



Local history sources, such as *Hofgeschichten*, can provide interesting details about an ancestor's historical, social, and cultural context. A *Hofgeschichte* for the village of Oberpreuschwitz, pictured here in 2016, is available in the History & Genealogy Department.

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FOR THE RECORDS

Local history sources for German genealogical research

Hofgeschichten, Häusergeschichten and Bürgerbücher

Researchers might be familiar with Ortssippenbücher (also known as Ortsfamilienbücher) or local genealogical registers published for many villages in Germany. These secondary sources, which contain extractions from local church records, provide a short cut to finding birth, marriage, and death information that might not otherwise be readily available. While Ortssippenbücher (OSBs) provide basic vital data, Hofgeschichten (farm chronicles), Häusergeschichten (building chronicles), and Bürgerbücher (citizen registers) are publications that can provide historical and social context for an ancestor's life, as well as additional genealogical clues. Like OSBs, they are

secondary sources whose contents are extracted from local records. Unlike OSBs, their format and content can vary greatly. They can be stand-alone publications, included within a comprehensive local history, or appear as articles in a journal. Although these sources are challenging to use for the non-German speaker, they are worth the effort to research.

Hofgeschichten

The core of Hofgeschichten are chronological (or succession) lists of tenants or occupants of individual farms from the earliest records to the time of publication. The breadth and depth of information varies with each publication. Some provide a bare succession list, while others can offer genealogical information about individuals. The chronicle lists can be useful for connecting generations, because tenancy was often heritable.

The manorial system

The information provided in *Hofgeschichten* can be difficult to

interpret for those who are not familiar with the historical context and social construction of German farming communities before the mid-19th century. Farm life and landholding was shaped by the manorial system (*Herrschaft*), which developed out of feudalism and provided economic and social stability. The system was based on protection given by someone in a superior position (a lord, for example) in exchange for loyalty, service, and payments in money and kind by someone in a position with less power, such as a peasant.

In this highly stratified system, a landlord needed to extract the wealth from his land to enrich himself and pay obligations owed to his superiors. He required laborers in the form of peasant farmers to create this wealth. Peasants had neither the means nor status to own land, but could obtain support and subsistence from the landlord in exchange for his and his family's labor and production. Terms of this exchange were governed by leases formulated by custom and local law.

In return for a house to live in and the ability to grow crops and livestock for personal consumption, the landlord received a portion of what the farmer produced and often other rents and fees. The relationship between the tenant and the landlord was commonly a form of indentured servitude known as *Leibeigene*. The landlord not only had control of his subjects' economic activities, but also many aspects of their personal lives, such as marriage and religious affiliation. The landlord could also require his subjects to perform military service.

The manorial system persisted in some parts of Germany until the early 19th century, when the manors were dissolved and farmers could own their properties outright. The laws and customs that governed the manorial system varied from territory to territory, and the details of such a system are beyond the scope of this article. Some *Hofgeschichten* and community histories include information about the local implementation of the manorial system. The article, "Surname Changes in Northwestern Germany" by Roger Minert provides information about the manorial system as practiced in the area of Westphalia. Although the article pertains to a local circumstance, the article is useful for understanding how the manorial system worked in general.

In some areas of Germany, farms society became stratified,

with some farms obtaining greater rights and privileges than others. This resulted in multiple terms such as *Kötter*, *Sölde*, *Vollerbe*, *Halberbe*, and *Colon*, which are inadequately translated as "farmer" in English Ernest Thode's *German Genealogical Dictionary* is useful for interpreting the meaning of these and other historical terminology.

Examples of Hofgeschichten

The following examples of *Hofgeschichten* demonstrate the variety of formats and types of information these sources can provide.

Schwaighausen

Title: *Schwaighausen: Ein Dorf im Wandel der Zeit*

[Schwaighausen: A Village in the Course of Time]

Schwaighausen is a village in the Swabian region of southwestern Bavaria. The Hofgeschichte appears in the context of a comprehensive history of the village. Contents include:

- Settlement and early history
- Basic overview of the manorial system (*Herrschaft*)
- 19th & 20th century land and social reforms
- Hardships
- Associated settlements
- Infrastructure
- Agriculture
- Craft & industry
- Societies & social clubs
- Building & farm histories
- Lexicon

The chapter on farm histories provides historical information about the properties, a chronological list of occupants to the early 2000s, and a photo of the farm house. The following example is a partial translation of the text (Fig. 1).

