

Locating Places in Germany: Gazetteers; Necessary Tools for Successful Research

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A necessary foundation for German research, gazetteers locate where a family lived and worshiped. Without them, genealogists cannot determine where the necessary records for research were maintained. Despite the German language or typeface, they can be rather easy to use, once you understand these simple guidelines.

Discussion Outline

Importance of Gazetteers to German Research

Locating the right place

Identifying the parish, or civil registration office

Reading the German Typeface

See Family Search guide: *How to Use the Meyers Gazetteer* <www.familysearch.org>

Formats and Arrangements

Meyer=s Gazetteer: The most important source

Background

Regular versus Reference entries

General format: 3 parts

- 1) Identify & locate the place (jurisdictions)
- 2) Population (shadow font used for emphasis in this syllabus only)
- 3) Description of place and services

Understanding the abbreviations

Finding specific information: Civil registration and church parish

Other Gazetteers for Germany

Prussia

Bavaria

Württemberg

Church Record Inventories (as substitutes)

Gazetteers for other German-speaking Areas

Name-change Gazetteers

Main Internet Sites for German Gazetteers

<<http://www.gemeindeverzeichnis.de/>> Community listing by jurisdictions in German Empire

<<http://gov.genealogy.net/index.jsp>> German Genealogy Gazetteer, with postal codes

<www.progenealogists.com/germany/gazetteersmain.html> Several genealogical gazetteers

Using Meyers Gazetteer

using Roman type, rather than Fraktur

Examples of *reference* entries (dependent communities):

Breitenfelder Moor, Ab., Kr. Rotenburg
Hann., s. Hellwege [chau, s. Landeck.
Breitenfelder Remmen, Ab., Kr. Schlo=

A typical *regular* entry can include the following elements, in three sections:

Name, (1) topographical description, state, province or district, lesser district office, district court, military command center, and [if not in the town itself:] civil registration office, nearest train station;(2) population; (3) telegraph, postal and/or railroad service; other governmental, cultural, business, or industrial services and facilities in the town [such as civil registry office, parish church, synagogue, schools, banks, industries, etc.]

Understanding an actual entry from Meyers:

Burtenbach, Markt, a/d Mindel; Bay., RB. Schwaben, BA. Günzburg, AG.
Burgau, Bkdo. Dillingen, E 6 km Thannhausen a/d Mindel; 1014 E; TP, Pw: 10
km E Jettingen; 8 km E Thannhausen; StdA., ev.Pfk.; Schloss, 2 Elctrwe., SpDrl.;
Käsefabr., Brau., Färbn., Mln., Sägewe.

Interpretation: Burtenbach is a market town on the Mindel River in Bavaria, within the provincial district (*Regierungsbezirk*) of Schwaben and the local district (BA.) of Günzburg. The district court (AG.) was in Burgau and the military command office in Dillingen. The nearest train station is six kilometers at Thannhausen, also on the Mindel River. It had a population of 1014. Telegraph, postal, and bus service is available to the train station 10 kilometers away at Jettingen, or to the train station 8 kilometers away at Thannhausen. The town has a civil registration office and an evangelical parish. Other features include a castle, two electrical power plants, a bank, cheese factory, brewery, dye shop, mills, and a sawmill.

Other samples:

Dietrichsfeld, D., Pr., Hann., RB. Kr. AG. Bkdo. StdA. Aurich, TP Ogenbargen, E 4,3
km Plaggenburg; 380 E.

Hausgereut, D., Baden, Kr. Bkdo. Offenburg, A. AG. Kehl, P E 1,4 km
Rheinbischofsheim; 97 E, StdA.

Kettenbach, 1)D., Pr., Hessen-N., RB. Bkdo. Wiesbaden, Untertaunuskreis, AG. Wehen,
P Michelbach Nassau; 508 E; T, E: WiesbadenBDiez; StdA., ev. Pfk.; Ölml.

Plattenhardt; D., Württ., Neckarkreis, OA. AG. Bkdo. Stuttgart, E 3.5 km Bernhausen;
1693 E., TP, ForstA., StdA., OrtssteuerA., ev. Pfk.; SpDrl.; Brenn., Sägew., Sandsteinbr.,
Zgl. C Dazu Hr. Obere u. Untere Kleinmichelesmühle, P Waldenbuch, 7 bz. 8 E.

