. Each state used a different format for civil registration. Preprinted forms have often been used for civil registration. In these instances, the form determined what information the record contains. The early French records sometimes give slightly more complete information than the later records. The most important civil records are birth, marriage, and death registers.

Births [*Geburten*]

Birth records usually give the child's name; sex; and birth date, time, and place. The father's name, age, occupation, and residence are also usually listed. The mother's maiden name, age, and marital status are usually given, although her age is sometimes omitted. The names, ages, and residences of witnesses are usually provided. The parents' religion is also listed in some states.

Births were usually registered within a few days of the child's birth by the father, a neighbor, or the midwife. Corrections and additions to a birth record may have been added as marginal notes.

Marriages [*Heiraten, or Ehen, or Trauungen*]

Marriages were usually recorded where the bride lived. After 1792 a civil marriage ceremony was required in areas of Germany under French control. In 1876 this law was applied to all of Germany. Most couples also had a church wedding, so records may exist for both the civil and church ceremonies. The civil marriage records may include more information than the comparable church records. When possible search both the civil registration and church records.

Records of Intention to Marry. If you believe a marriage took place but cannot find a marriage record, search records that indicate the couple's "intent to marry." Various records may have been created to show a couple's intent to marry:

- *Proclamations* [*Aufgebote* or *Eheverkündigungen*] were made a few weeks before a couple planned to marry. The couple may have been required to announce their intentions in order to give other community members the opportunity to object to the marriage.
- *Marriage Supplements* [*Heiratsbeilagen*] were often filed by the bride or groom to support their marriage application. Information included may document their births, their parents' births and deaths, and the groom's release from military service. Sometimes the records contain information about earlier generations.
- *Contracts* [*Ehekontrakte*] are documents created to protect legal rights and property of spouses. These may give the same information as the marriage supplements noted above. They also list property and are usually found in court records rather than in civil registration records.

Marriage Records. You may find the following records documenting civil marriages:

- *Marriage Registers [Heiratsregister]*. Civil officials recorded the marriages they performed, usually on preprinted forms bound in a book and kept in the civil registration office. Marriage registers give the date and time of the marriage. They list the bride's and groom's names, ages, birth dates, birthplaces, residences, occupations, and whether they were single or widowed. The registers also give the parents' names, residence, occupations, marital status, and whether they were living at the time of the marriage. Witnesses' names, ages, and relationships to the bride or groom are supplied. Often a note is made as to whether a parent or other party gave permission for the marriage. The couple's religion is often mentioned, especially after 1874.
- *Certificates [Heiratsscheine]*. Some couples were given a marriage certificate or a book [*Stammbuch*] with the marriage entry and space for entering children's births. The certificate or book may be in the possession of the family or the civil registrar.

Deaths [Sterben or Tote]

Death records are especially helpful because they may provide important information on a person's birth, spouse, and parents. Civil death records often exist for individuals for whom there were no birth or marriage records. Deaths were usually registered within a few days of death in the town or city where the person died.

Early death records usually give the name of the deceased and the date, time, and place of death. The age, birthplace, residence, occupation, and marital status of the deceased may also be given, along with the name of the parents or spouse and their residences. The informant's name, age, occupation, residence, and relationship may also be listed. Post-1874 death registers also include the person's religion. Information about parents, the birth date, the birthplace, and other information about the deceased may be inaccurate, depending on the informant's knowledge.

Locating Civil Registration Records

Civil registration records are kept at the local civil registration office [*Standesamt*]. You must therefore determine the town where your ancestor lived before you can find the records. In a few places, such as Detmold and Speyer, duplicates have been gathered into a central archive.

If your ancestor lived in a small village, the civil records may have been kept in a larger nearby town. You may need to use gazetteers and other geographic references to identify the place where

your ancestor lived and the civil registration office that served it (see the "Gazetteers" section of this outline). You also need to know at least an approximate year in which the birth, marriage, or death of your ancestor occurred.

Large cities often have many civil registration districts. City directories can sometimes help identify which civil registration district a person lived in. The Family History Library Catalog lists books showing registration districts for street addresses in Berlin, Leipzig, Magdeburg, Breslau, and Stettin.

Indexes to Civil Registration Records

Births, marriages, and deaths were written in the civil registration records as they occurred, and thus they are arranged chronologically. Where available, indexes can help you find your ancestor more easily. The indexes usually cover one year at a time and are located at the beginning or end of each year. You will sometimes also find an alphabetical index at the beginning or the end of a volume. These indexes and volumes may cover many years.

Each civil registrar [*Mairie* or *Bürgermeisterei*] in Elsaß-Lothringen has cumulative indexes that cover ten-year periods [*Tables décennales*]. To use these indexes, you need to know the town or district where a person lived; the approximate year of birth, marriage, or death; and at least his or her surname. The indexes are alphabetical by at least the first letter of the surname. The Family History Library Catalog usually indicates which records have index listings.

Records at the Family History Library

The Family History Library has microfilmed the civil registration records of many towns throughout Germany up to about 1876. Many of these records are from the Hannover, Hessen-Nassau, Rheinland, and several other Prussian provinces as well as Württemberg and the Pfalz.

In the eastern Prussian provinces, the available civil records are filmed for only about three years, starting in 1874.

The Family History Library has records from many towns and states. However, the library *does not* have records that were destroyed, have not been microfilmed, were not available in the registrar's office at the time of microfilming, or are restricted from public access by the laws of the country. You may use the records at the library for your family research, but you must contact the civil office holding the records if you want an official certificate for living or deceased individuals.

To find civil registration records in the Family History Library Catalog, search the Locality Search under:

GERMANY - CIVIL REGISTRATION
GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - CIVIL
REGISTRATION

The library's collection continues to grow as new records are microfilmed and added to the collection. Do not give up if the records you need are not available. The Family History Library Catalog is updated regularly. Check it periodically to see if the records you need have been added to the library's collection.

Locating Records Not at the Family History Library

Birth, marriage, and death records may be found by contacting or visiting German civil registration offices or archives. To protect the privacy rights of living persons, most modern records have restrictions on their access and use.

Use search engines such as www.dogpile.com or www.google.com to enter the name of your town and find town web sites with contact addresses, etc.

Germany has no single repository of civil registration records. A person's records may be found in one or more locations.

- *Local towns.* Most civil records are still maintained by the civil registration office in the local towns. Older records may be at the local office or in the town archives. The records are not public, but descendants can obtain extracts or copies.

You can usually obtain civil registration records by writing to the town. Civil officials will usually answer correspondence that is written to them in German. Your request may be forwarded if the records have been sent to an archive or central repository.

- *City archives.* Large cities have many civil registration offices. Most civil registers are still located at the local offices, but some are collected in city archives. Many German cities have established archives to preserve their older records. Often they cannot handle genealogical requests, but they can determine whether specific records are available for you or your agent to search.
- *State archives.* Duplicate registers from some towns are kept in state archives. Many of these records have been microfilmed and are available

at the Family History Library. However, for more recent records and for those not yet microfilmed, you may write to the state archives of Germany and request searches of the records. See the "Archives and Libraries" section of this outline. If the archivist cannot do the research you request, you can hire a professional genealogist to search the records for you.

You may also find archive inventories that describe the record-keeping systems and available civil registration records in Germany (see the "Archives and Libraries" section). These and other guides are found in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY - ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES
GERMANY, [STATE] - ARCHIVES AND
LIBRARIES

After deciding who has jurisdiction over the records for the time period you need, write a short request to the proper office. Be careful not to ask for too much when writing German archives. They can briefly answer questions about the records in their collection, but often they are reluctant to do research in these records. You may have more success if you ask for a referral or a list of local researchers you could hire to search the archive's records. See the Family History Library publication *German Letter-Writing Guide* (34066) for more information about writing letters to Germany.

COURT RECORDS

A court record is a document created by or submitted to the judge, jury, or clerk of a court. The earliest German vital records were usually kept by one of many city courts. Some German cities began keeping birth, marriage, and death information in the 1400s, but only a small fraction of Germans are represented in court records. Marriage contracts are the most common early court records of value to family historians.

There were over fifty kinds of courts (each with a different jurisdiction) in the German states before 1870. Court records are rarely indexed, so finding an ancestor in them is difficult. Search court records only after you have tried all other record types first. You may need professional help to use court records.

However, if you do find a person mentioned in court records, you will often find much useful information. Age, residence, political allegiance, property, debts, misdemeanors, taxes, adoptions, and guardianship are typical information in German court records. Divorces are also recorded in court

records, but they are rare before the 1900s. For information about wills, see the “Probate Records” section of this outline.

The Family History Library has only a few court records. They are listed in the Locality Search of the catalog under:

GERMANY - COURT RECORDS
GERMANY, [STATE] - COURT RECORDS
GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - COURT RECORDS

DIRECTORIES

Directories are alphabetical lists of names and addresses. Some German directories list all the adult residents or tradesmen who lived in a town or area at the time the directory was published. The earliest German directory, for the city of Halle, was published in 1701. Directories have become common since then.

The most helpful directories for genealogical research are town directories of local residents and businesses.

These have usually been published annually and may include names, addresses, occupations, and other helpful facts. Particularly in large cities with several parishes, addresses often help you find your ancestor's parish. Directories sometimes have town maps and may include addresses of churches, cemeteries, civil registration offices, and other locations of value to the genealogist.

Modern telephone directories with over 32 million addresses and telephone numbers are now available online at: www.dastelfonbuch.de

A list of many German city directories is found on pages 235 to 261 of Ribbe's *Taschenbuch für Familiengeschichtsforschung* (see the “For Further Reading” section of this outline).

The Family History Library has a few German city directories. Most date from the 1830s to the early 1900s. They are listed in the Locality Search of the catalog under:

GERMANY, [STATE] - DIRECTORIES
GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - DIRECTORIES

DWELLINGS

A few cities and towns have house books [*Hausbücher*] that list the owners of each house, their occupations and years of residence, and sometimes other residents of the house. Biographical sketches and genealogies are

sometimes included. The following is an example of this kind of record:

Bauern und Hausbesitzer mit ihren Vorfahren in den 55 Dörfern des Kreises Peine (Farmers and house owners with their ancestors in the 55 villages of the Peine District [Hannover]). Goslar: Blut und Boden, 1938. (FHL book 943 B4q v. 25; film 924,909 item 3; computer number 262811.)

The Family History Library has only a few of these records, and only people wealthy enough to own property are likely to be listed in them. The following bibliography is arranged by both author and place:

Spruth, Herbert. *Die Hausmarke: Wesen und Bibliographie* (The nature of house marks with their bibliography). Neustadt/Aisch: Degener, 1965. (FHL book 943 B4a no. 4; computer number 246711.)

These records are most often found in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY, [STATE] - DWELLINGS
GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - DWELLINGS
GERMANY, [STATE] - GENEALOGY
GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - GENEALOGY

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

Emigration and immigration sources list the names of people leaving (emigrating) or arriving (immigrating) in Germany. These sources may be passenger lists, permissions to emigrate, or records of passports issued. The information in these records may include the emigrants' names, ages, occupations, destinations, and places of origin or birthplaces. Sometimes they also show family groups.

If you cannot find your ancestor, you may be able to find emigration information on your ancestor's neighbors. People who lived near each other in Germany often settled together in the country they immigrated to.

Records were created when individuals emigrated from Germany. Other records document their arrival in the destination country. This section discusses the following subjects:

- Finding the emigrant's town of origin
- Emigration from Germany, including the historical background of German emigration

- Records of German emigrants in their destination countries

Finding the Emigrant's Town of Origin

Once you have traced your family back to a German emigrant, you must find the city or town your ancestor came from if you wish to find earlier generations. The records you will need to continue your research, such as birth, marriage, and death records, are kept in local areas. Germany has no nationwide index to these records.

Several sources may reveal where your ancestor came from. You may learn of your ancestor's place of origin by talking to older family members. Other relatives or a library may have documents that name the city or town, such as the following:

- Birth, marriage, and death certificates
- Obituaries
- Journals
- Photographs
- Letters
- Family Bibles
- Church certificates or records
- Naturalization applications and petitions
- Passenger lists
- Passports

The Family History Library publication *Tracing Immigrant Origins* (34111) gives more suggestions for finding your ancestor's place of origin.

Emigration From Germany

Significant numbers of German emigrants can be found on every continent and in many countries around the world. Millions of people left Germany in several waves of migration. Most emigrants left Germany during the following periods:

- *1683 to 1820.* Emigrants left Germany and migrated to Southeast Europe, North America, Russia, England, Scotland, and Ireland. This wave of emigration was caused by religious persecutions and economic hardships after the Thirty Years' War. Many of these emigrants were Protestants from the Palatinate area of Germany who wanted religious and economic freedom.

- *1820 to 1871.* This wave of emigration was caused chiefly by economic hardships, including unemployment and crop failures. Many Germans also left to avoid wars and military service. In some cases, government entities encouraged citizens to emigrate. Most of these emigrants were from Rheinland, Hessen, Baden, Württemberg, and Elsaß-Lothringen.
- *1871 to 1914.* The number of emigrants increased dramatically during this time period. Emigration became more affordable, and political and economic problems continued. Emigrants came from all areas of Germany, including large numbers from the eastern areas of Preußen. Emigrants included not only ethnic Germans but also Poles and Jews.

Records that document emigration from Germany include passenger lists, passports, permissions to emigrate, German and French emigration indexes, published emigration lists, police registration records, and other departure documents, as well as sources in the emigrant's new countries.

Links to various lists of German emigrants, passenger lists, etc. are found at:

<http://home.att.net/~weemonster/emigration.html>

Passenger Departure Lists

The earliest German emigrants went down the Rhine River and left Europe from Rotterdam in the Netherlands. As passenger traffic increased, Dutch, Belgian, French, and Danish ports were used. From 1850 to 1891, 41 percent of German and east European emigrants left via the port of Bremen (Germany), 30 percent via Hamburg (Germany), 16 percent via Le Havre (France), 8 percent via Antwerp (Belgium), and 5 percent via several ports in the Netherlands. Only a few Germans emigrated from other European ports. Southern and western Germans tended to emigrate through the ports of Bremen or Le Havre. Northern and eastern Germans tended to leave through Hamburg.

The records of departures from these ports are called *passenger lists*. Information given in passenger lists varies but usually includes the emigrant's name, age, occupation, last residence or birthplace, and destination. The records also name the ship and the date of departure. The most significant passenger departure lists for German emigrants are from the following ports:

Bremen. Unfortunately, the passenger departure lists for the port of Bremen were destroyed. The lists for 1847 to 1871 have been partially reconstructed. Some

20 to 25 percent of the Bremen passengers arriving at New York during this time period are indexed with their place of origin in the source below:

Zimmerman, Gary J., and Marion Wolfert. *German Immigrants: Lists of Passengers Bound from Bremen to New York*. 4 vols. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1985, 1986, 1988, 1993. (FHL book 974.71 W3g; computer number 377998.)

An early commercial partner with Bremen was the port at Baltimore, Maryland. Many Germans going to America through Bremen landed in Baltimore. The Baltimore passenger arrival lists are indexed.

Hamburg. The most significant surviving passenger departure lists are from Hamburg. The original departure records for Hamburg are at the state archive [*Staatsarchiv*] in Hamburg. Every emigrant from every country who left from Hamburg between 1850 and 1934 should be on these passenger lists. Most importantly, these lists show each passenger's hometown, and the lists are indexed. The Hamburg passenger List indexes are being put online at:

http://fhhl.hamburg.de/fhhbehoerden/staatsarchiv/link_to_your_roots/english/index.htm

For most years, the index is handwritten in gothic script and alphabetized only by the first letter of the surname. A separate index of departures was created each year. There is also a compiled fifteen-year index for 1856 to 1871. The passenger lists themselves are alphabetical from 1850 to 1855.

The Hamburg passenger list records and indexes have been microfilmed and are available at the Family History Library. They are listed in the Locality Search of the catalog under:

GERMANY, HAMBURG, HAMBURG -
EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

For more information on using the Hamburg passenger lists, see the Family History Library's *Hamburg Passenger Lists* (34047) resource guide.