Gartenstraße 1

House no. 19, [called] "Beim Brösele," formerly a *Sölde* [cottage], a two-family home

The community bath house stood on the farm property before the Thirty-Year's War. Martin Geiger is mentioned as the first occupant in the manorial record (*Urbar*) of

1580/1601. During the fragmentation of the manor (*Herrschaft*) in 1671, there is only a mention of “standing in front of the bath house” and in 1694 succinctly, “the bath is gone.” The high water demand was satisfied by the numerous surrounding springs...

Leibherrschaft [bonded servitude], *Gerichtsbarkeit* [judicial rights]: the previously mentioned landlords had these privileges at their disposal. *Leibherrschaft* ended in 1808 and *Gerichtsbarkeit* in 1848. The latter fell to the provincial court.

Tenants are then listed in succession. An example follows:

Manorial record of 1671 / 1678

Transfer fee: 20 Florin

Caspar Fischer from the Luzern area, married in 1661 in

Holzgrün [location of the parish church]

Maria Urbin

Rent in 1671: 4 Viertel rye, 4 Viertel oats,

1 Florin & 17 Kreuzer payment for hay

Kitchen rent: 1 hen, 2 cocks, 50 eggs

Land use description...

Cattle inventory in 1678: 1 cow, 1 calf

Service: 7 days of manual labor

Distillation fee: 1 Florin

His occupation of the farm is confirmed by the manorial record of 1671. Fischer transferred 2 cows, 1 steer, 1 calf, distillation equipment, and everything pertaining to the farm to his step-daughter in 1680 for 82 Florin. For the rest of his life, he lived in the front chamber. In the winter, he shared the heated living room with his son-in-law. From that resulted the mutual obligation of gathering and preparing firewood from the communal forest. Fischer owed the landlord a specific rent, and if he paid it on time, he had prospects for leaving an inheritance.

Transferred: 1680

Marriage fee and admission fee: 8 Florin

Consent fee: 30 Kreuzer

Caspar Reiner from Lautern, Manor [*Herrschaft*] of Bregenz

Married on 30 Sept. 1680 in Holzgünz to

Gartenstraße 1

Hs. Nr. 19, „Beim Brösele“ ehemalige Sölde, Zweifamilienhaus

Vor dem 30-jährigen Krieg stand auf dem Hofareal die Badestube der Gemeinde. Als erster Inhaber geht Martin Geiger im Urbar von 1580/1601 hervor. Bei der Herrschaftszertrümmerung 1671 erscheint dann lediglich der Hinweis „alwo hier bevor die Badstüb gestanden“ und 1694 heißt es kurz und lapidar „das Bad ist hinweg“. Den hohen Wasserbedarf deckten wohl die zahlreichen Wasserquellen im Umfeld. Grundsätzliches über den allgemeinen Badebetrieb und Aufgaben des Baders enthält das Kapitel „Bader“.

Aus einst bescheidenen Anfängen mit ca. 7 Jauchert Grund entwickelte sich bis zuletzt eine Landwirtschaft mittlerer Größe, bis auch hier die Hofbesitzer, dem allgemeinen Trend folgend, die Landwirtschaft 1991 stilllegten. Schon vor 1808 ist der Hausname „Brösele“ (Brosamen) ein fester Begriff, womit unterschwellig auf die bescheidenen wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse hingewiesen wurde. Nicht zuletzt aus diesem Grund räumte die Herrschaft der Familie ein Zusatzeinkommen mit dem Branntwein- und Weberrecht ein.