Tabular Arrangement of Two Key Kingdom Gazetteers

Prussian Gazetteer

Generally one volume per province. Arranged by provincial district (*Regierungsbezirk*) and then county (district) (*Kreis*), and then alphabetically in three groups: cities, communities, and dependent locals (farmsteads, estates, etc.). Complete index at the back of each volume.

run- ning num- ber	Name of the community	Residences		Households		Population present					
		hou- ses	oth- ers	regular with 2 or more persons	single	total	of which		Religious		
							male	active mili- tary	Evangelical (protestant)		
									Total	languages	
German		Polish									
1	2	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14

on 1 December 1905			Church parish				Civil Registration district	City or office district	run- ning num- ber
affiliation			others	Jewish	evangelical (protestant)	Catholic			
Catholic		total							
languages									
German	Polish								
17	18	19	22	23	25	26	27	28	1

Wuerttemberg

Arranged by region and county, with an alphabetical index at the back of the volume. Each town is numbered on the left. That number is used in columns 7 through 10 to indicate which town has the respective parish or school for each of the two major denominations.

Nr .	Residential Place	Population count					Church parish		School		Com- mercial facilities
		Total	of which				ev	cath.	ev.	cath	
			ev.	cath.	jew.	other					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
2	Albershausen	1272	1260	5		7	2	1	2	1	
3	Auendorf	443	437	6			3	7	3	7	

Bibliography

Meyers Orts- und Verkehrs-Lexikon des Deutschen Reichs, 5th ed., comp. by E. Utrecht. Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1912. (FHL film 496,640 and 496641 or fiche 6000001-29). Reprint, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2000, with English translation of the publisher's preface, and a *Researcher's Guide* to the gazetteer, both by Dr. Raymond S. Wright III.

Herbert Koch. *Die Kirchenbücher von Elsass-Lothringen.* vol. 9, p. 14-61; *Die Kirchenbücher des Reichslandes von Elsass-Lothringen.* vol. 10, p. 8-52 in *Mitteilungen der Zentrastelle für Deutsche Personen- und Familien-Geschichte*. Leipzig: H. A. Ludwig Degener, 1911, 1912. (FHL microfilms 492890 and 492892). Use for **Alsace-Lorraine**.

Hermann Franz. *Die Kirchenbücher in Baden*. Karlsruhe: Verlag G. Braun, 1957. (FHL microfilm 492889)

Ortschaften-Verzeichnis für den Freistaat Bayern. Munich: J. Lindauersche Universitäts Buchhandlung, 1928. (FHL microfilm 924721)

Otfried Praetorius. *Kirchenbücher und Standesregister für Alle Wohnplätze im Land Hessen*. Darmstadt: Selbstverlag der Historischen Kommission für das Land Hessen, 1939. (FHL microfilm 496714, item 2)

Die Bestände des Staatsarchivs und Personenstandsarchives Detmold. Selbstverlag des Staatsarchivs Detmold, 1970. (Not on microfilm.)

Das Land Schaumburg-Lippe. *Familiengeschichtlicher Wegweiser durch Stadt und Land*. No. 12, p. 4. Verlag Degener and Co., 1939. (Not on microfilm.)

Mecklenburgs Familiengeschichtliche Quellen. Hamburg: Richard Hermes Verlag, 1936. (FHL microfilm 496473).

Ortschaftsverzeichnis der Grossherzogtums Oldenburg. Oldenburg: Druck und Verlag von Ad. Littmann, Hoflieferant, 1911. (FHL microfilm 806633)

Gemeindelexikon für das Königreich Preussen. 10 vols. Berlin: Verlag des Königlichen Statistischen Landesamts, 1908. (FHL microfilms 806633-635, and 492042)

August Schumann (comp.). *Vollständiges Staats- Post- und Zeitungs Lexikon von Sachsen*. 13 vols. Zwickau: Verlag der Gebrüder Schumann, 1825. (FHL microfilms 824319-325)

Ortschaftsverzeichnis des Königreichs Württemberg. Stuttgart: Druck von W. Kohlhammer, 1912. (FHL microfilm 806633, item 3)

Online German Geographic Tools

Gemeindeverzeichnis Deutschland 1900: Community listing by jurisdictions; German Empire
<http://www.gemeindeverzeichnis.de/>