Le Havre. The only lists available for the French port of Le Havre are lists of crews and passengers on commercial cargo vessels. Passenger vessels are not included. A few German emigrants are included in these records, but most Germans who sailed from Le Havre are not recorded. These lists are not indexed. The Family History Library has filmed the Le Havre commercial cargo vessel passenger lists for the years 1750 to 1886. The film numbers are listed in the Locality Search of the catalog under:

FRANCE, SEINE-MARITIME, LE HAVRE -
BUSINESS RECORDS AND COMMERCE

Antwerp. The library has only the passenger lists of emigrants who sailed from Antwerp in 1855. This year is only a small percentage of the total. Many German emigrants sailed from this port. The following is an index to the Antwerp passenger lists:

Hall, Charles M. *The Antwerp Emigration Index*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Heritage International, 1983?. (FHL book Ref 949.3 W22h; FHL film 1,183,596; computer number 14470.)

The Library also has registers of foreign nationals residing in Antwerp prior to Emigration: Vreemdelingendossiers, 1840-1930; indexed.

Netherlands. The Family History Library has copies of passenger lists for the port of Rotterdam for the years 1900 to 1938. (FHL fiche 6,109,126-6,109,217; computer number 758018.) However, most German travel through Dutch ports was before 1820. Pre-1807 Philadelphia port arrivals include many Germans who left via Dutch ports (see Strassburger and Hinke's book, listed later in this section of this outline).

Copenhagen. The library has the passenger lists of emigrants from Copenhagen [*København*], Denmark, from 1868 to 1940. Only a few Germans appear on these lists, which are alphabetical for intervals of one to five years. The film numbers are in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

DENMARK, KØBENHAVN, KØBENHAVN -
EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

On-line index at: <http://ddd.sa.dk/>

Passports

Each state or city had its own laws regarding passports. In many cases, the applications for passports and the supporting documentation have been preserved. These records often give information such as the emigrant's name, birth date or age, birthplace, occupation, last residence, verification of identity, and physical description.

Hamburg. Residents of Hamburg had to apply for a passport to emigrate. A few emigrants from other parts of Germany stopped in Hamburg long enough to become residents. If they were residents, they might be in the passport records. The Hamburg passport applications have been microfilmed for the years 1851 to 1929 and include indexes. They are in

the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY, HAMBURG, HAMBURG -
EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

Stuttgart (Württemberg). The Family History Library has indexed the Stuttgart-area passport records for the years 1845 to 1920. This index usually gives the emigrant's hometown and destination. Names beginning with the letters A through R are on FHL film 1,125,018, and S through Z are on film 1,125,019; computer number 354364. Many of the individuals listed were internal migrants who came from another part of Württemberg and remained in Württemberg. Most names are from the early 1900s. To find the original passport and visa record microfilm numbers, look in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY, WÜRTTEMBERG, STUTTGART
- EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

Permission to Emigrate Records

Germans had to apply for permission to emigrate from most areas. The Family History Library has these application records for several states and cities, including Baden, Rheinland, the Pfalz, and Zwickau. For example, the library has microfilmed the emigration application records of Württemberg. They list the emigrant's birthplace, residence, assets, and indebtedness. Most Württemberg records consist of applications and accompanying documents that were collected by district offices. These records begin in the mid-1700s, with most from the 1800s. Most districts also have handwritten indexes for the mid-1800s. Six published volumes of indexes are available, which so far cover 35 of the 64 districts:

Schenk, Trudy, and Ruth Froelke. *The Wuerttemberg Emigration Index*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Ancestry, 1986-. (FHL book Ref 943.47 W22st; computer number 405643.) Available on: www.ancestry.com

German Emigration Card Indexes

Dozens of card indexes exist for German emigrants. For example, the Family History Library has microfilmed card indexes for emigrants from Hessen. The indexes are divided into five sections for various time periods or areas of Hessen, each in alphabetical order. Other card indexes at the library include the following:

- From Baden 1660s-1900s
- From the Pfalz 1500s-1900s

- To the Austro-Hungarian Empire 1750-1943
- To Russia 1750-1943

There are card indexes of World War II refugees from many parts of central and eastern Europe. These indexes are listed in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under the region from which the refugees fled.

Periodicals publish many emigration records. The following source is a card index for emigrants that have been listed in the periodical *Deutsches Familienarchiv* (German Families Archive):

Emigrants to and from Germany from the 18th to the 20th Century. Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1976. (FHL film 1,125,001; computer number 354655.)

Genealogical societies often compile card indexes of emigrants from the German region they specialize in. For details on how to contact these societies (to learn if they have an emigration index), see the "Societies" section of this outline.

French Emigration Indexes

Many Germans either lived in Elsaß-Lothringen (Alsace-Lorraine) or passed through it to emigrate. The following sources help identify many of them.

Alsace Emigration Index. The Family History Library has compiled an index of persons who emigrated from or through Elsaß-Lothringen from 1817 to 1866. About half the names are from southern Germany. The alphabetical index gives the emigrant's name, age, occupation, place of origin, residence, destination, passport date, and source microfilm number. Not everyone who emigrated via Alsace is in this index. The index is easiest to find in the Author/Title Search of the Family History Library Catalog under *Alsace Emigration Index*. It is also listed as:

France. Ministère de l'Intérieur. *Registres des émigrés, 1817-1866* (Index of emigrants, 1817-1866). Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1977. (FHL films 1,125,002-7; computer number 403094.)

Alsace Emigration Books. Cornelia Schrader-Muggenthaler used the *Alsace Emigration Index*, other emigration records, passenger lists, genealogies, genealogy periodicals, and newspaper articles to compile the following index:

Schrader-Muggenthaler, Cornelia. *The Alsace Emigration Book*. 2 vols. Apollo, Penn.: Closson Press, 1989-1991. (FHL book 944.38)

W2s; computer number 549007.) This index has over 20,000 entries, mostly of 1817 to 1870 emigrants.

The following is also an excellent book on the subject:

Burgert, Annette Kunselman. *Eighteenth Century Emigrants from the Northern Alsace to America*. Camden, Maine: Picton Press, 1992. (FHL book 974.8 B4pgp v. 26; computer number 684917.)

Published Emigration Records

Lists of emigrants are often published. These usually focus on the emigrants from one town, principality, or state. An example is listed below:

Gruhne, Fritz. *Auswandererlisten des ehemaligen Herzogtums Braunschweig 1846-1871* (List of emigrants from the former Duchy of Braunschweig, 1846-1871). Wolfenbüttel: Braunschweigischer Geschichtsverein, 1971. (FHL book 943.59 W29g; film 1,045,468 item 10; computer number 310002.) This list does not include the city of Braunschweig and the district of Holzminden

Links to various Lists of German emigrants, passenger lists, etc. are found at:

<http://home.att.net/~weemonster/emigration.html>

Dozens of other published emigrant lists are listed in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under the town, state, or province from which the emigrants came. A partial bibliography of German emigration sources is in Smith's *Encyclopedia of German-American Genealogical Research*, pages 207 to 232 (see the "For Further Reading" section of this outline).

Police Lists or Registrations

German police began keeping records of each person's residence in the 1840s. Citizens were required to tell the police when they moved. These records are discussed further in the "Population" section of this outline.

Other Records of Departure

Several other records were usually created as emigrants left Germany.

Church Records (Annotations). Often the local pastor or priest noted peoples' departures in the parish registers next to birth or marriage entries.

Sometimes these notes include the year of emigration and names of those who went with the person. Where family registers were kept, the departure was sometimes noted there. See the "Church Records" section of this outline for more information.

Probate Records of Relatives Who Stayed. Wills or testaments of relatives who stayed in Germany occasionally mention their relatives in foreign lands. For more information, see the "Probate Records" section of this outline.

Newspaper Announcements. Local newspapers often told of residents in their area moving to other lands. See the "Newspapers" section of this outline for more information.

The *Germanic Emigrants Register* (1992 edition) indexes German emigrants listed in the *Deutscher Reichsanzeiger* newspaper from 1820 to 1914. This 277,000-name, 23-microfiche index shows name, event year, birth date, emigration date, destination, and last known residence. It does *not* give the place of origin, but you can get the place of origin for a fee by writing to:

Germanic Emigrants Register
Postfach 10 08 22
51608 Gummersbach
GERMANY

The Family History Library has the 1991 edition of the *Germanic Emigrants Register*:

Germanic Emigrants Register. Diepholz: [s.n.], 1991. (FHL fiche 6,312,192; computer number 445448.) This source consists of 10 microfiche and contains about 118,000 names.

Locating Emigration Records of Germany

The Family History Library has emigration records or indexes for almost every German state and various German districts or cities. These are listed in the catalog under the particular state, province, or town in Germany where the records were made. Check the Locality Search of the catalog under:

GERMANY, [STATE] - EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION
GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

Records of German Emigrants in Their Destination Countries

Often the best sources for information about German emigrants are found in the country they immigrated to. Records of German immigrants may list their towns of origin and other valuable information. To learn more about these records, see the research outline for the country where your ancestor settled and the research outline *Tracing Immigrant Origins*.

United States

Early German immigrants to the United States (1683-1820) settled mainly in Pennsylvania. Those in the second wave of migration (1820-1871) often settled in Ohio, Wisconsin, Indiana, Missouri, and Texas. During the third wave (1871-1914), many German immigrants settled in New York City, Chicago, St. Louis, or other large cities.

German immigrants from Pommern often went to Wisconsin. Large numbers also settled in Illinois, Minnesota, and other Midwest states. Immigrants from the Palatine area usually settled in Pennsylvania. The book below describes the history and process of migrating from Germany to the United States:

Wellauer, Maralyn Ann. *German Immigration to America in the Nineteenth Century: A Genealogist's Guide*. Milwaukee: Roots International, 1985. (FHL book 943 W2we; computer number 124557.)

Immigrant records available in the United States include the following:

Passenger Arrival Lists. Most German immigrants to the United States arrived at New York City. The Family History Library has microfilm copies of the arrival records and indexes of this and other ports. See the *United States Research Outline* for more information about emigration and immigration records of the United States. Unfortunately, few United States arrival records give the immigrant's specific town of origin.

New York passenger lists, 1892-1924, are available on-line, indexes, at www.ellisland.org; passenger lists for 1851-1891 are available on www.ancestry.com.

Published Passenger Arrival Lists. The arrival records for many German immigrants to the United States are partially indexed. By mid-1994 there were 36 volumes covering the years 1850 to 1880. Each volume is individually indexed:

Glazier, Ira A., and P. William Filby. *Germans to America*. On-going. Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1988-. (FHL book Ref 973 W2ger; computer number 465274.)

The following bibliography contains over 2,500 published lists of emigrants and immigrants:

Filby, P. William. *Passenger and Immigration Lists Bibliography, 1538-1900*. 2nd ed. Detroit: Gale Research, 1988. (FHL book 973 W33p 1988; computer number 482522.) More than 1,600 of these lists are indexed in P. William Filby, *Passenger and Immigration Lists Index*, 12+ vols. (Detroit: Gale Research, 1981-; FHL book Ref 973 W33p; computer number 122828). This does not index official U.S. arrival lists. Many of the names are from post-1820 published sources.

Two of the hundreds of German immigration records indexed in Filby are listed below:

Jones, Henry Z, Jr. *The Palatine Families of New York: A Study of the German Immigrants Who Arrived in Colonial New York in 1710*. Universal City, Calif.: Jones, 1985. (FHL book 974.7 D2j; computer number 362903.)

Strassburger, Ralph Beaver, and William John Hinke. *Pennsylvania German Pioneers: A Publication of the Original Lists of Arrivals in the Port of Philadelphia from 1727 to 1808*. 2 vols. Norristown, Penn.: Pennsylvania German Society, 1934. 3 vols. Reprint. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1966. (FHL book 974.8 F2st 1966; 1934 edition on films 1,035,683 item 5 and 1,321,373 item 3; fiche 6,057,507-9; computer number 139222)

Please note that published immigration lists are subject to errors and should be verified in original records.

Census Records. The 1920 United States census sometimes lists the province or city of birth for people (or their parents) born in Germany. Some state censuses, such as the 1925 New York census (which gives the date and place of naturalization), contain more information than federal censuses.

Military Records. Many German immigrants served in the United States military, especially in the American Civil War. Their military records may help identify their German hometowns. Records of German soldiers who served as British mercenaries in the American Revolution are described in the "Military Records" section of this outline.

Newspapers. Arriving German immigrants are occasionally mentioned in newspapers, especially

German-language newspapers. See the "Newspapers" section of this outline for a bibliography of German-language newspapers.

Southeast Europe

Starting in 1722, the Austro-Hungarian monarchs encouraged Germans to settle their lands, especially along the devastated border with the Turks. Colonies developed in what later became Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia. Initially, twice as many Germans moved to this area as went to America. More references and research tools for locating Germans who emigrated to Southeast Europe are found on-line at:

www.genealogientz.de/reg/ESE/dsrec.html.

Following World War II, most returned to Germany or Austria, but many also moved to the United States, Canada, Australia, Brazil, and other countries.

Below are listed some indexes that can help you find Germans from Southeast Europe:

Deutsches Ausland-Institut (Stuttgart). *Auswandererkartei der Deutschen nach Ungarn und Rußland, 1750-1805* (Emigration index of Germans in Hungary and Russia, 1750-1805). Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1988. (FHL films 1,340,060 item 5 to 1,340,061 item 2; computer number 516675.)

Deutsches Ausland-Institut (Stuttgart). *Kartei der Auswanderer nach Ungarn, 1750-1945* (Index of emigrants to Hungary, 1750-1945). Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1988. (FHL film 1,552,795 items 1-2; computer number 516660.)

Deutsches Ausland-Institut (Stuttgart). *Kartei der im Ausland lebenden Deutschen, 1940-1945* (Index of Germans in foreign countries, 1940-1945). Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1988. (FHL films 1,340,062-5, 1,197,320-23, 1,197,492-7; computer number 516816.)

Brandt, Bruce. *Where to look for hard-to-find German-speaking ancestors in Eastern Europe: index to 19,720 surnames in 13 books, with historical background on each*. 2nd ed. Baltimore: Clearfield Co., 1993. (FHL book 943 H22b; computer number 716691.) This contains surnames only.

Russia

In 1763 Catherine the Great of Russia offered free land, no taxes for thirty years, freedom of religion, and other incentives to encourage Germans to settle her vast, sparsely populated domain. Dozens of German colonies were established and grew until World War I. Many Russian Germans moved to the United States, Canada, or South America beginning in 1874.

The following is the single most valuable source for researching German families from Russia:

Stumpp, Karl. *The Emigration from Germany to Russia in the Years 1763-1862*. Tübingen: Stumpp, 1972. Reprint. Lincoln, Neb.: American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, 1978. (FHL book 943 W2sk; film 1,183,529; 1972 edition on fiche 6,000,829; computer number 63974.) The most useful parts of this source for genealogists are the alphabetical lists of German immigrants, which are divided into three sections: Volga region immigrants (pp. 117-165), Mennonites in South Russia and Samara (pp. 167-204), and Black Sea region immigrants (except Mennonites) (pp. 204-497).

A good web site for Germans from Russia coming to the U.S. is:

www.angelfire.com/KS/gerrus

Many on-line sources for Germans from Russia are found in the Odessa Digital Library:

<http://pixel.cs.vt.edu/library/odessa.html>

The German Protestant church [*Evangelische Kirche*] of Russia was organized into consistories headquartered in St. Petersburg. The Family History Library has microfilmed the 276 volumes of the consistories' church record civil transcripts in the Russian State Historical Archives. These records are from German settlements in Ingermanland (surrounding St. Petersburg), near the Black Sea, and in Bessarabia for the years 1833 to 1900. They are in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

RUSSIAN EMPIRE, [PROVINCE], [TOWN], -
CHURCH RECORDS

German Protestant records are also listed in the Subject Search of the catalog under:

GERMANS - RUSSIA - CHURCH RECORDS
AND REGISTERS

In addition, several organizations, such as the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia and the Germans from Russia Heritage Society, will help genealogists. More information about such organizations is found in the "Societies" section. Web site for AHSGR:

www.ahsgr.org

Web site for Germans from Russia Heritage Society:

www.grhs.com

Other Countries

Similar immigration records and indexes are available at the library for most nations and states where Germans settled. They are listed under the new nation or state in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

[NATION or STATE] - EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

You can look in the Subject Search of the catalog under:

GERMANS - [NATION or STATE]
RUSSIAN GERMANS

GAZETTEERS

A gazetteer is a dictionary of place-names. Gazetteers describe towns and villages, parishes and counties, states and provinces, rivers and mountains, and other geographical features. They usually include only the names of places that existed at the time the gazetteer was published. The place-names are usually listed in alphabetical order, similar to a dictionary.