Grundherrschaft: Als 1671 die Herrschaft unter den sieben Neubronnerischen Erben verlost wurde, gehörte das leibfällige Söldgut zu Los Nr. 7 von Johann Wachter. Bereits bei seinen beiden Töchtern mit ihren Ehemännern Georg Jakob Scheufele und Dr. Benedikt Hermann zersplitterte sich der Besitz wieder. Fast mit jeder neuen Generation stieg die Zahl der Erbberechtigten. Teilungen und Abtretungen innerhalb der Familie reihten sich aneinander. Zwar wird 1806 nur auf die Dr. Benedikt Hermannschen Erben verwiesen, bis das Rentamt Memmingen (1810 – 1834) allein bei dieser Sölde folgende Besitzanteile bestätigte: ½ Anteil Johann Jakob von Zoller, Memmingen, je ¼ Anteil Tobias und Johann Jakob von Wachter. Zwei von ihnen, Tobias von Wachter und Johann Jakob von Zoller, starben 1839. Nunmehr tauchten als deren „Relikten“ insgesamt neun namentlich genannte Personen mit Besitzansprüchen auf. Es mag ein abschreckendes Beispiel sein, welche Kettenreaktion an Erbberechtigten die Herrschaftszertrümmerung 1671 auslöste. Mit der Aufhebung der standes- und gutsherrlichen Gerichtsbarkeit 1848 durch Bayern endete die Grundherrschaft

Leibherrschaft, Gerichtsbarkeit: Die zuvor erwähnten Grundherren verfügten auch über diese beiden Privilegien. Allerdings endeten aufgrund bayrischer Erlasse bereits 1808 die Leibherrschaft wie auch 1848 die Gerichtsbarkeit. Letztere Aufgabe fiel dem Landgericht Ottobeuren zu.

Figure 1 | A sample text from the Hofgeschichte for the Swabian village of Schwaighausen (Schwaighausen: *Ein Dorf im Wandel der Zeit*, p. 282)

Sybille Birzlerin, Schwaighausen, stepdaughter of Caspar Fischer

Because the building was found to be in poor condition, the landlord required the tenant to procure the necessary materials to restore it. In consideration of the significant expense, he waived the transfer fee.

The introduction to the farm history mentions that it was formerly a *Sölde*, a regional term for cottage. This is a term for a property, usually located adjacent to the home of the principle tenant, that included enough land for a garden and a few livestock but not enough resources to pay rent. The occupant, therefore, had to hire himself out as a day laborer in order to make ends meet.

As indicated above, the manorial records of 1671 state that Casper Fischer was given tenancy of the property and provides details of his lease obligations and other information. The lease was transferred to his step-daughter, Sybille Urbin, in 1680. A woman could inherit tenancy but could not operate a farm, as her legal status was dependent on a related male. In this case, Sybille quickly married Casper Reiner, who had to pay the corresponding fee of 8 Florin to the landlord.

Bayersoien

Title: *Bayersoier Haus und Hofgeschichte: Geschlechter, Hausnamen, Flurnamen* [Building and Farm Chronicle of Bayersoien: Families, House Names, Field Names]

Baiersoien is a village in southern Bavaria. The book focuses on the succession lists for each farm and includes a photo of the farmhouse but provides little information about the history of the community itself. Contents include:

Brief overview of place names with etymologies

- Brief historical introduction
- Explanation of the farm chronicles and sources used
- Information about the foundational source: tax records from 1671
- Farm / building chronicles
- New construction since 1920
- Field names
- List of sources

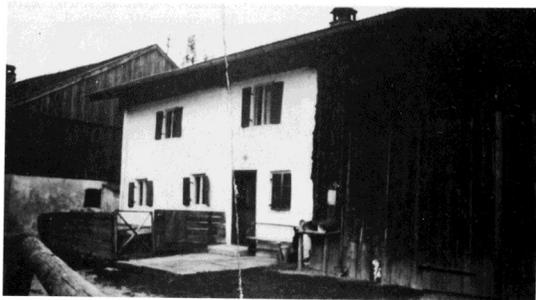
The entry for Echelsbach No. 10 begins with when the ownership of the property changed hands in 1167 and again in 1362 (Fig 2). The chronological list of tenants begins with Jörg Kübler in 1470. The succeeding entries include no genealogical information outside of an indication of marriage (without dates), but it is clear from the surnames that the property often transferred between generations.