Atlas des Deutschen Reichs by Ludwig Ravenstein 1883 Atlas of the German Empire
<http://www.library.wisc.edu/etext/ravenstein/>

GOV Genealogical Gazetteer
<http://gov.genealogy.net/index.jsp>

German Gazetteers
Includes gazetteers for Bavaria, Hesse, Mecklenburg, Schleswig, East and West Prussia, etc.
<http://www.progenealogists.com/germany/gazetteersmain.html>

Kartnemeister: Comprehensive gazetteer of German places east of the Oder and Neisse rivers
<http://www.kartenmeister.com/>

Online travel maps of many scales for all of Germany (like MapQuest)
www.viamichelin.com

Find a Map on Expedia.com
<http://www.expedia.com/pub/agent.dll?qscr=mmfn>

Deutsches Post (German Post Office) to find postal code
<http://www.deutschepost.de/dpag?xmlFile=828> (select PLZ suchen)

Church Archive Inventories

Evangelical Central Archives in Berlin
<http://www.ezab.de/e/ebframe.html> [Select Church Records]

State Church Archives in Greifswald: Eastern Pomeranian Church Registers
<http://www.pommersches-kirchenarchiv.de/Seiten/buecherliste1.htm>

State Archives in Greifswald
<http://www.landesarchiv-greifswald.de/folgeseiten/english/index.html>

Pomeranian church books in four different archives:
<http://www.hinterpommern.de/Wegweiser/node114.html>

On-line Gazetteers for the old German Empire

Online version of this list at: <http://www.progenealogists.com/germangazetteersonline.htm>

The German Empire consisted of the following 19 German states or provinces:

Kingdoms:

Bayern (Bavaria) <http://www.progenealogists.com/germany/bavaria/index.html>
Sachsen (Saxony) [removed; see online version, above, for link]
Wuerttemberg <http://www2.genealogy.net/privat/v.milbrandt/Orte-WUE/ortsv-wuert.html>
Preussen (Prussia, with 13 provinces)

Gazetteer on-line:

Brandenburg http://db-brandenburg.de/SD/brb_orte_allg_tabelle.php?sprache=1&filter=
Hanover <http://www.hist.de/info.htm>
Hessen-Nassau <http://www.progenealogists.com/germany/hesse/hessnas.htm>
Hohenzollern:

<http://www.progenealogists.com/germany/baden-wuerttemberg/hohenzollern/index.html>

Ostpreussen (East Prussia) <http://www.progenealogists.com/germany/prussia/index.html>

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

Pommern (Pomerania) <http://www.kartenmeister.com/> (Hinter Pommern)

Posen <http://www.kartenmeister.com/>

Rheinland (Rhineland) [no separate list found on web]

Sachsen (Saxony) (see Anhalt, below)

Schlesien (Silesia) <http://www.kartenmeister.com/>

Schleswig-Holstein <http://www.progenealogists.com/germany/schleswig/schlparish.htm>

Westfalen (Westphalia) <http://www.progenealogists.com/germany/westphalia/default.htm>

Westpreussen (West Prussia) <http://www.progenealogists.com/germany/prussia/index.html>

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

Duchies (and Grand Duchies):

Anhalt

http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste_der_St%C3%A4dte_und_Gemeinden_in_Sachsen-Anhalt

Baden <http://www.lineages.com/InfoCenter/Databases/BadenParish.cfm>

Braunschweig (Brunswick) [no separate list found on web]

Hessen Darmstadt (Hesse) <http://www.progenealogists.com/germany/hesse/hessindex.htm>

Mecklenburg (both) <http://www.progenealogists.com/germany/mecklenburg/meckgaz.htm>

Oldenburg <http://www.hist.de/info.htm>

Waldeck <http://www.progenealogists.com/germany/hesse/waldeck.htm>

Principalities:

Lippe (Detmold) http://www.genealogy.net/gene/reg/NRHE-WFA/lippe_orte-d.html

Schaumburg-Lippe <http://www.genealogy.net/gene/reg/NSAC/SLP/gaz.html>

Thuringen (Thuringia) (8 small duchies and principalities) [no separate list found on web]

Empire State:

Elsass-Lothringen (Alsace-Lorraine) <http://www.rootsweb.com/~fraalsac/alsaceaz/> (Alsace)