Gazetteers may also provide additional information about towns, such as:

- The population size.
- The different religious denominations.
- The schools, colleges, and universities.
- Major manufacturing works, canals, docks, and railroad stations.

Gazetteers can help you find the places where your family lived and determine the civil and church jurisdictions over those places. For example, Falkenberg, Germany, was a small village in the state of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. It had its own civil registration office, but the Protestants attended the

Evangelical parish at Dömitz. If your ancestor was a Protestant from Falkenberg, a gazetteer can tell you where to look for your ancestor's civil and church records.

Some places in Germany have the same or similar names. You will need to use a gazetteer to identify the specific town where your ancestor lived, the government district it was in, and the jurisdictions where records about him or her were kept.

Gazetteers can also help you determine county jurisdictions used in the Family History Library Catalog.

Finding Place-Names in the Family History Library Catalog

German place-names used in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog are based on the German Empire as it existed in 1871. To find the state or province that a town is filed under in the catalog, use the "see" references on the first few microfiche of the catalog for Germany. If you are using the catalog on compact disc, use the "Locality Browse" search. The computer will find a place with the name you select if the library has records from that place.

The Family History Library uses one gazetteer as the standard guide for listing German places in the catalog. Regardless of the various jurisdictions a place may have been under at different times, all German places are listed by the jurisdictions used in the following reference:

Utrecht, E. *Meyers Orts- und Verkehrs-Lexikon des Deutschen Reichs* (Meyers commercial gazetteer of the German Empire). 5th ed. Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institute, 1912-3. (FHL book Ref 943 E5mo; films 496,640-1; fiche 6,000,001-29; computer number 282809.) This book lists the names of places as they existed in Germany from 1871 to 1918. It gives the name of the state or province where each town was located at that time. The gazetteer is written in gothic print, which can be hard to read.

The first volume of this gazetteer contains an explanation of the many abbreviations the gazetteer uses. For example, *Meyers* indicates where to find the civil registration office [*Standesamt*]. If a comma or semicolon follows the abbreviation *StdA* (Standesamt), the town had its own civil registration office. If it does not have a comma or semicolon, the town name that follows the abbreviation and has a comma or semicolon after it is the town where the civil registration office is found.

The gazetteer also indicates if the town had its own parish by using the abbreviation *ev. Pfk.* for a Lutheran parish [*evangelische Pfarrkirche*]; *reform. Pfk.* for a Calvinist parish [*reformierte Pfarrkirche*]; or *kath. Pfk.* for a Roman Catholic parish [*katholische Pfarrkirche*]. A Jewish synagogue [*Synagoge*] is indicated by the abbreviation *Syn.* If no parish is indicated, you must check a state (or provincial) gazetteer or parish register inventory to find the parish.

Occasionally Meyers only gives a “see” reference, indicated by the abbreviation *S* (see the example below). For example, if you look for the village of Filge, county Lübbecke, the gazetteer refers you to the larger village of Levern Westfalen for more information.

The table on page 34 shows the abbreviations used in Meyers for each German state or province. It also provides a sample entry from the Locality Search of the catalog for that province, and lists the English spelling of the state or province.

Civil Registration Offices

The following source lists the 1930 German civil registration offices:

Höpker, H. *Deutsches Ortsverzeichnis: unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der zuständigen Standesämter* (German gazetteer of civil registration offices). Frankfurt/Main: Verlag für Standesamtswesen, 1978 reprint of a 1930 edition. (FHL book 943 E5h; computer number 637890.) In part one (pp. 1-310), any locality with an asterisk (*) has a civil registration office. The civil registration office for towns without the asterisk is shown immediately following the double ring (∞). In part two (pp. 313-66) the civil registration offices for areas Germany lost after World War I are shown.

Modern Place-Names

For some research purposes, such as correspondence, you need to know the modern jurisdictions for the place where your ancestor lived. This may also help you find the ancestral town on modern maps. The following modern gazetteer is available through family history centers and may also be found at some large public libraries:

Müller, Friedrich. *Müllers Großes Deutsches Ortsbuch* (Müllers German gazetteer). 12th ed. Wuppertal-Barmen: Post und Ortsbuchverlag Postmeister A.D. Friedrich Müller, 1958. (FHL book 943 E5m 1958; film 1,045,448; fiche 6,000,343-54; computer number 282525.) This work alphabetically lists modern German place-names as they existed before Germany was reunited in 1990. The last part of each

entry is the abbreviation for the German state. In cases where more than one town has the same name, each is listed separately. The district [*Kreis*] name usually follows the town name and is printed in bold type to distinguish the towns with the same name. Müller's gazetteer is printed with modern type, making it easy to use.

Postal Code Book. The German postal code book lists in alphabetical order all towns with post offices. Part two of the book lists a postal code for each street address in cities with more than one post office. You can use the book's maps to find post office towns and the approximate location of city streets.

Available on-line at: www.deutschepost.de

On 1 July 1993 Germany significantly revised its postal codes. To update addresses published before July 1993, use the following book:

Das Postleitzahlenbuch (The postal code book). Bonn: Postdienst, 1993. (FHL book 943 E8p 1993; computer number 695930.) This book is available for purchase in the United States from Genealogy Unlimited (see p. 41 for ordering information).

German Places in Foreign Countries

A supplement to Müller's gazetteer (described above) lists localities that were formerly in German territory but that were placed under the administration of another country after 1945. The place-names are listed both in German and in the language of the other country:

Müllers Verzeichnis der jenseits der Oder-Neiße gelegenen, unter fremder Verwaltung stehenden Ortschaften (Müllers gazetteer of foreign localities beyond the Oder-Neiße). Wuppertal-Barmen: Post und Ortsbuchverlag Postmeister A.D. Friedrich Müller, 1958. (FHL book 943 E5m 1958 Supp.; film 1,045,448; fiche 6,000,343-54n; computer number 359851.)

The following source lists German localities that were placed under foreign control in 1918, at the end of World War I, with their name changes (German to foreign and foreign to German):

Kredel, Otto, and Franz Thierfelden. Deutsch-fremdsprachiges (Fremdsprachig-deutsches) Ortsnamenverzeichnis (German-foreign [foreign-German] gazetteer). Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1931. (FHL book Q 940 E5kt; film 583457; computer number 260956.)

Another place to find foreign names of former German localities is:

Bundesanstalt für Landeskunde. Amtliches Gemeinde- und Ortsnamenverzeichnis der deutschen Ostgebiete unter fremder Verwaltung (Gazetteer of Eastern German areas under foreign administration). 3 vols. Remagen: Bundesanstalt für Landeskunde, 1955. (FHL book 943.8 E5b; film 824,243 and 1,045,449 item 5; fiche 6,053,256; computer number 359819.)

For an explanation of how to use the above gazetteers, see pages 57 to 84 of Jensen's A Genealogical Handbook of German Research (see the "For Further Reading" section of this outline).

Historical Place-Names

Many German place-names and boundaries have changed or no longer exist. Historical gazetteers that describe places as they were known earlier may help you. Use gazetteers that were published during the time period you are researching to find the names and boundaries that existed during that time. Some places that used to be part of Germany are now part of another nation, such as France, Denmark, or Poland. These are described in the "Historical Geography" section of this outline.

Additional gazetteers and similar guides to German place-names are listed in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY - GAZETTEERS
GERMANY, [STATE] - GAZETTEERS

Additional sources of genealogy for noble families in Germany are described in the "Nobility" section of this outline.

Latinized place names can be found in Orbis Latinus online at:

www.columbia.edu/acis/ets/Graesse/contents.html

Web sites that list German-Polish locality name changes are:

www.atsnotes.com/other/gerpol.html

www.kartenmeister.com/databaseUWE.asp

(This one includes the Memelland area, which is now Lithuania)

For Schlesien, go to:

www.genealogienetz.de/reg/SCI/orte-d.html

German States and Provinces in Meyers Gazetteer and the Family History Library Catalog		
Meyers Listing	Locality Section Listing for a Sample Town	English Spelling
Anh.	GERMANY, ANHALT, HOYM	Anhalt
Baden	GERMANY, BADEN, ADELSHEIM	Baden
Bay.	GERMANY, BAYERN, DAHN	Bavaria
Braunschw.	GERMANY, BRAUNSCHWEIG, UFINGEN	Brunswick
Bremen	GERMANY, BREMEN, BORGFELD	Bremen
Els.-Loth.	GERMANY, ELSAß-LOTHRINGEN, SURBURG	Alsace-Lorraine
Hamburg	GERMANY, HAMBURG, GRODEN	Hamburg
Hessen	GERMANY, HESSEN, DARMSTADT	Hesse-Darmstadt
Lippe	GERMANY, LIPPE, ELBRIN	Lippe
Lübeck	GERMANY, LÜBECK, NUSSE	Luebeck
Meckl.-Schw.	GERMANY, MECKLENBURG-SCHWERIN, FEDEROW	Mecklenburg-Schwerin
Meckl.-Str.	GERMANY, MECKLENBURG-STRELITZ, KUBLANK	Mecklenburg-Strelitz
Oldenb.	GERMANY, OLDENBURG, GIMBWEILER	Oldenburg
Pr.	GERMANY, PREUßEN	Prussia
Pr., Brandbg.	GERMANY, PREUßEN, BRANDENBURG, LENTZKE	Brandenburg
Pr., Hann.	GERMANY, PREUßEN, HANNOVER, MOLZEN	Hanover
Pr., Hessen-N.	GERMANY, PREUßEN, HESSEN-NASSAU, NORDECK	Hesse-Nassau
Pr., Hohenzollern	GERMANY, PREUßEN, HOHENZOLLERN, OSTRACH	Hohenzollern
Pr., Ostpr.	GERMANY, PREUßEN, OSTPREUßEN, PÜLZ	East Prussia
Pr., Pomm.	GERMANY, PREUßEN, POMMERN, RUMBSKE	Pomerania
Pr., Posen	GERMANY, PREUßEN, POSEN, SADKE	Posen
Pr., Rheinl.	GERMANY, PREUßEN, RHEINLAND, THÜR	Rhineland
Pr., Sa.	GERMANY, PREUßEN, SACHSEN, URBICH	Saxony (Province)
Pr., Schles.	GERMANY, PREUßEN, SCHLESIEN, VIEHAU	Silesia
Pr., Schlesw.-Holst.	GERMANY, PREUßEN, SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN, WELT	Schleswig-Holstein
Pr., Westf.	GERMANY, PREUßEN, WESTFALEN, ZÜSCHEN	Westphalia
Pr., Westpr.	GERMANY, PREUßEN, WESTPREUßEN, WROTZK	West Prussia
Reuß ä. L.	GERMANY, REUß ÄLTERE LINIE, GREIZ	Reuss elder line
Reuß j. L.	GERMANY, REUß JÜNGERE LINIE, OßLA	Reuss younger line
Sa.	GERMANY, SACHSEN, BORSODORF	Saxony (Kingdom)
Sa.-A.	GERMANY, SACHSEN-ALTENBURG, SULZA	Saxe-Altenburg
Sa.-C.-G.	GERMANY, SACHSEN-COBURG-GOTHA, COBURG	Saxe-Coburg-Gotha
Sa.-M.	GERMANY, SACHSEN-MEININGEN, RIETH	Saxe-Meiningen
Sa.-W.-E.	GERMANY, SACHSEN-WEIMAR-EISENACH, HERDA	Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach
Schaumb.-L.	GERMANY, SCHAUMBURG-LIPPE, LUHDEN	Schaumburg-Lippe
Schwarzb.-Rud.	GERMANY, SCHWARZBURG-RUDOLSTADT, LICHTÉ	Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt
Schwarzb.-Sond.	GERMANY, SCHWARZBURG-SONDERSHAUSEN, ÖLZE	Schwarzburg-Sondershausen
Waldeck	GERMANY, WALDECK, TWISTE	Waldeck

This table shows the state or province abbreviations used in Meyers Orts- und Verkehrs-Lexikon des Deutschen Reichs, a sample entry from the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog, and the English spelling of the state or province.

GENEALOGY

The term genealogy is used in this outline to describe records that contain family information gathered by individuals, societies, or archives. These records may include pedigree charts, compiled family information, correspondence, ancestor lists, research exchange files, record abstracts, and collections of original or copied documents. These excellent sources of information can save you time. However, because they are compiled from other sources, they may contain inaccuracies. You should verify the information found in them when possible.

Major Collections and Databases

The Family History Library has several sources that contain previous research or that can lead you to other people who are interested in sharing family information. These sources include many ancestral lines that extend into Germany:

- *International Genealogical Index and Appendix.* The 1993 edition of the index provides names and vital information for 25 million deceased persons who lived in Germany. This valuable research tool lists birth, baptism, or marriage dates. The index for Germany includes names extracted from parish registers by volunteers and names submitted by other researchers.

The International Genealogical Index is available on microfiche and also on compact disc as part of FamilySearch (see the “FamilySearch” section of this outline). In both editions you can search all of Germany in one alphabetical list. If you are using the compact disc edition, the computer will also search France at the same time to include Elsaß-Lothringen in the search.

Filtering a compact disc search enables you to limit the search to selected states. You can filter on one to nine German states:

- Alsace-Lorraine [France]
- Baden
- Bayern
- Germany, Misc.
- Hesse-Darmstadt
- Prussia
- Sachsen
- Thuringen
- Wuerttemberg

Filtering on Germany, Misc. includes only the small states and free cities of Anhalt, Braunschweig, Bremen, Hamburg, Lippe, Lübeck, Mecklenburg, Oldenburg, Schaumburg-Lippe, and Waldeck.

References to many genealogical collections are found at:

www.genealogienetz.de/genealogy.html

- *Ancestral File.* This file, part of FamilySearch, contains family history information linked in

family groups and pedigrees that have been contributed since 1979. The file contains the names of 36 million people, including thousands of German families. Ancestral File can print pedigree charts, family group records, and individual summary sheets for any person in the file.

- *Family Group Records Collection.* More than 8 million microfilmed family group record forms make up the Family Group Records Collection. The collection has two major sections: the Archive Section and the Patron Section. The film numbers for both sections are listed in the Author/Title Search of the Family History Library Catalog under Family Group Records Collection.
- *German Pedigree Charts, about 1750-1937.* This collection contains over 5,200 pedigrees on fifteen microfilms. The film numbers for the index and pedigrees are found on FHL films 417,525-39 (computer number 365425).
- *German Genealogists Directory.* Use directories to find others working on your lines. A directory with about 34,000 indexed surnames and a list of 1,900 genealogists (mostly German), their addresses, and their ancestors is listed below:

Glenzdorf, Johann. *Glenzdorfs internationales Genealogen-Lexikon* (Glenzdorf's international directory of genealogists). 3 vols. Bad Münden/Deister: Wilhelm Rost Verlag, 1977-1984. (FHL book 943 D27gi; computer number 31443.) This source is not completely up-to-date, but it is still useful.

References to many genealogical collections are found at: www.genealogienetz.de/genealogy.html

Family Histories

Many German families have produced family histories or newsletters. These often contain genealogical information about several generations of the family, and they may include biographies, photographs, and pedigrees.

The Family History Library has many German family histories and newsletters listed in the Surname Search of the catalog. However, only the major surnames discussed in a family history are listed in the catalog.