Mockritz

Title: *Bäuerliche Besitzfolgen in Modritz, Kreis Torgau* [Farm Successions in Mockritz, District of Torgau]

Echelsbach Haus-Nr. 10 – Baltes von Balthasar

1/6 Hof Kloster Rottenbuch Freistift 800 fl	1706 Benedikt Magold v. Ilchberg d. K. ∞ Anna Schretter v. Ohlstadt (31)
1167 von Herzog Welf VI an das Kloster Kempen gegeben. 1362 vom Kloster Rottenbuch gekauft (ein Geräut) (15)	1738 Balthasar Schwarz v. Waltenhofen d. H. ∞ Maria Magold (31)
1470 Jörg Kubler (1)	1740 Balthasar Schwarz II. ∞ Maria Kath. Höck v. Kohlgrub (36)
1501 Wolfgang Kubler d. Ü. geit Pauzins ein Gulden (1)	1754 Andreas ReBle v. Tannenberg d. H. d. Ww. ∞ Katharina Schwarz (31)
1578 Marx Fendt (18)	1773 Joh. Georg Schwarz d. Ü. ∞ Maria Horner v. Rottenbuch (31)
1600 Andreas Rueff ∞ Dorothea (18)	1783 Joh. Georg Schwarz II. ∞ Maria Schwaiger v. Soyen (31)
1625 Johann Rueff d. Ü. ∞ Ursula (36)	1814 Josef Schwarz d. Ü. unverheiratet, 1846 verstorben (19)
1626 Michael Rueff d. H. d. Ww. ∞ Ursula Rueff (11+36)	Johann Niggloo u. Rosina Schwarz bewirtschaften den Hof
1650 Sebastian Rueff d. Ü. ∞ Afra Pierling v. Achen (36)	1846 Anna Reichsiegel v. Oberammergau geb. Schwarz d. E. (44)
1666 Sebastian Rueff II. ∞ Maria Pierling v. Kimberg (36)	1846 Matthias Reichsiegel v. Oberammergau d. Ü. ∞ Kath. Schwaiger v. Altenau (44)
1693 Simon Schretter v. Ohlstadt d. H. ∞ Agnes Rueff (1)	1879 Anton Reichsiegel d. Ü. ∞ Agatha Meier v. Löttschmüller (44)
1671 Simon Schretter, mit seiner Behausung und vier halbe Viertl nach Rottenbuch gilbar, gibt jährlich dahin zwei Gulden fünf Kreuzer. Nach Ettal Vogtei fünf Kreuzer, hat Leibgeding durch Heirat übernommen. Anfall nach Rottenbuch 30 fl Paulich erhalten und schätze 100 fl, hat 2 Roß, 4 Khue, 2 Jungrindt, eine eigene halbe Wies im Egga, kann jährl. ein kleines Rindt verkaufen, muß 3 Schaf Traidt zukaufen. Haus, Kasten, Pachkuchl, Hofraith nebst einem kl. Pflanzgärtl, 5 Tgw. Wiesflächen, item an Acker u. Egarten bey 20 Juchard (10+31+20)	1913 Josef Reichsiegel d. Ü. ∞ Katharina Schwarz v. Lettigenbichl (44)
	1929 Josef Reichsiegel II. ∞ Anna Geisenhof v. Ingenried (36)
	1953 Josef Reichsiegel d. Ü. ∞ Adelheid Heimer v. Schongau (57)
	1962 Josef Reichsiegel baute einen Aussiedlerhof in das „Feldle“ (21)



Balteshof Wohnhaus 16. Jh. ca. 1930

Figure 2 | An entry in the Bayersoien Hofgeschichte showing the succession of occupation (Title: *Bayersoier Haus und Hofgeschichte*, p. 24).

Mockritz is a village that is now part of the city of Dresden, Saxony. The book focuses on farm chronicles with only cursory information about the village itself. Individual farm histories feature a narrative introduction followed by a list of occupants into the 20th century, as can be seen in the following example (Fig 3):

Farm property no. 4
Now Dorfstraße 14 and 16

The farm was in the possession of the Krug family from 1542 until the suicide of the last man to bear the family

name at the age of 91. The family assuredly inhabited the farm since about the turn of the 17th century, because Martin Krug acquired the property for the substantially high price of 2,400 Florin. Included in his estate were ‘8 of the best horses,’ which remained with the property after the rest of the livestock was divided. Martin Krug is also mentioned as an investor in and co-proprietor of the mill in Mockritz. His son, Andreas (4.05) married a daughter of the occupant of the Drönitz property in Beiden in 1641. Joh. Gottfreid Carl Krug, born 1786, son of Joh. Carl Gottlob Krug (4.08), farmed the Erbricht property in Döbern about 1815.