The following indexes of published genealogy books and articles in genealogical periodicals are described in the “Periodicals” section of this outline:

- *Der Schlüssel* (The Key)
- *Familiengeschichtliche Quellen* (Family History Sources)

Many German family histories are listed in the following 400-page bibliography:

Heinzmann, Franz, and Christoph Lenhartz. *Bibliographie gedruckter Familiengeschichten, 1946-1960* (Bibliography of printed family histories, 1946-1960). Düsseldorf: Heinzmann, 1990. (FHL book 943 D23he; computer number 660289.) This bibliography cites 6,486 titles alphabetically by the main family discussed in each history. It also contains indexes of collateral lines, authors, and localities mentioned in the titles.

The Family History Library also has several statewide bibliographies of family history, such as the following:

Spruth, Herbert. *Landes- und familiengeschichtliche Bibliographie für Pommern : Drucke und Handschriften* (State and family history bibliography for Pomerania: Printed and Manuscripts). Neustadt/Aisch: Degener, 1962-1965. (FHL book 943.81 D23s; computer number 6359.)

Ancestor Certificates

During the Nazi era, starting about 1937, many families from all over Germany were asked to compile a four-generation genealogical chart [*Ahnenpaß*]. The information in the chart was usually verified in original civil and church records. The chart became an official certificate from the government. The Family History Library has very few of these records. They are hard to find. Many were discarded after World War II, but some families still kept them.

Village Lineage Books

For some German towns, a type of local genealogy book called an *Ortssippenbuch* or *Dorfsippenbuch* is available. These local histories give extensive genealogical information on almost all of the town's inhabitants. They usually begin with the earliest town records in the 1500s or 1600s and continue up to the twentieth century. They typically list families in roughly alphabetical order, with a surname index and place index at the end. They frequently have appendixes listing war casualties, mayors, pastors, refugees, or veterans. If your ancestor's town is the subject of one of these books, you will probably be able to easily trace his or her family back many generations. Since it is compiled information, you should verify it whenever possible. These books usually list only families whose members were born or married or died in the town. Some regions of Germany have more than others; Baden, Württemberg, and Hannover have the most.

A list of on-line Ortssippenbücher (only available on-line) is found at:

<http://db.genealogy.net/ofb/map.cgi?land=deutschland>

A list of published Ortssippenbücher is found at:

www.genealogienetz.de/misc/ofb/index/html

Some of these books are indexed in the composite indexes described in the "Periodicals" section of this outline. Below is listed an important bibliography of 668 village lineage books in alphabetical order by town name:

Heinzmann, Franz. *Bibliographie der Ortssippenbücher in Deutschland* (Bibliography of village lineage books in Germany). Düsseldorf: Heinzmann, 1991. (FHL book 943 D23h 1991; computer number 678491.) This work lists both monographs and village lineages in periodicals.

Some recently discovered village lineage books are now available through the German Center for Genealogy (see the "Archives and Libraries" section of this outline).

Village lineage books are listed in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - GENEALOGY

Genealogical Collections

Germany. The Family History Library has many genealogical collections for German families, including published and unpublished collections of family histories and lineages and research files of prominent genealogists. Two major published collections are listed below:

Deutsches Geschlechterbuch (German lineage book). 194+ vols. Limburg/Lahn: C. A. Starke, 1889-. (FHL book 943 D2dg; computer number 278503.) The Family History Library is missing a few volumes, and earlier volumes are in Gothic type. These volumes often give many generations of German families. They are indexed at the end of each volume, and the first 150 volumes are indexed in a cumulative index called *Stammfolgen-Verzeichnisse für das genealogische Handbuch des Adels und das deutsche Geschlechterbuch* (Index of the genealogical handbook of nobility and the German lineage books), (Limburg/ Lahn: C.A. Starke, 1969; FHL book 943 D2dg index 1969). The 1963 index for volumes 1-134 has been filmed (FHL book 943 D2dg index 1963; film 1,183,565 item 5; fiche 6,053,506; computer number 16373). A cumulative surname index to Vols. 1-209 (1999) and a supplemental index (2000) are available on computer (CD-ROM) disk at the FHL.

Institut zur Erforschung Historischer Führungsgeschichten Bensheim. *Führende Persönlichkeiten* (Leading personalities). Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1980-1983. (On 388 FHL films; computer number 0092838.)

The library also has a collection of half a million German pedigrees, often hundreds of pages long, mostly for the years 1650 to 1850:

Deutsche Zentralstelle für Genealogie. Die Ahnenstammkartei des deutschen Volkes (The German pedigree card index). Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1991-1992. (638 index films, computer number 688651; over 600 pedigree films, computer number 677728.)

The handwritten, phonetic index on 2.4 million cards is arranged by the wife's married name. For a detailed introduction in German see FHL film 1,799,712 item 3. A film register in English is on FHL fiche 6,001,616; computer number 688651. The following book can help you use this collection. It explains the phonetical system used and how to locate the correct film number for your name.

Edlund, Thomas Kent. *An Introduction and Register to "Die Ahnenstammkartei Des Deutschen Volkes" of the Deutsche Zentralstelle Fur Genealogie Leipzig, 1922-1991*. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Family History Library of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1993. (FHL book 943 D231 1993; fiche 6,001,616; computer number 727397.) This is available on-line at: <http://feefhs.org/fij/ahnstamm.html>, with a detailed explanation and all film numbers.

Bayern. The Family History Library has the following collection of records on forty microfilms:

Regensburg (Bayern). *Stadtarchiv. Genealogische Sammlung von Familiengeschlechtern Namenskartei, 800-1900* (Card index of genealogical collections, 800-1900). Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1986. (FHL films 1,337,855-94; computer number 446493.) These records list births, marriages, deaths, professions, parents, spouses, and places of residence. The records are taken from city archives in Amberg, Augsburg, Nürnberg, Würzburg, and Regensburg. Family names are arranged phonetically.

The following sources list two alphabetical card indexes of births, marriages, and deaths from the Pfalz:

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Pfälzisch-Rheinische Familienkunde. *Pfälzische Ahnenkartei, 16.-20. Jahrhundert* (Palatinate ancestor index, sixteenth to twentieth century). Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1979. (On 63 FHL films; computer number 131154.)

Raimar, Josef A. *Genealogische Quellensammlung-Karteien, 14.-20. Jahrhundert* (Index of a collection of genealogical sources, fourteenth to twentieth century). Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1980. (FHL films 1,203,923-37 and 1,258,025-26; computer number 134180.)

The following is an alphabetical collection of unpublished family group sheets and other miscellaneous material representing 97 parish registers of Kreis Ansbach and other places in Mittelfranken, Bayern, for 1650 to 1969:

Brenner, Tobias. Brenner Collection of Genealogical Records of Mittelfranken, Bayern, Germany, Including Description, List of Card-indexed Parishes, etc., and List of Abbreviations Used for Given Names. Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1969. (On 764 FHL films; computer number 289956.)

Hannover. The following sources contain alphabetical genealogies for Hannover:

Pohlsander, Hermann Walter. *Genealogische Sammlung von Niedersächsischen Familien, 800-1975* (Genealogical collection of families of Lower Saxony, 800-1975). Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1975. (FHL films 1,043,746-851; computer number 185094.)

———. *Genealogische Sammlung von Niedersächsischen Familien, 1600-1900* (Genealogical collection of families of Lower Saxony, 1600-1900). Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1975. (FHL films 1,043,852-73; computer number 355895.) This work is especially for the area around the city of Celle.

Lübeck. Two alphabetical genealogies for Lübeck are listed below:

Lübische Genealogie (Lübeck genealogies). Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1960. (FHL films 492,120-31; computer number 357775.)

Genealogisches Register, Lübeck (Lübeck genealogical register). Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1960. (FHL films 492,132-40; computer number 357784.)

Württemberg. The Family History Library has a collection of Württemberg genealogies collected by Max Cramer. The collection is on 72 microfilms and is in two parts:

Cramer, Max. *Genealogien - Ahnen* (Genealogies - ancestors) Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1969. (Computer number 110266.) This section contains an index and genealogies.

———. *Familien - Genealogien, 1600-1930* (Family genealogies 1600-1930). Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1969. (Computer number 110265.) This section contains Protestant parish extracts of baptisms, marriages, and deaths in alphabetical order.

These and dozens of other genealogical collections are listed in the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY - GENEALOGY
 GERMANY, [STATE] - GENEALOGY
 GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - GENEALOGY

If you find your surname in any of the sources described in this section, determine whether the entry actually pertains to your family. All persons with the same surname are not related. You will usually have to do some research before you can connect your ancestry to families listed in these sources.

HANDWRITING

Old German gothic handwriting and print are very different from the Roman script most English-speaking genealogists use. A useful chapter on German print and script is found on pages 204 to 217 of Schweitzer's *German Genealogical Research* (see the "For Further Reading" section of this outline). Another is on pages 171 to 197 of Smith's *German Church Books* (see "For Further Reading"). The chart in the next column shows how each letter of the alphabet looks in gothic handwriting and type.

Links to handwriting samples and reading helps are available on-line at:

<http://genealogy.about.com/ca/handwriting>

ROMAN TYPE	GERMAN TYPE	GERMAN SCRIPT
A a Ä ä	A a Ä ä	A a Ä ä
B b	B b	B b
C c	C c	C c
D d	D d	D d
E e	E e	E e
F f	F f	F f
G g	G g	G g
H h	H h	H h
I i	I i	I i
J j	J j	J j
K k	K k	K k
L l	L l	L l
M m	M m	M m
N n	N n	N n
O o Ö ö	O o Ö ö	O o Ö ö
P p	P p	P p
Q q	Q q	Q q
R r	R r	R r
S s	S s	S s
ß, sz, ss	ß	ß
T t	T t	T t
U u Ü ü	U u Ü ü	U ü Ü ü
V v	V v	V v
W w	W w	W w
X x	X x	X x
Y y	Y y	Y y
Z z	Z z	Z z

HERALDRY

Heraldry is the design, use, regulation, and recording of coats-of-arms. Originally, coats-of-arms were granted to individuals, not families. However, sometimes the right to bear a coat-of-arms was inherited by the descendants of the person to whom it was granted.

In Germany mainly the noble class, gentry, and some burghers (city residents with citizenship rights) were entitled to bear coats-of-arms. The ruling monarch granted a noble title and the right to use a coat-of-arms as a reward for persons who performed a heroic deed, achieved a notable accomplishment, or held a prominent government position. These grants were documented.

The laws and practices of heraldry have changed over the years. In the eighteenth century, many burgher families had coats-of-arms that they recorded with the appropriate government agencies.

An annotated bibliography of heraldry books is found at:

<http://heraldica.org/biblio/annotate.ntm>

Various authors have prepared armorial, or heraldry, books. An *armorial* is a collection of descriptions of coats-of-arms and the families that bear them. It also briefly describes the family's entitlement to that coat-of-arms. It may note early bearers of the coat-of-arms and sometimes notes their relationships, birth dates, and other genealogical information. Each armorial differs from the others and includes different names. Some minor noble families are not included in any books. The following sources are of particular interest in Germany:

Rietstap, Johannes Baptist. *Armorial Général*. 2 vols. Gouda: G.B. van Goor Zonen, 1887. Reprint. Berlin: J.S. Stargardt, 1934. Reprint. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1965. (FHL book 940 D6r; films 1,045,393 items 2-4 and 1,045,394; computer number 261673.)

Siebmacher, Johann J. *Siebmacher's grosses und allgemeines Wappenbuch* (Siebmacher's great book of general heraldic arms). 6 vols. Nürnberg: Bauer und Raspe, 1857-1920. (FHL book 943 D6j old ser.; computer number 274715.)

The books below index Siebmacher's work:

Jäger-Sunstenau, Hanns. *General-index zu den Siebmacher'schen Wappenbüchern* (General index to Siebmacher's heraldry books). Graz: Akademische Druck und Verlagsanstalt, 1964. (FHL book 943 D6j index 1964; film 1,181,781 item 4; computer number 274715.)

Index to v. 1-3 of Siebmacher's *Wappenbuch*. Chicago: Newberry Library, 1971. (FHL book 943 D6j index 1971; film 1,181,790 item 9; computer number 274715.)

The Family History Library has collected many armorial and heraldry books. These are listed in the Locality Search of the catalog under:

GERMANY - HERALDRY
GERMANY, [STATE] - HERALDRY

Sources with information about noble ancestors may also be listed under:

GERMANY - NOBILITY
GERMANY, [STATE] - NOBILITY

Such families are often subjects of published genealogical books or articles. See the "Genealogy" and "Nobility" sections of this outline.

HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY

As a result of wars and political realignments, the internal and external boundaries of Germany have changed several times. Web site discussing German Empire boundary changes (with maps, lists, etc.) is:

www.polishroots.com/genpoland/changes.htm

Place-names and county, province, and state jurisdictions have also changed, often more than once. Because of these changes, you may not be able to find the name of your German ancestor's town on a modern map. You may also have trouble determining the jurisdiction where their records were kept. This section describes the changes that have taken place in Germany's state structure. This information will help you find records in the Family History Library Catalog for the place where your ancestors lived.

The territory of Germany has varied considerably over the centuries. Until 1871 Germany consisted of numerous independent kingdoms, duchies, principalities, and states, whose borders often changed and merged. These changes often make it hard to determine which archive has the particular records you need. In 1871 all states except the Austrian states were consolidated into the German Empire under the leadership of Preußen.

The Family History Library Catalog is based on German jurisdictions as they existed from 1871 until World War I, regardless of earlier or later changes. Places that are now under foreign jurisdiction but were part of the German Empire in 1871 are listed under both GERMANY, PREUßEN, [PROVINCE], [TOWN] and also under their present location, such as POLAND, RUSSIA, LITHUANIA, FRANCE, or DENMARK.

Boundaries

Several boundary changes occurred after World War I. Elsaß-Lothringen (Alsace-Lorraine) was returned to France in 1918. A few towns and villages of Rheinland were ceded to Belgium. The northern tip of Ostpreußen (East Prussia) was given to Lithuania.

The northern part of Schleswig-Holstein passed from Germany to Denmark in 1920. Compare the maps found earlier in this outline to see how the boundaries have changed.

After World War II, other former Prussian areas, such as Posen, most of Schlesien, Westpreußen, and parts of Pommern, became part of Poland. Russia and Poland split Ostpreußen, and a tiny part of Schlesien went to the Czech Republic.

Each nation or state determined its own record-keeping practices. You may find that records differ in what they contain and where they are kept according to who ruled that area when the record was created.

States and Provinces

The German Empire, created in 1871, was made up of a patchwork of German-speaking duchies, principalities, and states. These areas often had little in common. The Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog uses 38 state or province divisions for Germany. For a list of these states and provinces, see the chart found in the “Gazetteer” section of this outline. More information about four of the most complex states follows.

Preußen. The largest, most powerful German state was Preußen (Prussia). It was divided into 13 large provinces (see p. 35). Only two of the provinces had the name “Preußen” in them, but citizens from all 13 provinces were Prussians. Thus, a resident of Rheinland often said he or she was from Preußen. Most Prussian emigrants to foreign countries came from the provinces of Rheinland, Hessen-Nassau, or Westfalen. The catalog lists each town in Preußen behind its *state and province*, as in this example: GERMANY, PREUßEN, RHEINLAND, THÜR.

Sachsen. Sachsen (Saxony) covered a wide band of Germany from the North Sea to the Czech Republic. The three modern German states carrying this name are Niedersachsen, Sachsen, and Sachsen-Anhalt. The Family History Library Catalog lists several old Empire states under Sachsen:

- Sachsen (the kingdom)
- Preußen Sachsen (the province)
- Thüringen (the Duchies of Sachsen)
 - Sachsen-Altenburg
 - Sachsen-Coburg-Gotha

- Sachsen-Meiningen
- Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach

When using the International Genealogical Index on compact disc, you can filter on “Sachsen” (the kingdom), “Prussia” (including the province of Sachsen), and “Thüringen” (including the Duchies of Sachsen).

Thüringen. Eight duchies and principalities of Sachsen became the state of Thüringen (Thuringia) in 1920. Records for towns in Thüringen are listed twice in the catalog: once under Thüringen and once under the duchy or principality. For example, the same record is cataloged under both GERMANY, THÜRINGEN, SULZE and GERMANY, SACHSEN-ALTENBURG, SULZE.