The farm consists of section I. The agricultural area covers 54.45 hectares (1907), of which a scant 12 hectares remain after the land reform of 1959.

Information of each successive tenant follows, for example:

4.07 KRUG, Gottfried; farmer, church consistory member; borrowed on 14 March 1731 200 Thaler; * Mockritz on 16 Nov. 1680; + there on 6 April 1762; oo there on 12 Jan. 1706 to SCHATTE, Susanna * Mockritz 2 June 1678; + there 15 May 1763; daughter of Andreas Schatte], farmer at Mockritz, see 16.05)

Children: * 1706 Joh. Georg; * 1707 Joh. Christian; * 1709 Gottfried, + 1709; * 1717 Maria Magdalena (see 16.07)

Each entry in the chronologies includes a unique number for cross-referencing purposes. For example, under “children” in the example above, a note next to Maria Magdalena states, “see 16.07,” indicating she is mentioned in the chronology of another farm. As indicated in the introductory narrative, the

LIBRARY HOLIDAY CLOSING

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day | Dec. 24 & 25
New Year’s Eve | Dec. 31—Close at 5:00 p.m.
New Year’s Day | Jan. 1
Presidents Day | Jan 17

Hufengut Nr. 4
(jetzt Dorfstraße 14 und 16?)



Nr. 4 Hufengut

Das Gehöft stand mindestens seit 1542 bis zum Freitod des letzten Namensträgers im Alter von 91 Jahren durchgehend im Besitz der Familie Krug. Sie muß um die Wende zum 17. Jahrhundert recht wohlhabend gewesen sein, denn 1628 erwirbt Martin Krug (4.04) das väterliche Gut für den nach Mockritzer Verhältnissen hohen Preis von 2.400 fl. Zu dem hierdurch erworbenen Erbteil gehörten “8 beste Pferde”, die nach Aufteilung des weiteren Viehbestandes im Gut verbleiben sollen. Martin Krug wird auch als “Mühl-Consorte” erwähnt, war also Mitinhaber der Mockritzer Schiffsmühle. Sein Sohn Andreas (4.05) heiratet 1641 eine Tochter des damaligen Besitzers des Gutes Drögnitz bei Neiden. Der 1786 geborene Joh. Gottfried Carl Krug, Sohn des Joh. Carl Gottlob Krug (4.08), bewirtschaftet um 1815 das Erbrichtergut in Döbern.

Das Gehöft führte die Feldmarke I. Die bewirtschaftete Fläche betrug (1907) 58,45 ha, von denen nach der Bodenreform bis 1959 noch knapp 12 ha verblieben.

Besitzfolge:

4.01 KRUG, Bastian; steuert 1531/42 als Hüfner

Figure 3 | The Mokritz *Hofgeschichte* includes a narrative section followed by the succession of occupants (*Bäuerliche Besitzfolgen in Mokritz, Kreis Torgau*, p. 25).

farm remained in the Krug family until the death of Richard Wilhelm Paul Krug in 1969. Vital information for each individual is indicated using symbols common in German genealogical publications: * (birth), oo (marriage), and + (death).

Oberpreuschwitz

Title: “Hofgeschichte der Gemeinde Oberpreuschwitz, Kreis Bayreuth” in Archiv für Geschichte in Oberfranken, Band 47 (1967) [“Farm Chronicle of the Community of Oberpreuschwitz, District of Bayreuth” in *Archives for the History of Upper Franconia*, Vol. 47 (1967)]

Oberpreuschwitz is a small village that has been incorporated

into the city of Bayreuth in northern Bavaria. The farm chronicle appears as an article in the historical Journal, *Archiv für Geschichte von Oberfranken*. The *Hofgeschichte* also includes Unterpreuschwitz and Dörnhof, nearby populated places consisting of several farms clustered together. Contents of the article include:

- Overview of the history & development of feudal holdings related to the village
- Overview of the fields and their ownership
- The farm successions [Besitzfolgen] / farm chronicles
- List of sources
- Bibliography
- Tables of tithes and obligations
- Name index

Preceding the succession lists is extensive discussion of the feudal land holdings related to the village. This is followed by the succession for each house number. The lists include tenants' birth, marriage, and death dates, as well as the name of spouses (including maiden names) and the names of their parents. An interesting example is House No. 17, described as an estate (*Gut*) and treated together with House No. 20 (Fig 4),

Beginning in 1620, the property came into the hand of Hans Hacker, and it was passed it down through successive generations of heirs. However, it was not a straightforward succession. The following is a synthesis of the information from the succession list:

- In 1700, the property transferred to Hans Hacker, son of the previous tenant. Hans had previously married Barbara Popp on 23 Nov. 1696. They had a son, Johann Hacker.
- Hans Hacker died in Jan. 1704.
- Barbara married Hans Roder from Vorlahm on 26 Jan. 1706, who took over possession of the property that same year. They had a son, also named Hans Roder.
- Hans Roder, Sr. died in Nov. 1713.
- Barbara married Nicolaus Tressendörfer, who died in Oct. 1731.

Barbara's marriages to Hans Hacker and Hans Roder each pro-

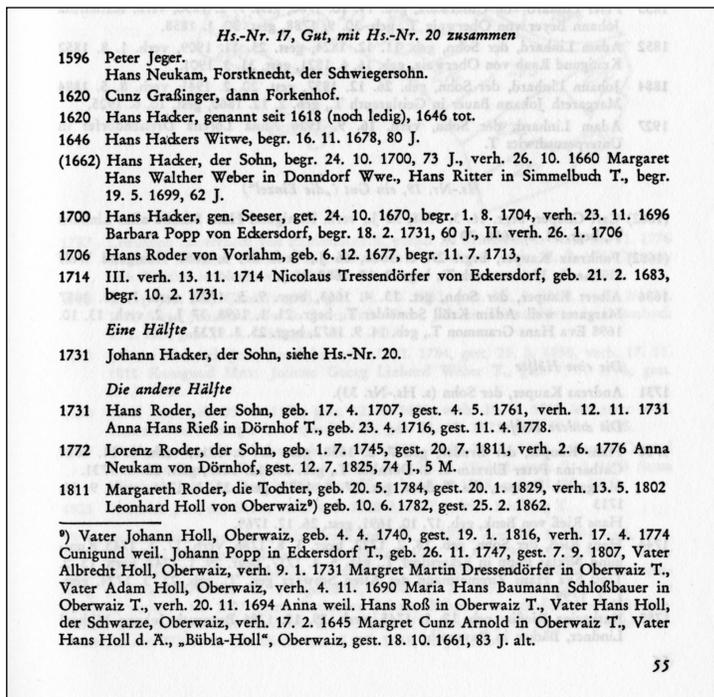


Figure 4 | This example from the Oberpreuschwitz Hofgeschichte shows how a property was split between two heirs (“Hofgeschichte der Gemeinde Oberpreuschwitz,” p. 55). A footnote provides a lineage of the Holl family going back to 1661.

duced an heir, both of whom has heritable rights to the property. The solution was to divide the property. In 1731, one-half of the farm was transferred to Johann Hacker, and the property was designated as House No. 20. The farm continued to be held by the Hacker family. The other half of the farm, which continued as House No. 17, was transferred to Hans Roder, Jr. and subsequently to his son, Lorenz, in 1772.

When Lorenz Roder died in 1811, he apparently left no male heir. The farm was, instead, transferred to his daughter, Margareth, who had married Leonard Holl from the neighboring village of Oberwaiz on 13 May 1802:

1811 Margareth Roder, the daughter, born 20 May 1784, died 20 Jan. 1829, married on 13. May 1802 [to] Leonhard Holl from Oberwaiz⁹⁾, born 10 June 1782, died 25 Feb. 1862.

The farm remained in the Holl family in the succeeding generations. A footnote in the extract above provides the Holl line-

7.3.12 Hof Eckelmann

Anschrift:	Malgartener Damm 43, 49565 Bramsche
Alte Anschrift:	Epe Nr. 33, Epe Nr. 12
Heutiger Eigentümer:	Familie Kötter
Heutige Nutzung:	Reiterhof, Ländereien verpachtet
Namensformen:	in Eyelo, in Eclo, de Eclo, van Eclo, tey eclo, tey Eclo, Zum Eiclo, zum Eclo, ten Ekel, thon Eckel, zum Ekel, Ekel- man, Eickelman, Eckelmann.
Namensursprung:	Der Name bezeichnet den Hof am Eichenwald.
Weitere Hofnamen:	Kötter (seit 1973)
Erste Erwähnung:	1223
Früherer Hofstatus:	Vollerbe

junge beschäftigt.

Der Erbe Henrich Eickelman heiratete um 1630 Hilleke Möllmanns. 1651 nahm der Hof ein weiteres Darlehn beim Kloster auf. Auch 1659 zahlte Eckelmann den höchsten Viehschatz in Epe. Es wurden 3 Pferde, 2 Fohlen, 6 Kühe, 6 Rinder, 8 Schweine und 23 Schafe gehalten. 1664 erwarb Eckelmann vom Markkötter Gudenrath einen Dustteil Holz.⁵²⁴

Um 1666 heiratete der Erbe Johan Herman Eickelmann Anne Engel Elsabein Meyer zu Broxten aus dem Kirchspiel Venne. Nach seinem Tod heiratete die Witwe 1688 Herman Menkhues (Menkhaus) aus Engter. Die Größe des Hofes wurde 1667 mit 36 Schef. Ackerland, 8 Schef. Holzung, 10 Fudern Wiesenwuchs und 4 Schef. Garten angegeben; 1680 sind 3 1/2 Schef. Garten, 41 Schef. Ackerland, 13 Fuder Heu und ein erheblicher privater Waldbesitz verzeichnet. Es wurden 1693 zwei Knechte beschäftigt.

1703 verlor das Kloster für die nachträglich erteil-

Figures 5 & 6 | Entries for the Eckelmann farm in the *Hofgeschichte* for Epe (*Epe: Epe, Malgarten, Bühren: Chronik einer Landgemeinde*, pp. 220 and 221).

age going back to the death of Hans Holl on 18 Oct. 1661.

Epe

Title: *Epe: Chronik einer Landgemeinde* [Epe: Chronicle of a Rural Community]

Epe is a village near Bramsche in the District of Osnabrück, Lower Saxony. The *Epe Hofgeschichte* occurs in the context of a comprehensive local history. Contents of the book include:

- Detailed chronological history
- Transportation and waterways
- Agricultural development
- Farm histories
- New settlements
- Churches
- Schools
- Public facilities
- Craft and industry
- Migrant workers, emigrants and immigrants
- Clubs and societies
- Customs and festivities
- Storks

- Weights and measures
- Explanation of old terms and festivals
- Sources
- Indexes

The farm chronicles provide extensive narrative histories of each farm and outline the succession of ownership. In the following excerpt, the farm is introduced by the farm name, location, current owner, farm status, and other information (Fig 5).

Eckelmann Farm

Address: Malgartener Damm 43, 49565 Bramsche

Old address: Epe No. 33, Epe No. 12

Current owner: The Kötter family

Current use: riding stables, leased agricultural land

Historic forms of the farm name: in Eyelo, in Eclo, de Eclo, van Eclo, tey eclo, tey Eclo, Zum Eiclo, Zum Eclo, ten Ekel, thon Eckel, zum Ekel, Ekelman, Eickelman, Eckelmann

Source of the farm name: The name indicates a farm by an oak forest [*Eichenwald*]

Additional farm name: Kötter (since 1973)

First mention [in records]: 1223

Previous farm status: Vollerbe

historical information about the village itself or genealogical information about occupants. The following is an example (Figs. 7 and 8):

- Former house number: 26
- Street with new house number: Augsburgs Straße 7
- Building name: Scharrer (1781), Lexenbauer, (1836)
- Size of the farm: A half farm [1/2 Hof], 4 horses, 4 cows, 2 calves
- Occupants [listed by year of acquisition, 1713–1991]