The duchies and principalities of Sachsen (Thüringen) were Reuß ältere Linie, Reuß jüngere Linie, Sachsen-Altenburg, Sachsen-Coburg-Gotha, Sachsen-Meiningen, Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach, Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt, and Schwarzburg-Sondershausen. The Coburg part of Sachsen-Coburg-Gotha joined Bayern in 1920 and is listed under Bayern instead of Thüringen in the catalog.

Pfalz. The Pfalz (Palatinate) on the French border in southwest Germany was devastated in the Thirty Years War (1618-1648). After the war, settlers from other parts of Germany and Switzerland were attracted to help repopulate the area. In the 1800s, more people emigrated to foreign countries from the Pfalz than from any other part of Germany. The Pfalz has been associated with Bayern most of the time since 1214. Therefore, the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog lists towns in the Pfalz under BAYERN. For example, the town of Kaiserslautern in the Pfalz would actually be listed as GERMANY, BAYERN, KAISERSLAUTERN.

The following books explain more about Germany's historical geography. You can find these and similar materials at the Family History Library and many other research libraries.

The Columbia Lippincott Gazetteer of the World. Morningside Heights, N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1962. (FHL book 910.3 C723g; computer number 260764.)

Kirn, Paul. *Politische Geschichte der deutschen Grenzen* (Political history of the German borders). Mannheim: Bibliographisches Institut, 1958. (FHL book 943 H2ki; computer number 95628.)

Jensen Publications. *Maps of the German Empire of 1871.* Rev. ed. Pleasant Grove, Utah: Jensen Publications, 1987. (FHL book 943 E7m; computer number 2075.)

On-line information is found at:
www.genealogienetz.de/genealogy.html in the section "General Help".

Other sources containing information about boundary changes are found in the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY - HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY
GERMANY - HISTORY
GERMANY, [STATE] - HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY
GERMANY, [STATE] - HISTORY

The historical atlases described in the "Maps" section of this outline contain maps depicting boundary changes, migration and settlement patterns, military actions, and ethnic and religious population distribution. Gazetteers and histories are also helpful sources of information about name and boundary changes. See the "Gazetteers" section of this outline.

HISTORY

Effective family research requires some understanding of the historical events that may have affected your family and the records about them. Learning about wars, governments, laws, migrations, and religious trends may help you understand political boundaries, family movements, and settlement patterns. These events may have led to the creation of records that mention your ancestors, such as land or military documents. Your ancestors will become more interesting to you if you learn about the events that shaped their lives. For example, by using a history you might learn about the events that occurred in the year your great-grandparents were married.

Below are some key dates and events in German history:

- 1517 Protestant Reformation. The first significant non-Catholic religions begin in Germany.
- 1524 Protestant church records begin in Nürnberg.
- 1563 Council of Trent. Catholic priests are ordered to start keeping baptism and marriage records.
- 1583 Catholic areas begin using the Gregorian calendar.
- 1618-1648 Thirty Years' War. Many records are burned.
- 1622 The Pfalz suffers great destruction in the war.
- 1683 The first permanent German settlement in the United States is founded at Germantown, Pennsylvania.
- 1700 The last German Protestant areas finally switch to the Gregorian calendar.

- 1709 Large numbers of emigrants, called Palatines [*Pfälzer*], leave the Pfalz region of Germany for England and America.
- 1722 Austro-Hungarian monarchs begin inviting Germans to settle parts of their empire.
- 1763 Catherine the Great begins inviting Germans to settle in Russia.
- 1792 France starts civil registration west of the Rhein. Some church records are interrupted.
- 1814 Napoleon weakens. German states begin to reorganize under the leadership of Preußen.
- 1828 Patronymic naming is abolished in Schleswig-Holstein (then part of Denmark).
- 1848 German Revolution. Emigration to the United States increases.
- 1850 The Hamburg passenger lists begin to document the origins or places of residence of Europeans leaving for the Americas, Africa, and Australia.
- 1864 Preußen conquers Schleswig-Holstein.
- 1871 Franco-Prussian War. Elsaß-Lothringen comes under German rule.
- 1874 Preußen introduces civil registration.
- 1876 Civil registration is required throughout Germany and begins wherever it is not already in effect.
- 1914-1918 World War I. Elsaß-Lothringen is returned to France. Northern Schleswig-Holstein returned to Denmark. Posen and parts of Schlesien and Westpreußen are ceded to Poland. Northern tip of Ostpreußen goes to Lithuania.
- 1939-1945 World War II. Ostpreußen divided between Poland and Russia. Most of Pommern, Westpreußen, Brandenburg, and Schlesien come under Polish administration.

The Family History Library has many published national, regional, provincial, and local histories for Germany. You can find histories in the Family History Library Catalog under:

EUROPE - HISTORY
GERMANY - HISTORY
GERMANY, [STATE] - HISTORY
GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - HISTORY

The following are only a few of the many historical sources that are available:

Historical Background Affecting Genealogical Research in Germany and Austria. Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1977. (FHL book 929.1 G286gs ser. C no. 19; fiche 6,000,035; computer number 327119.) This work emphasizes religious minorities and emigration.

Detwiler, Donald S. *Germany: A Short History.* 2nd ed. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989. (FHL book 943 H2dds; computer number 557580.)

Reinhardt, Kurt Frank. *Germany: 2000 Years.* Rev. ed. 2 vols. New York: F. Ungar, 1989. (FHL book 943 H2rk; computer number 283736.)

Local Histories

Local histories describe the settlement of an area and the founding of churches, schools, and businesses in that area. They may contain information about families. Some county and town histories include separate sections or volumes containing biographical information. Even if your ancestor is not listed in a history, information on other relatives may be included and may provide important clues for finding the ancestor. A local history may also suggest other records to search.

A special type of local history book with extensive genealogical information, called a village lineage book [*Ortssippenbuch*], is available for many towns in Germany. For more information about these books, see the “Genealogy” section of this outline.

In addition, local histories should be studied and enjoyed for the background information they can provide about your ancestors' lifestyle and the community and environment in which they lived. The Family History Library has some local histories for towns in Germany, and similar histories are often available at major public and university libraries and archives.

Bibliographies that list local histories are available for most states and provinces of Germany. These are listed in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY - BIBLIOGRAPHY
GERMANY, [STATE] - BIBLIOGRAPHY
GERMANY - HISTORY - BIBLIOGRAPHY
GERMANY, [STATE] - HISTORY -
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Calendar Changes

The Gregorian calendar is the calendar in common use in the world today. It is a correction of the Julian calendar that had been in use since A.D. 46. Leap years were miscalculated in the Julian calendar, so

that by 1582 the calendar was ten days behind the solar year.

In 1582 Germany was a collection of small principalities, duchies, city-states, and feudal estates. The new calendar was officially adopted by the Catholic dioceses and states in Germany between 1582 and 1585, but many Protestant states did not accept the new calendar until the 1600s. As a result, there were two different dating systems used in various areas of Germany throughout this time period. In some cases, Catholic and Protestant congregations in the same city may have used different calendars at the same time.

The Gregorian calendar was finally accepted throughout Germany in 1700, when the Protestant commission adopted the new calendar. In that year, 18 February was followed by 1 March.

Feast Dates. Date calculation tables are available to convert church feast dates to days of the month (see “Feast Dates” under the “CHURCH RECORDS” section of this outline), but there are separate tables for calculating dates in Julian and in Gregorian years. It is, therefore, important to know the year in which the calendar changed in the area you are searching. You can find a list of over 30 German territories showing exactly when they officially shifted to the Gregorian calendar on pages 317 to 318 of *Ribbe's Taschenbuch für Familiengeschichtsforschung* (see the “For Further Reading” section of this outline). Individual parishes or villages in a region may have lagged behind the rest of the region in making the change.

Double Dating. When an area changed from Julian to Gregorian calendars, the first day of the year changed to 1 January. Before the change, the first day of the year was 25 March. Prechange dates may be confusing. For example, *before* the change, 24 March 1565 was followed by 25 March 1566. Many researchers record dates between 1 January and 24 March with two years, using a technique called *double dating*. An example of a prechange date using double dating is 16 February 1573/1574.

French Republican Calendar. From 1793 to 1805, many parts of Germany under French control used the French Republican calendar. This calendar was based on the founding of the French Republic, and its days and months were unrelated to the Gregorian calendar. For details see the Family History Library publication *French Republican Calendar* research outline (34046).

A conversion table for French Republican Calendar dates is available on:

www.gefrance.com/calrep/calen/htm.

JEWISH RECORDS

Jewish records [*Jüdische Urkunden*] include records of Jews or Jewish congregations. The Family History Library has over 2,000 microfilms of German Jewish vital records that list births, marriages, and deaths. These vital records are an excellent source for accurate information about Jewish ancestors.

The Family History Library also has other types of Jewish records, including synagogue records, records of Jewish taxpayers, Holocaust victims, and censuses.

A gazetteer of places, sources and indexes can be found at:

www.jewishgen.org.

General Historical Background

The earliest German Jewish records are synagogue records, but these were not kept by all congregations. The German Jews did not usually keep registers of births, marriages, and deaths unless required to do so by law.

In the early nineteenth century, Jews in many parts of Germany were required by law either to register with Catholic or Lutheran parishes or to prepare their own civil transcripts of births, marriages, and deaths. These types of records, whether kept by a Christian parish or civil authorities, are called *Jewish records*.

With the introduction of nationwide civil registration by 1876, Jewish births, marriages, and deaths were recorded by German civil authorities. In most cases, the records for Jews were kept in a separate Jewish register. Jewish synagogue records and separate civil registers of Jews are listed in the Family History Library Catalog under JEWISH RECORDS. Mixed civil registration records are listed in the catalog under CIVIL REGISTRATION. See the “Civil Registration” section of this outline for information about civil registration records.

Censuses were taken from time to time to identify Jews and other minorities, especially during the Nazi era (1938-1939). Many records of Jews who died in the Holocaust are now available.

Understanding the history of the Jewish people in Germany can help you in your research. The following are two good reference books:

Adler, H. G. *The Jews in Germany: From the Enlightenment to National Socialism*. Great Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969. (FHL book 943 F2a; computer number 282632.)

Lowenthal, Marvin. *The Jews of Germany: A Story of Sixteen Centuries*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1939. (FHL book 943 F2lm; computer number 105615.)

Below are listed a useful genealogical handbook and a bibliography of Jewish family histories:

Kurzweil, Arthur. *From Generation to Generation: How to Trace Your Jewish Genealogy and Personal History*. New York: William Morrow, 1980. (FHL book 929.1 K967f; film 1,059,468 item 4; computer number 51783.)

Zubatsky, David S., and Irwin M. Berent. *Jewish Genealogy: A Sourcebook of Family Histories and Genealogies*. 2 vols. New York: Garland, 1984. (FHL book 929.1 Z81j; computer number 294278.)

Information Recorded in Synagogue Records

Synagogue records may include the following:

- *Financial accounting records*. These records sometimes list the names of contributors.
- *Circumcision registers* (“Mohel” books). These registers include the Hebrew given name for the male child, the date of circumcision (Hebrew calendar), the father's given Hebrew name, and sometimes the father's surname.
- *Marriage contracts*. These contractual agreements include the names of the bride and groom. They may also give the marriage date and the parents' names. In cases of second or later marriages, names of previous marriage partners and their death dates may be included.
- *Lists of deceased persons*. These lists give the name of the deceased person and the death date.

Information Recorded in Jewish Civil Registration Records

Jewish civil registration records contain the same birth, marriage, and death information as civil registration records for Christians. They are used in the same way as church records or other civil registration records. See the search strategies included in the “Church Records” and “Civil Registration” sections of this outline.

Other Records. From 1809 to 1812, Jews made lists of surnames that show each person's residence, old name, new name, and birth date. The Nazi census of minorities in 1938 lists given names and surnames, birth dates, birthplaces, education levels, and which grandparents were Jewish.

Locating Jewish Records

The Family History Library has Jewish records from many German places, but there are also many places not yet represented in the collection. The library has very few synagogue records. Most of the library's Jewish materials are vital records made by civil authorities. Jewish civil registration records and civil registration records that include Jews along with the rest of the population are available beginning in 1795. Because of privacy restrictions, the library has few records for events that occurred after 1875.

Below are listed places where you can look for records of your Jewish ancestors:

Civil Registration Records. These records are kept at the local civil registration office [*Standesamt*] in each town or city. Therefore, you need to know the town where your ancestor lived before you can look for these records.

Many German archive and parish register inventories touch on various Jewish records. The inventory below concentrates on Jewish records:

Verzeichnis der im Bundesarchiv aufbewahrten Filme von Personenstandsregistern: Jüdischer Gemeinden aus Mittel- und Ostdeutschland (Inventory of microfilms at the German Federal Archive of Jewish Vital Records from central and eastern Germany). Typescript photocopy, 196-? (FHL book 943 A5gp; computer number 245618.) This inventory is divided into five sections: (1) east of the Oder-Neiße line, (2) Russian occupied East Germany, (3) Nordrhein-Westfalen, (4) Berlin, and (5) Locality Index. The inventory lists hundreds of synagogue records—including birth, marriage, and death records; cemetery records; school records; and so forth—and the years they cover.

Leo Baeck Institute. The Leo Baeck Institute in New York has a collection of 50,000 German Jewish records, primarily from Baden, Berlin, Schleswig-Holstein, Westpreußen, and Württemberg. These include circumcision, marriage, death, and memorial records. The following work describes the collection:

Grubel, Fred, et al. *Catalog of the Archival Collections [of the Leo Baeck Institute]*. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1990. (FHL book 974.71 A3gf; computer number 405651.)

More good Jewish information can be found at: www.lbi.com, web site of the Leo Baeck Institute.

Registry of Jewish Research. The Jewish Genealogical Society provides an alphabetical registry of genealogists and the Jewish families they are researching:

Mokotoff, Gary. *Jewish Genealogical Family Finder*. New York: Jewish Genealogical Society, 1984-. Irregular. (FHL Reg Table 940

F2mg; computer number 465035.) On-line at: www.jewishgen.org.

Genealogical Societies. The International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies may be able to help find records of Jewish ancestors. Their address is:

International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies
1485 Teaneck Road
Teaneck, NJ 07666
USA
www.jewishgen.org/ajgs

Holocaust Records. Most of the Jewish population of Germany was killed during the atrocities of World War II. Below is a source containing a list of about 130,000 people who died in the Holocaust, their birth and death dates, their places of residence before deportation, and the camps to which they were sent:

Gedenkbuch: Opfer der Verfolgung der Juden unter der nationalsozialistischen Gewaltherrschaft in Deutschland, 1933-1945 (Memorial book for the victims of Jewish persecution during Nazi despotism, 1933-1945). 2 vols. Koblenz: Bundesarchiv, 1986. (FHL book Q 943 V4g.)

Family History Library Records. To determine whether the Family History Library has Jewish records for the locality your ancestor came from, search the Locality Search of the catalog under each of the following:

GERMANY - JEWISH RECORDS
GERMANY, [STATE] - JEWISH RECORDS
GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - JEWISH RECORDS

Information about Jews may also be found in the Locality Search under:

GERMANY - JEWISH HISTORY
GERMANY - MINORITIES

Additional information may be found in the Subject Search under:

JEWS - GERMANY
HOLOCAUST, JEWISH (1939-1945)

LAND AND PROPERTY

Land records often provide a chain of land ownership from father to son (or to daughters and sons-in-law) over several generations. This information can be very useful, especially when other records do not exist or fail to give needed information. However, German land records are seldom used for research since they tend to be about the nobility or wealthy. Better sources, such as church records and civil registration records, are available.

German land records are not easily accessible. Where available, land records are found at state archives. You might be able to use land records for your research if you can visit the German archives in person or hire a local research agent.

The Family History Library has few German land records. They are found in the Locality Search of the catalog under the name of the locality and the subject LAND AND PROPERTY. House owner books are explained under the "Dwellings" section of this outline.

LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGES

Most materials used in German research are written in German. However, you do not need to speak or read German to do research in German records. You will need to know some key words and phrases to understand the records.

Because of Germany's history, you may also find several other languages in German records. Latin was frequently used in Roman Catholic church records. French was often used in Elsaß-Lothringen and during the French domination of the area west of the Rhein river (1806-1815). Danish was used in much of Schleswig-Holstein until Preußen annexed that area in 1864.

German grammar may affect the way names appear in genealogical records, so your ancestor's name in German may vary from record to record. For help in understanding name variations, see the "Names, Personal" section of this outline.

Language Aids

The Family History Library has genealogical word lists for German, Latin, French, Danish, and Polish. The *German Genealogical Word List* includes symbols commonly used in German genealogical sources. For more information about reading German writing, see the "Handwriting" section of this outline.

The following books and English-German dictionaries can help in your research. You can find these and similar materials at many research libraries.

Thode, Ernest. *German-English Genealogical Dictionary*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1992. (FHL book 433.21 T352g 1992; computer number 211632.)

Langenscheidts German-English, English-German Dictionary = Langenscheidts Deutsch-Englisches, Englisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch. New York: Pocket Books, 1952, 1993. (FHL book 433.21 L262g; computer number 264735.)

Other language aids, including dictionaries of various dialects and time periods, are listed in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY - LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGES

Also check the Subject Search of the catalog under:

GERMAN LANGUAGE - DICTIONARIES

MAPS

Maps can help you find where your ancestors lived. Maps can show churches, geographical features, transportation routes, and neighboring towns. Historical maps are especially useful for understanding boundary changes.

Maps may be published individually or in collections called *atlases*. Maps may also be included in gazetteers, guidebooks, local histories, and history texts.

There are many types of maps. Each can help you in a different way. Historical maps describe the growth and development of countries. They show boundaries, migration routes, settlement patterns, military campaigns, and other historical information. Road maps provide details on highways, rivers, and town size. Street maps are extremely helpful when researching in large cities such as Berlin.

A website for maps is:

www.rootsweb.com/~deupru/maps/

Using Maps

Maps must be used carefully for several reasons:

- Often several places have the same name. For example, 92 towns in present-day Germany are called Steinbach.
- The spellings and names of some towns may have changed since your ancestors lived there. Some localities have different names in different languages. For example, the city formerly known as Breslau (Germany) was called Wrocław (Poland) after 1945.
- Place-names are often misspelled in English-language sources. Difficult names may have been shortened and important diacritical marks omitted. For example in English, München is called Munich; Köln is known as Cologne. Some place-names were greatly altered. For example, the village of Lösenbach was recorded in American records as Loose Creek. (The -bach ending means creek in English.)
- Political boundaries are not clearly indicated on all maps.

Finding a Specific Town on the Map

To do successful German research, you must identify the town where your ancestor lived. Because many towns have the same name, you may need some additional information before you can find the correct town on a map.

Gazetteers can help you identify the government district your ancestor's town was in. With this information, you may be able to distinguish between places with the same name. See the "Gazetteers" and "Historical Geography" sections of this outline for more information. Along with gazetteers, check histories, family records, and other sources to learn all you can about your ancestor's area. The following information can be very helpful:

- The government administrative districts in which your ancestor's town was located
- Your ancestor's state or province
- The name of the parish where your ancestor was baptized or married
- Places where related ancestors lived
- The size of your ancestor's town
- The occupation of your ancestor or his or her relatives (This information may indicate the town size or industries of the town.)
- Nearby localities, such as large cities
- Nearby features, such as rivers and mountains
- Industries of the area
- Other names the town was known by

The more information you can gather about the town where your ancestor lived, the better chance you have of finding it on a map.

Finding Maps and Atlases

Collections of maps and atlases are available at many historical societies and at public and university libraries.

The Family History Library has a good collection of German maps and atlases. These are listed in the Locality Search of the catalog under:

GERMANY - MAPS

Two general maps of Germany are found earlier in this outline. Listed below is the most detailed map of Germany at the Family History Library:

Königliche Preußische Landesaufnahme.
Kartographische Abteilung. *Karte des Deutschen Reiches* (Map of the German Empire). Scale 1:100,000. Berlin: Königliche Preußische Landesaufnahme, 1914-1917. (FHL film 68,814; computer number 23525.) This map will help you find places in the former German Empire as they existed from 1871 to 1914. The detailed maps on this microfilm are in numerical order. The identification numbers on the detailed maps correspond to the small numbers in the upper right corner of each grid square on the first several overview maps.

The following are helpful atlases for Germany:

Auto Atlas Deutschland. Scale 1:200,000. Berlin: RV Verlag, 1997-. (FHL book 943 E7a; computer number 394143.)

Der Grosse V.A.G. Atlas (The great V.A.G. atlas). Scale 1:200,000. Berlin: Reise-und Verkehrsverlag, Annual. (FHL book 940 E7gv 1991-2; computer number 374936.) This is an excellent atlas of Germany. It has an index of cities and towns that makes finding locations easy. It also has some maps of neighboring countries that are on a smaller scale than the maps of Germany. Street maps for several larger cities are also included. Editions published before 1991 are not as detailed for the areas that were then in East Germany.

Der Grosse Shell Atlas (The great Shell atlas). Scale 1:500,000. Ulm/Donau: Franz Spiegel Buch, Annual. (FHL book 943 E7gs; computer number 203587.) This atlas contains maps for both western and eastern Germany. The maps are on a smaller scale than those in the atlas listed above. This atlas is indexed and contains street maps of some larger cities. Several neighboring countries are also featured in this atlas.

Stier, Hans-Erich. *Westermann Grosser Atlas zur Weltgeschichte* (Westermann atlas of world history). 8th ed. Braunschweig: Georg Westermann, 1972. (FHL book Ref 940 E3we; computer number 190050.) This is an excellent historical atlas.

You can purchase German maps and postal code books and get current prices from:

Genealogy Unlimited
Interlink Bookshop & Genealogical Services
4687 Falaise Drive
Victoria, B.C.
V8Y1B4
Canada
E-mail: dixie@genealogyunlimited.com
On-line: www.genealogyunlimited.com

MILITARY RECORDS

Military records identify individuals who served in the military or who were eligible to serve. Germany had a large army and a small navy. Since most German states had conscription laws, most young men were required to register for military service. A young man who had not yet served had to get special permission to emigrate. Evidence that an ancestor actually served in the military can sometimes be found in family records, biographies, censuses, photographs, emigration papers, medals, probate records, civil registration records, and church records.

The crucial information needed to find military records is the soldier's regiment or the sailor's ship. This is usually difficult to find, making military records hard to use for genealogical research. Search the sources cited above to find your ancestor's regiment, ship, or commanding officer. Commanding officers can be identified with their units relatively easily. Photographs sometimes show insignia that identify a regiment or ship.

Types of Military Records

The earliest German military records, which began around 1485, usually list only the names of the soldiers. Records from the middle 1800s often give information about promotions, places served, pensions, conduct, and other details concerning the soldier's military career. In addition, these records may include the soldier's age, birthplace, residence, occupation, and physical description as well as the names of family members.

However, many German military records provide very few details about individuals other than those who served as officers.

Military records include the following:

- Military church records [*Kirchenbücher*] These records include garrison [*Garnisons-*] records, parish registers, and regimental [*Regiments-*] church records. They date from 1672.
- Personnel files [*Stammrollen*] of common soldiers and noncommissioned officers
- Published officer files [*Offizier-Stammlisten*]
- Officer rolls [*Ranglisten*]
- Regimental histories [*Regimentsgeschichten*]

Foreign Military Service

Germans frequently served with the armies of foreign countries.

Denmark. Before 1772 the Danish army was made up mostly of German soldiers and officers. After 1772

the army began to recruit more Danes, and by 1803, the army was entirely Danish. If your German relative served in the Danish military before 1803, you may be able to find valuable genealogical information in Danish military records. For more information, see the Denmark Research Outline.

American Revolution. Germans served on both sides of the American Revolution. To find information about Germans who fought for the Americans, see the *U.S. Military Records Research Outline*.

About 25,000 mercenary troops raised in Germany worked for the British. They may have come from any part of Germany, but they are usually called "Hessians." Some deserted or were sold to Americans as laborers. Many remained in the United States or went to Canada after the war. The following source is a major index of German mercenaries:

Hessische Truppen *im amerikanischen Unabhängigkeitskrieg* (HETRINA) (Hessian troops in the American Revolution). 6 vols. Marburg: Archivschule, 1971-1976, 1987-. (FHL book 943 M2mg; films 1,320,516 items 6-7 and 1,320,542 items 5-6; computer number 296972.) Indexes from this series list each soldier's name, year of birth, place of origin, rank, and military unit and the source of the information.

The following source indexes thousands of American and British records of German mercenaries:

Smith, Clifford Neal. *Cumulative Surname Index and Soundex to Monographs 1 through 12 of the German-American Genealogical Research Series*. McNeal, Ariz.: Westland Publishing, 1983. (FHL book 973 W2smn no. 13; computer number 257434.) This index lists only the soldier's surname and the series number of the monograph where information about that soldier can be found. Each monograph is individually indexed. The monograph normally lists the soldier's name, rank, and unit. Some of the following may also be listed: birthplace; age; occupation; promotions; where the soldier resided or was recruited; and whether he was wounded, killed, missing in action, captured, deserted, or sold, and where.

American Civil War. About one in ten Union soldiers was born in Germany. Over 200,000 German immigrants to the United States were recruited by the Union, many as they stepped off the boat. Some were drafted. Some Germans served in the Confederate military. To find information about Germans who fought in the Civil War, see the *U.S. Military Records* research outline.

Locating Military Records

German military records can be of great genealogical value, but getting access to them is often a problem.

For example, it is very hard to get information from military records through correspondence. Also, the Family History Library has microfilmed only a few German military records. Those that have been microfilmed are hard to read, incomplete for several years, poorly arranged, and not indexed.

If you write to archives for information from military records, you must indicate the regiment or company to which your ancestor belonged. Also include the garrison town or commanding officer's name and your ancestor's rank if you know that information.

Two books help identify where regiments from Preußen were stationed. Although the records they describe were burned in World War II, the garrison towns listed are locations to look for other records:

Lyncker, Alexander von. *Die altpreußische Armee 1714-1806 und ihre Militärkirchenbücher* (Old Prussian army and its military parish records, 1714-1806). Berlin: Verlag für Standesamtswesen, 1937. (FHL book 943 M21 v.1; film 477,806; computer number 123824.)

———. *Die preußische Armee 1807-1867 und ihre sippenkundlichen Quellen* (Old Prussian army and its genealogical sources, 1807-1867). Berlin: Verlag für Standesamtswesen, 1939. (FHL book 943 M21 v. 2; film 477,807; computer number 123853.)

Records at German State Archives

There is no central archive for German military records. German states each had their own system of keeping military records before 1867. These records are now stored in several German state archives. The following pamphlet lists the archives where existing military records for each state are found:

Reschke, Horst A. *German Military Records as Genealogical Sources*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Reschke, 1990. (FHL book 943 M2r; fiche 6,001,596; computer number 592812.)

In 1867 the armies of all but three German states were integrated into the armies of Preußen. From that time, soldiers of any German state (except Bayern, Sachsen, or Württemberg) were recorded only in the military records of Preußen. Unfortunately, the Preußen military records were almost completely destroyed in 1945.

Records at the Family History Library

Only a few German military records are available at the Family History Library. They are mostly military parish registers, a few published officer rolls [*Stammlisten and Ranglisten*], and regimental histories. German military church records are usually listed in the Family History Library Catalog with

other church records. For other German military records, see the Locality Search of the catalog under:

GERMANY - MILITARY RECORDS
GERMANY, [STATE] - MILITARY RECORDS

Military History

Germans were involved in the following military actions, among others:

- 1618- 1648 Thirty Years' War. Protestant and Catholic states fought. Sweden, Denmark, and France all seized German territory. Parts of Germany were decimated.
- 1688- 1697 Palatine Wars of Succession - destroyed mainly Southwestern Germany
- 1740- 1748 War of Austrian Succession. Preußen invaded Schlesien.
- 1756- 1763 Seven Years' War. Preußen kept Schlesien.
- 1775- 1783 American Revolution. Several German states, led by Hessen, provided troops to fight for the British.
- 1805- 1815 Napoleonic Wars. German troops served throughout Europe. Rheinland was temporarily occupied by France.
- 1864 War with Denmark. Preußen seized Schleswig-Holstein.
- 1866 Seven Weeks' War. Preußen consolidated power in a fight with Austria.
- 1867 Army Reorganized. Preußen absorbed the armies of all other states except Bayern, Sachsen, and Württemberg.
- 1870- 1871 Franco-Prussian War. Germany annexed Elsaß-Lothringen.
- 1914- 1818 World War I. Elsaß-Lothringen returned to France. Parts of eastern Germany ceded to Lithuania and Poland.
- 1939- 1945 World War II. Many German records were destroyed.

For more historical information about the German military, see the following sources:

Alfoldi, Laszlo M. *The Armies of Austria-Hungary and Germany, 1740-1914*. Pennsylvania: Carlisle Barracks, 1975. (FHL book 943 A3a v. 1, film 1,045,372 item 3; computer number 244690.)

Sigel, Gustav A. *German Military Forces of the 19th Century*. New York: Crown Publishing, 1989. (Not at FHL.)

Other military histories are listed in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY - MILITARY HISTORY
GERMANY, [STATE] - MILITARY HISTORY

NAMES, PERSONAL

Understanding German surnames and given names can help you find and identify your ancestors in the records.

Surnames

Before record keeping began, most people had only one name, such as John. As the population increased, it became necessary to distinguish between individuals with the same name. The problem was usually solved by adding descriptive information. John became John the smith, John the son of Matthew, John the short, or John from Heidelberg. At first "surnames" applied only to one person, not to the whole family. After a few generations, these names became hereditary and were passed on from generation to generation.

Surnames developed from four major sources:

- 1689- *Patronymic*, based on a parent's name, such as Johann Petersohn (son of Peter).
- 1690- *Occupational*, based on the person's trade, such as Johann Weber (weaver).
- 1691- *Descriptive or nickname*, based on a unique quality of the person, such as Johann Langbein (long leg).
- 1692- *Geographical*, based on a person's residence, such as Johann Schlesier (a person from Schlesien).

The nobility and wealthy land owners were the first to begin using surnames. Merchants and townspeople then adopted the custom, as did the rural population. This process took two or three centuries. In most of Germany, the practice of using surnames was well established by the 1500s.

Patronymics. The use of patronymic names was prevalent in the Schleswig-Holstein and Ostfriesland areas in northern Germany. Patronymic names changed with each generation. For example, Hans Petersen was a son of a man named Peter. If Hans had a son Jens, the son was known as Jens Hansen (son of Hans). The use of patronymics continued until decrees were passed that required persons to adopt permanent hereditary family names. Subjects were often reluctant to comply, so several decrees were needed. These decrees were passed in 1771, 1820, and 1822 in the province of Schleswig-Holstein and in 1811 in Ostfriesland.

Alias Surnames. In some areas of Germany, individuals took a second surname. In the records, the second surname may be preceded by the word *genannt, vulgo, modo, sive, or alias*. This practice was common in the provinces of Westfalen and Hannover and parts of Rheinland and Schlesien.

The development of alias surnames was often tied to agriculture. When a man moved to a new farm, he sometimes changed his name to the name of the farm. Also, when a man married a woman who had inherited a farm, his name may have changed to her family name. In this situation, some of the children born to the couple may have used his surname, while others in the same family used the wife's family name.

Jewish Naming Customs. Before the 1800s, the use of a family name by Jews was left to the discretion of the individual. Jews in Germany followed the custom of using only a given name and the name of the father, such as Isaac, son of Abraham. Most Jews did not adopt hereditary family names until required to do so by law. In 1790 Baden was the first German state to require fixed surnames. Preußen issued an edict on 11 March 1812 that required that permanent family names be adopted within six months. Compulsory surname laws were enacted in the German states of Bayern and Mecklenburg in 1813 and 1814. By the 1820s, most small German states had extended civil rights to Jews and required them to adopt surnames.

Given Names

German given names are usually derived from Biblical names, such as Josef (Joseph); from the names of saints, such as Joannes (Joan); or from Old German, such as Siegfried.

When baptized, children were usually given two or more given names. In most of Germany, the child was normally called by the first name given at baptism. In some areas, however, it was more common for the child to be called by the second name. For example, if the first two males born in a family were named Johann Christoph and Johann Friedrich, they were usually called by their second given names. If an elder child died young, the parents frequently reused the deceased child's exact name on the next born child of the same gender.

Some children received as many as four or more given names at baptism. Multiple given names were often the names of parents or other relatives. Many of these names were frequently dropped as the child matured. Thus, a person's later records do not always use the name he or she was given at birth.

Grammatical Effects on German Names

Gender and grammar can affect German word endings. Feminine names often end with **-in**. For example, *Barbara Meyer* may appear as *Barbara*

Meyerin. Germans occasionally use **-chen** and **-lein** as diminutive endings meaning “little.” *Gretchen* could be translated *little Greta* (Margret). The endings **-s** or **-es** show possession. *Hermann Josefs Sohn* would mean *Joseph's son Hermann*.

Names in Foreign Languages

Because German genealogical records were kept in various languages, you may find your ancestor's name in different languages at different times. For example, your great-grandfather's name could be in Latin on his birth record, in French on his marriage record, and in German on his death record. Some given names are often very different when translated into different languages, as shown by the following table.

German	Latin	French	Polish
Albrecht	Adalbertus	Adalbert	Wojciech
Anna	Anna	Anne	Hanna
Elisabeth	Elisabetha	Isabelle	Elżbieta
Franz	Franciscus	François	Franciszek
Georg	Georgius	Georges	Jerzy
Gottlieb	Bogumilus	Bogomil	Bogumił
Johann (Hans)	Joannes	Jean	Jan
Karl	Carolus	Charles	Karol
Katharine	Catherina	Catherine	Katarzyna
Lorenz	Laurentius	Laurent	Wawrzyniec
Ludwig	Ludovicus	Louis	Ludwik
Margareta	Margarita	Marguerite	Małgorzata
Marie	Maria	Marie	Marja
Wilhelm	Guilielmus	Guillaume	Wilhelm

The following source contains given names translated into 23 different European languages, including English:

Janowowa, Wanda, et al. *Słownik Imion* (Dictionary of names). Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im Ossolińskich, 1975. (FHL book Ref 940 D4si; film 1181578 item 2; fiche 6,000,839; computer number 26595.)

Variations on Given Names

Many given names have variants and dialectical forms. Barbara, for example, can appear as Barbel, Barbele, Barbeli, Bärbel, Bärbchen, Bärmel, Bäbi, or even Wawerl or Wetti. Several books are available that give variant forms of given names.

For more details about German naming customs, spellings, grammatical endings, and variants read Kenneth L. Smith's *German Church Books* (see the “For Further Reading” section of this outline).

There are also many books that discuss German names and their meanings. Some indicate the cities or regions where some surnames are most common or the earliest date and place the name was documented. One such source is listed below:

Bahlow, Hans. *Deutsches Namenlexikon* (German name dictionary). Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp Taschenbuch, 1972. (FHL book 943 D4ba 1972; computer number 275948.)

More such books are listed in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY - NAMES, PERSONAL

NATURALIZATION AND CITIZENSHIP

In Germany, citizenship was a valuable privilege that included the following:

- 1693- Rights to engage in business in a town
- 1694- Protection under the law
- 1695- Permission to reside in a town without being expelled

Naturalization is the process of granting citizenship privileges and responsibilities to residents. Citizenship was usually extended by individual cities to certain of their inhabitants. National citizenship was rare until the German Empire of 1871.

Those who received the rights to citizenship were recorded in citizenship books [*Bürgerbücher* or *Bürgerlisten*]. Although some German citizenship books date from medieval times, most are for later centuries. They are among the earliest and most consistently kept records of genealogical value for Germany. They include information about citizens' names, ages, social and economic status, occupation and training, and sometimes birthplaces and relationships.

Only males of the middle or upper classes were granted citizenship, and only if they were born legitimately. Merchants and craftsmen were commonly granted citizenship.

Genealogical use of citizenship books is usually limited to the time period before church records are available. They may also be used to trace migrations not found in other records. A bibliography of 517 published *Bürgerlisten* is found on pages 138 to 180 in Ribbe's *Taschenbuch für Familiengeschichtsforschung* (see the “For Further Reading” section of this outline).

The Family History Library has obtained copies of some German citizenship books. In the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog they are usually listed under the specific town. For example:

GERMANY, PREUßEN, HESSEN-NASSAU,
FRANKFURT (MAIN) - NATURALIZATION
AND CITIZENSHIP

The original citizenship books were usually kept by the town and may be found in town archives or town halls.

NEWSPAPERS

You can use German local newspapers to inquire for genealogical help in your ancestor's town. However, you may have a better response if you use a local genealogical society periodical rather than a general newspaper. The following is a current newspaper directory for Germany:

Benn's Media Directory International. Tonbridge, England: Benn's Business Information Services, annual. (FHL book 011.35 B439; computer number 23967.) This is arranged by the nation and city of the newspaper.

Newspapers printed during your ancestor's lifetime may contain birth or marriage notices. Death notices and war casualties are especially common in old German papers. Death notices typically list birth and death dates and burial places. Sometimes they list the birth place or immediate family members. Since few indexes are available, you must know the approximate date of the newspaper to search. Newspapers became more common in Germany after 1855, when a tax on paper was lifted.

The Family History Library has virtually no German newspapers. A few related items may be found in the Locality Search of the catalog under the name of the town and the topic NEWSPAPERS. To find newspapers in German repositories, use the source below:

Hagelweide, Gert. *Deutsche Zeitungsbestände in Bibliotheken und Archiven = German Newspapers in Libraries and Archives*. Düsseldorf: Droste, 1974. (FHL book 943 B3h; computer number 246709.) This book covers the years 1700 to 1969, citing 2,018 papers from 222 towns and stored at 579 German and foreign repositories. It does not list every paper ever published, but it is still an excellent list.

German Immigrant Newspapers

In most places where Germans settled around the world, they published a German-interest newspaper. The directory below lists modern newspapers by language and title:

Wynar, Lubomyr R., and Anna T. Wynar. *Encyclopedic Directory of Ethnic Newspapers and Periodicals in the United States*. 2nd. ed. Littleton, Colo: Libraries Unlimited, 1976. (FHL book 973 E4w; computer number 237101.)

Newly arrived immigrants and their home towns are often listed in old newspapers. For a listing of about 5,000 historical German-interest newspapers and their repositories, see the following source:

Arndt, Karl J. R. *The German Language Press of the Americas, 1732-1968: History and Bibliography = Die Deutschsprachige Presse der Americas, 1732-1968: Geschichte und Bibliographie*. 2 vols. München: Verlag Dokumentation, 1973-1976. (FHL book 973 B33a 1976; computer number 63754.)

NOBILITY

The nobility is a class of people who had special political and social status. Members of this class had titles such as Baron [*Freiherr*], Duke [*Herzog*], Count [*Graf*], Margrave [*Markgraf*], and Knight (Sir) [*Ritter*]. Noble status was usually inherited. It originated with people who had power, influence, and land in ancient times or who received a grant of nobility from a king.

Most family traditions about a noble ancestor prove to be untrue. Members of the noble class seldom left their country or disowned their children. Illegitimate children of nobility, though not entitled to noble status, were often recorded (although the father may not have been named) and can be found in the records.

The noble class formed only a small percentage of Germany's population, and Germany limited the growth of the noble class. Laws specified which children of the nobility inherited their parents' status.

Although some original records such as grants of nobility still exist, you can often research your noble ancestors by using compiled sources. German nobility was frequently associated with the military and a mobile lifestyle. When the family moved frequently, compiled sources become especially helpful. The compiled sources for German nobility include both published and manuscript genealogies. If your ancestor was of the noble class, the following books may help you in your research:

Hefner, Otto Titian von. *Stammbuch des blühenden und abgestorbenen Adels in Deutschland* (Lineages of flourishing and extinct nobles in Germany). 4 vols. in 2. Regensburg: Georg Joseph Mainz, 1860-1866. (FHL book 943 D22h; film 491,136; computer number 273733.) This is a quick reference list of German noble families.

Fritsch, Thomas, Freiherr von. *Die Gothaischen Taschenbücher, Hofkalender, und Almanach* (The gotha pocketbooks, calendar and almanac). Limburg/Lahn: C. A. Starke, 1968. (FHL book Ref 943 B4da vol. 2; computer number 129897.) A comprehensive index of four published serials on German nobility is found on pages 187 to 349. Pages 350 to 415 index six other published serials on German nobility.

Führende Persönlichkeiten (Leading personalities). See the "Genealogy" section of this outline.

In addition to "Genealogy," see the "Biography" and "Heraldry" sections of this outline. The Family History Library has collected some records of noble families. These records are listed in the Locality Search of the catalog under:

GERMANY - NOBILITY
GERMANY, [STATE] - NOBILITY
GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - NOBILITY

OBITUARIES

Funeral Sermons [Leichenpredigten]

Funeral sermons include remarks (eulogies) made by ministers regarding the life of a deceased person. In Germany, these sermons were often collected and published. The middle and wealthier classes were more likely to have sermons for their dead, but sermons can occasionally be found for farmers, printers, or soldiers. Protestants started the practice and made the most funeral sermons, but Catholic priests also followed the custom.

Published funeral sermons were most popular from about 1550 to about 1750. They usually contain information such as names, dates, places, relatives, life histories, and sometimes pedigrees for many generations. Eulogies are subject to error because the information was given by relatives who did not always remember facts accurately.

If you find a phrase like "with sermon" [*mit Predigt*] in a burial record, check for a published funeral sermon. If you suspect a funeral sermon was given for one of your ancestors, you can contact archives in the area where your ancestor was buried, asking for help finding the sermon. Published abstracts are often available. Two helpful lists of funeral sermon collections and indexes are listed below:

Wentscher, Erich, and Hermann Mitgau. *Einführung in die praktische Genealogie* (4. Aufl.) (Introduction to practical genealogy [4th ed.]). Limburg/Lahn: C. A. Starke, 1966. (FHL book 943 B4gg v.1; computer number 251242.) See pages 92 to 93 of the book.

Jensen, Larry O. "Leichenpredigten (Funeral sermons)." *German Genealogical Digest* 8 (Fourth Quarter 1992): 119-24. (FHL book 943 B2g; computer number 366089.)

The following source indexes abstracts of over 40,000 funeral sermons:

Katalog der fürstlich Stolberg-Stolberg'schen Leichenpredigten-Sammlung (Catalog of the funeral sermon collection from principality of Stolberg). Leipzig: Degener, 1927-1935. (FHL book 943 B4b v.2; films 477,802-4; computer number 247096.)

Funeral sermon abstracts available in the Family History Library are listed in the Locality Search of the catalog under:

GERMANY - OBITUARIES
GERMANY, [STATE] - OBITUARIES
GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - OBITUARIES

The German Center for Genealogy has an index of about 324,000 names from records of the 1600s to the 1700s. The original records are from about 450 repositories. The index is called the *Union Catalog for German Collections of Personal Writings and Eulogies* (see the "Archives and Libraries" section of this outline).

OCCUPATIONS

Many trades, such as butchers, tanners, shoemakers, and tailors, were organized into professional associations called guilds [*Gilden* or *Zünfte* or *Innungen*]. The purpose of a guild was to provide training of apprentices and otherwise regulate the practice of the trade in the area.

Beginning in the eleventh century, guilds were established in major cities. The records of these guilds contain lists of members and information on journeymen practicing in the town, marriages of journeymen, and advancements from the rank of apprentice to journeyman and from journeyman to master craftsman. Some guilds kept records of children similar to church baptism records. Contracts between masters and parents of apprentices may also be included. Boys from ages 7 to 18 could be apprenticed for four to seven years in trades such as shoemaking, barrel making, blacksmithing, and tanning. Young girls often became servants or lived with relatives.

Guild records are usually found in the town archives or in the possession of the modern guilds. The records are extensive, but few have been published or indexed. To use guild records, you need to know your ancestor's place of residence and craft. Since sons often had the same occupation as their fathers, you may find information about several generations of a family.

Only part of the male population is included in guild records, although their wives and daughters are sometimes mentioned. Guild records are most useful where they exist before the beginning of church records. Because of their antiquity, such records are often hard to read, even for persons fluent in German. They may require an expert's help.

The Family History Library has collected a few German guild records. These records and related items are listed in the Locality Search of the catalog under:

GERMANY - OCCUPATIONS
GERMANY, [STATE] - OCCUPATIONS
GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] -
OCCUPATIONS

Biographical works often focus on the members of a specific occupation or trade, such as theologians or communications workers. See the "Biography" section of this outline. For help in determining the meaning of old occupational terminology, see the Family History Library publication *German Genealogical Word List* (34067). Also check the "Language and Languages" section of this outline.

PERIODICALS

A periodical is a regularly published magazine, newsletter, or journal. Several valuable periodicals concerning German genealogical research exist. Most genealogical and historical societies in North America and in Germany publish magazines and newsletters. The articles in these periodicals often include the following:

- 1696- Family genealogies and pedigrees
- 1697- Helpful articles on research methodology
- 1698- Transcripts of church records, migration lists, and cemetery records
- 1699- Indexes to genealogical sources
- 1700- Information about records, archives, and services
- 1701- Interesting articles about social life and customs
- 1702- Book advertisements and book reviews
- 1703- Advertisements of professional researchers
- 1704- Queries or requests for information about specific ancestors that can help you contact other interested researchers

North American Periodicals

Some historical and genealogical societies publish periodicals focusing on German immigrants to North America. These periodicals are often published quarterly and may focus on the immigrants to a particular region or state. Some examples are listed below:

German American Genealogy. 1988-. Published by The Immigrant Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 7369, Burbank, CA 91510-7369, USA. (FHL book 973 F25ga; computer number 523764.)

The German Connection. 1976-. Published by the German Research Association, P.O. Box 711600, San Diego, CA 92171-1600, USA. (FHL book 943 D25gc; computer number 184589.)

German Genealogical Digest. 1985-. Published by German Genealogical Digest, P.O. Box 700, Pleasant Grove, UT 84062, USA. (FHL book 943 B2g; computer number 366089.)

Journal (American Historical Society of Germans from Russia). 1978-. Published by the AHSGR, 631 D St., Lincoln, NE 68502-1199, USA. (FHL book 973 B2aht; computer number 2930.)

Palatine Patter: The Newsletter of Palatines to America. 1975-. Published by Palatines to America, Capital University Box 101, Columbus, OH 43209-2394, USA. (FHL book 973 D25pa; computer number 37398.)

German Periodicals

Nationwide. Many societies and organizations in Germany publish genealogical periodicals. These are in German. Much of their content is devoted to compiled genealogies of native families. They are also an excellent place to publish queries or advertisements for a lost ancestor from Germany. Below are listed two major examples published by C.A. Starke Verlag (mailing address: Postfach 1310, 65533 Limburg/Lahn, GERMANY):

Archiv für Sippenforschung (Archive for ancestral research). 1941-. (FHL book 943 B2as; computer number 51747.)

Praktische Forschungshilfe (Practical research help). 1924-. (FHL book 943 B2pf; computer number 51747.) This is an insert in *Archiv für Sippenforschung*.

Three nationwide family history periodicals published by Verlag Degener (mailing address: Postfach 1340, 91403 Neustadt/Aisch, GERMANY) are listed below:

Deutsches Familienarchiv (German families archive). 1952-. (FHL book 943 D2df; computer number 273457.)

Familienkundliche Nachrichten: Mitteilungen, Rundfragen, Empfehlungen (Family history news: announcements, queries, suggestions). 1956-. (FHL book 943 B2f; computer number 224465.)

Genealogie: Deutsche Zeitschrift für Familienkunde (Genealogy: German periodical for family studies). 1952-. (FHL book 943 B2gf; computer number 63124.)

Regional. In addition to the national periodicals, excellent regional publications are also available. Most articles in these periodicals are about families from the area covered by the periodicals. Examples of regional periodicals are listed below:

- 1705- *Badische Familienkunde* (Baden family studies)
- 1706- *Blätter des Bayerischen Landesvereins für Familienkunde* (Pages of the Bavarian State Association for Family Studies)
- 1707- *Hessische Familienkunde* (Hessian family studies)
- 1708- *Norddeutsche Familienkunde* (North German family studies)
- 1709- *Oldenburgische Familienkunde* (Oldenburg family studies)
- 1710- *Pfälzisch-Rheinische Familienkunde* (Palatinate-Rhine family studies)
- 1711- *Altpreußische Familienkunde* (Old Prussian family studies)
- 1712- *Mitteilungen der Westdeutschen Gesellschaft für Familienkunde* (Notices of the West German Society for Family Studies, specializing in Rheinland)
- 1713- *Beiträge zur westfälischen Familienforschung* (Contributions to Westphalian family research)

Indexes

Most magazines have annual or cumulative indexes. A major composite index to over 175 German periodicals is listed below:

Der Schlüssel: Gesamtinhaltsverzeichnisse für genealogische, heraldische und historische Zeitschriftenreihen mit Orts-, Sach-, und Namenregistern (The key: comprehensive index of genealogical, heraldic, and historical serials with place, subject, and name indexes). 9 vols. Göttingen: Heinz Reise Verlag, 1950-1986. (FHL book 943 D25sc; computer number 244443.) This source indexes 68,660 article and book titles. About half of each volume is a numbered bibliography of periodical articles and genealogical books. Each bibliography entry gives the issue and page number of the article. The second half of each *Schlüssel* volume contains a place, subject, and surname index of that volume's bibliography. It is easy to quickly browse each volume's surname index for the surname you seek. Volumes 7, 8, and 9 each summarize the years and major periodicals covered in previous volumes.

The following is another major composite index:

Familiengeschichtliche Quellen: Zeitschrift familiengeschichtlicher Quellennachweise (Family history sources: periodical of family history source references). 17 vols. Neustadt/Aisch: Degener, 1926-. (FHL book 943 B2fq; films 496,680-82; fiche 6,000,817; computer number 224301.) This index totals over 6,400 pages, citing over 2,300 sources and listing over 2.5 million surname citations. The first few pages of each volume are a numbered bibliography of genealogy periodicals and books. Most of each volume is a separate index of surnames cited in the sources at the beginning. You will need to check each volume's surname index for the surname you seek.

Obtaining Periodicals

Copies of periodicals are available from the individuals or societies that publish them. Major archives and libraries with genealogical collections often have copies of many periodicals, particularly those that represent the area they serve. Some libraries collect certain periodicals as part of a special collection about an area or topic.

The Family History Library subscribes to numerous periodicals. These publications are listed in the catalog in several ways. If you know the title of a periodical, look in the Author/Title Search of the catalog. To find periodicals in the Locality Search of the catalog, look under the following:

GERMANY - GENEALOGY - PERIODICALS
 GERMANY - HISTORY - PERIODICALS
 GERMANY - PERIODICALS
 GERMANY - SOCIETIES - PERIODICALS
 GERMANY, [STATE] - (same topics as above)
 GERMANY [STATE], [TOWN] - (same topics as above)

POPULATION

Police began keeping records of each German's residence in the 1840s. Citizens were required to tell the police at the local registration office [*Meldeamt* or *Einwohnermeldeamt*] when they moved. The records created are called registrations [*Melderegister*] or residents lists [*Einwohnerregister*]. They are usually found at the city archives.

To use the records, you must know the approximate years a person lived in a town. The records usually give a person's name, birth date, birthplace, occupation, each residence in the city, and where he or she moved. These records supplement church records and civil registration. The Family History Library has a selection of these records, most notably in Hamburg, Sachsen, and Thüringen. For example, the library has over 4,000 films for Leipzig (1890-1949). Population registers are found in the Locality Search of the catalog under:

GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - POPULATION
GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] -
OCCUPATIONS

PROBATE RECORDS

Probate records and wills [*Testamente*] are court records that deal with the distribution of a person's estate after death. Information in probate records can include the deceased person's death date and occupation; relationships, residences and names of heirs and guardians; an inventory of the estate; and names of witnesses.

Probate records are not usually used for German genealogical research. Only individuals who owned property, along with their relatives, were mentioned in probate records. Most farmers, merchants, and artisans did not own their own farms or shops and did not leave wills. Other sources, such as church records and civil registration records, give much of the same information as probate records and cover a larger percentage of the population. In addition, probate records are hard to access. Very few probate records have been microfilmed. However, some German probate records are very old, as early as the 1300s, and occasionally they provide information found nowhere else.

Original probate records can still be found in state and town archives or local courts [*Amtsgericht*]. You can write to a city or state archive and request a search of their probate records for your ancestor if you believe that he left an estate.

The Family History Library has only a few probate records for Germany. The are listed in the Locality Search of the catalog under:

GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - PROBATE
RECORDS

SCHOOLS

If your ancestors were educated in German universities, they may have been recorded in the matriculation records of their schools. The library has a limited number of these records for the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. They are not available for all states.

School records sometimes contain valuable information, such as your ancestor's name, age, hometown, and enrollment and graduation dates. Sometimes they contain biographical information, including names of parents, wife, and children. The few school records that the Family History Library has are listed in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog under:

GERMANY - SCHOOLS
GERMANY, [STATE] - SCHOOLS
GERMANY, [STATE], [UNIVERSITY TOWN] -
SCHOOLS

The university may have kept original school records (and any published versions). In some areas, local or state archives may have these records. You can find citations for German university matriculation sources on pages 181 to 197 of Ribbe's *Taschenbuch für Familiengeschichtsforschung* (see the "For Further Reading" section of this outline).

Though you may not be successful in getting the information you want, you can try writing for school records. Address your letter to the town and school in which you are interested. The Family History Library does not have the addresses of German schools.

SOCIETIES

Many societies and organizations may have information of value to your genealogical research. There are many genealogical and historical societies in Germany and in the country your ancestors immigrated to, especially the United States. You may find it helpful to join one of these societies and support its efforts.

Genealogical Societies

Many genealogical societies emphasize German research. They publish helpful periodicals and compiled genealogies. They may also have special indexes, collections, and projects. Some publish queries about German ancestors or maintain a list of Many societies cannot give research assistance, but members' research interests. Some specialize in immigrants to a specific area. they will inform you of addresses of researchers and other sources that may assist you in your research. They can usually help you find and hire a researcher to investigate local records that an archivist does not have time to search. When contacting a society for help, remember the following:

- 1714- Research is impossible without exact information about places (town) and detailed information about dates (day, month, and year). Asking for help on an ancestor born in "Preußen in the nineteenth century" will not be successful.
- 1715- Determine which German state your ancestor is from before contacting that state's society.
- 1716- If you cannot specify enough detail to begin research in Germany try a well-written, paid genealogical query offering a generous reward. Two periodicals that publish such queries are:
 - *Familienkundliche Nachrichten* (see p. 48 of this outline).
 - *Praktische Forschungshilfe* (see p. 48 of this outline).

1717- When writing to any society in a foreign nation, include three international reply coupons to guarantee a response. Send a self-addressed stamped envelope if writing to a society in your own nation.

German Societies. Most German states have genealogical societies. Contact the society in the state where your ancestor lived. See "Guides to Societies and Associations", found later in this section, for a more complete list. The following societies may be of interest:

1718- Specializing in Württemberg and Baden is:

Verein für Familien- und Wappenkunde in
Württemberg u. Baden
Postfach 10 54 41
70047 Stuttgart
GERMANY
e-mail: wappen@wlb-stuttgart.de
www.genealogienetz.de/vereine/VFWKWb/index/html

1719- Specializing in Hessen is:

Hessische Familiengeschichtliche Vereinigung
Karolinenplatz 3
64289 Darmstadt
GERMANY
www.genealogienetz.de/vereine/HFV/hfv.html

1720- Specializing in the Pfalz and Rheinland is:

Pfälzisch-Rheinische Familienkunde E. V.
Rottstr. 17 (Stadtarchiv)
67061 Ludwigshafen/Rhein
GERMANY
www.prfk.de

1721- Specializing in Rheinland is
(Questions directed at the organization at large):

Geschäftsstelle der Westdeutsche Gesellschaft für
Familienkunde
Claus Geis
Unter Gottes Gnaden 34
50859 Köln
E-mail: wgff@genealogy.net

(Questions regarding mailing lists):

Tobias A. Kemper
Günter Junkers
E-mail: wgff-1-admin@genealogy.net
www.genealogienetz.de/vereine/WGFF

1722- Specializing in middle Germany is:

Arbeitsgemeinschaft für mitteldeutsche
Familienforschung

For help, write to work group or each geographic area; addresses on web site:

www.genealogienetz.de/vereine/AMF/AMF.html

1723- Specializing in east Germany is:

Arbeitsgemeinschaft ostdeutscher Familienforscher
For research help write to the 'Forschungsstelle'
(research group)

For help by geographic area, see address on website:

www.genealogienetz.de/Vereine/AGoFF/AGoFF-d.html

Societies Outside Germany. If your ancestors are from Elsaß-Lothringen contact:

Cercle Généalogique d'Alsace
5, rue Fischart
67000 Strasbourg
FRANCE

Links to German Genealogical Societies on the Internet are found at:

www.genealogienetz.de/vereine/vereine.html

There are often Germanic genealogical societies in the nations to which Germans immigrated. For example:

1724- German Genealogical Society of America
P.O. Box 517
LaVerne, CA 91750-0517
USA
www.scgsgenealogy.com

1725- German Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 16312
St. Paul, MN 55116-0312
USA

1726- German Research Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 711600
San Diego, CA 92171-1600
USA
<http://feefhs.org/gra/frg-gra.html>

1727- Immigrant Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 7369
Burbank, CA 91510-7369
USA
www.feefhs.org/igs/frg-igs.html

1728- Palatines to America
611 East Weber Road
Columbus, OH 43211-1097
USA
www.palam.org

1729- Sacramento German Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 660061
Sacramento, CA 95866
USA
<http://feefhs.org/siggs/frg-siggs.html>

Historical Societies

Historical societies can provide valuable sources of information on Germany. Some historical societies collect information about German emigrants, and some exist in the countries where German immigrants settled.

Historical societies sometimes have information about specific German individuals. Many societies have special collections of books and manuscript material for Germany that may be hard to find in libraries and archives. You may be interested in the services, activities, and collections of the following societies:

- 1730- Institut für pfälzische Geschichte und
Volkskunde
Benzinoring 6
67657 Kaiserslautern
GERMANY
E-mail: info@institut.bv-pfalz.de
www.institut-pfaelzische-geschichte.de
- 1731- American Historical Society of Germans from
Russia
631 D Street
Lincoln, NE 68502-1199
USA
E-mail: ahsgr@ahsgr.org
www.ahsgr.org
- 1732- Germans from Russia Heritage Society
1125 West Turnpike Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58501
USA
www.grhs.com
- 1733- Pennsylvania German Society
P. O. Box 244
Kutztown, PA 19530-0244
USA
E-mail: pagerman@pgs.org
www.pgs.org

The following source includes the addresses of over 100 ethnic heritage historical societies in North America:

Wheeler, Mary Bray, ed. *Directory, Historical Societies and Agencies in the United States and Canada*. 14th ed. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1990. (FHL book Ref 970 H24d 1990; computer number 531083.)

Family Associations

Family organizations in the United States or Germany may be gathering information about your German relatives. Family histories, newsletters, family group

records, Glenzdorf's directory (see p. 31), and Ancestral File can help you find active family associations (see the "Genealogy" section of this outline).

Guides to Societies and Associations

The source below is the best German genealogical society directory:

Zwinger, Dieter. *Mitgliederverzeichnis 1992*
DAGV (1992 membership directory of the German study group of genealogical societies). Neustadt/Aisch: Degener, 1992. (FHL book 943 B4a no. 13; computer number 756409.) This directory lists the address, telephone, services, publications, and territory covered by each of the 65 member societies. You will need to update the postal codes from the directory using the postal code book cited in the "Gazetteers" section of this outline.

The following sources contain additional information on societies and other sources of information about Germany:

Meyer, Mary Keysor. *Meyer's Directory of Genealogical Societies in the U.S.A. and Canada*. 9th ed. Mt. Airy, Md.: Meyer, 1992. (FHL book 970 C44m 1992; computer number 648346.) See pages 98 to 101 of this book.

Wasserman, Paul and Alice E. Kennington, eds
Ethnic Information Sources of the United States. 2nd ed. Detroit: Gale Research, 1983. (FHL book Ref 973 F24w; computer number 255.)

Records at the Family History Library

Society records are usually described in the Author/Title Search of the Family History Library Catalog under the name of the society. The Locality Search also lists societies under one of the following headings:

GERMANY - SOCIETIES
GERMANY, [STATE] - SOCIETIES
GERMANY - GENEALOGY
GERMANY, [STATE] - GENEALOGY

Lists and guides that describe the collections of societies are listed in the Locality Search of the catalog under:

GERMANY - ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES -
INVENTORIES, REGISTERS, CATALOGS
GERMANY, [STATE] - ARCHIVES AND
LIBRARIES - INVENTORIES, REGISTERS,
CATALOGS
GERMANY, [STATE], [TOWN] - ARCHIVES
AND LIBRARIES - INVENTORIES,
REGISTERS, CATALOGS

OTHER RECORDS

Other types of records that are not mentioned in this outline are listed in the Locality Search of the Family History Library Catalog. See the following subject headings:

ALMANACS
BIBLIOGRAPHY
BUSINESS RECORDS AND COMMERCE
COLONIZATION
CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS
DESCRIPTION AND TRAVEL
ENCYCLOPEDIAS AND DICTIONARIES
ETHNOLOGY
FOLKLORE
JEWISH HISTORY
LAW AND LEGISLATION
MANORS
MEDICAL RECORDS
MIGRATION, INTERNAL
MILITARY HISTORY
NAMES, GEOGRAPHICAL
OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES
POSTAL AND SHIPPING GUIDES
PUBLIC RECORDS
RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS LIFE
SOCIAL LIFE AND CUSTOMS
YEARBOOKS

FOR FURTHER READING

More detailed information about research and records of Germany can be found in the following sources:

Arbeitsgemeinschaft ostdeutscher Familienforscher e.V., Herne, Germany. *Genealogical Guide to German Ancestors from East Germany and Eastern Europe*. Neustadt/Aisch: Degener, 1984. (FHL book 943 D27gg; computer number 293384.)

Bellingham, Mary, et al. *Research Guide to German-American Genealogy*. St. Paul, Minn.: German Interest Group, MGS, 1991. (FHL book 973 D27rg; computer number 612067.)

Jensen, Larry O. *A Genealogical Handbook of German Research*. Rev. ed. Pleasant Grove, Utah: Jensen, 1978-1983. (FHL book 943 D27j; film 1,181,765 item 4; fiche 6,000,366-8; computer number 38460.)

Ribbe, Wolfgang, and Eckart Henning. *Taschenbuch für Familiengeschichtsforschung* (Pocketbook for family history research). Neustadt/Aisch: Degener, 1975. (FHL book 943 D25t 1975; computer number 275405.)

Schweitzer, George K. *German Genealogical Research*. Knoxville: Schweitzer, 1992. (FHL book 973 D2sg; computer number 681111.)

Smith, Clifford Neal, and Anna Piszczan-Czaja Smith. *Encyclopedia of German-American Genealogical Research*. New York: R. R. Bowker, 1976. (FHL book 943 D27sp; computer number 265734.)

Smith, Kenneth Lee. *German Church Books:*

Beyond the Basics. Camden, Maine: Picton Press, 1989. (FHL book 943 D27skl; computer number 542741.) Thode, Ernst. *Address Book for Germanic Genealogy*. 4th ed. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1991. (FHL book 943 D27t 1991; 1977 edition on film 1,181,556 item 7; computer number 638962.)

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

The Family History Library welcomes additions and corrections that will improve future editions of this outline. Please send your suggestions to:

Publications Coordination
Family History Library
35 North West Temple
Salt Lake City, UT 84150
USA

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