It is assumed that the oldest house name, “Scharrer,” is connected to *Scharwerk* [compulsory labor]. The given name, “Alexander,” led to the establishment of the second house name. Alexander Schrettenseger is mentioned in records as the occupant of half of the farm in 1835. The abbreviation of his first name, in combination with his status as farmer [*Bauer*], resulted in the house name “Lexenbauer.” A tavern, operated at the time by Lorenz Wachter, has been located at the former Lexenbauer property since 1873. On the vendor application, Wachter gave the reason for establishing the tavern as, “...the hard working farmers among our residents cannot be expected to travel to a tavern so far away.” The tavern acquired the name, “The Star Inn” [*Gasthaus Stern*], which it still bears...

Burgbernheim

Title: *Burgbernheim: Orts- und Häusergeschichte bis ins 21. Jahrhundert* [Burgbernheim: Local History and Building History up to the 21st Century]

The books includes a comprehensive history of the community, as well as building chronicles. The contents include:

- Tips for using the resource
- Information for interpreting the data
- Local history
- Manorial system—Noble landlords, peasant obligations
- Maps
- Building chronicles
- Indexes, list of sources, and other appendixes

Haus Nr. 2	Pl.Nr. 2	Untere Kirchgasse 3
Beschreibungen / Abgaben:		
1715: <i>Eine Hofraith bey dem Herrenkeller, ist zehendfrei, gibt 22½ xr ins Gotteshaus. Besitzer: Niclas Best. [A2531]</i>		
1724: <i>Niclas Best besitzt: Eine Hofraith, worauf ein geringes Eingädiges Hauß und kleines Scheuerlein erbauet, so Zehendfrey ist [...] Gibt jährl. auß: 10 xr Lichtmeß-Steuer und 22½ xr Geldt-Güld ins Gotteshaus. [A4957]</i>		
1835: <i>Ein Häckergut. Wohnhaus mit angeb. Backofen, Scheune mit angeb. Stall, Gänstall, Hofraum, 1 ganzes Gemeinderecht. Zinsbar zur Kirche Burgbernheim 28 xr 2 hl. Grundbesitz 10,1 Tgw. [StAN: K.4.1]</i>		
Abb. 32 und <i>Alt-Bernemer Bilderbüchla</i> Seite 9.		
Grundherrschaft: 1780 Kirche Burgbernheim (Gruppe B1, s. S. 59).		
Eigentümer:		
1588 <i>Friedrich Flück [BB1600.32] iezo Paul Schuch, gibt der Kirche jährlich 3 Pfund Wachs v. seiner Hofarth bey dem Herrenhaus. [LKAEN: 213]</i>		
1615 <i>Martin Böhrers, Büttners Wittib (1628) > Jost Mohr: gibt jährl. 3 lb gelds von seiner Hofraith im Röder Viertel, hinter dem Herrenkeller, neben Hansen Leschen Heßbergischer Hofraith [HsNr. 1] gelegen. [LKAEN: 214]</i>		

Figures 7 & 8 | The entry for House No. 2 (now Untere Kirchgasse 3) in the Bergbernheim *Häusergeschichte* (*Bergbernheim Orts- und Häusergeschichte*, p. 97).

An overview of a typical building chronicle follows (Fig. 9):

House no. 2, Place no. 2, Untere Kirchgasse 3
 Descriptions of the property in 1715, 1724, and 1835 from manorial records and the rents and fees owed to the landlord. The landlord in 1780 was the church in Burgbernheim.

A successive list of occupants beginning in 1588 follows. A typical entry states:

1615—Martin Böhrers, cooper, widow (1628) succeeding Jost Mohr: pays 3 lbs. money (silver) from his farm in the Röder quarter behind the landlord’s cellar, next to Hansen Leschen on the Heßberger farm [House no. 1]. [LKAEN: 214]

The notation at the end refers to the original source, which is listed elsewhere in the book.

Bürgerbücher

Bürgerbücher (citizen registers) most commonly pertain to cities and other places that had town status. In the Middle Ages, places that became centers of trade and craft could be granted town status. This gave the community independence to govern its own affairs and enforce its own laws, but it was also responsible for protecting itself. Citizenship was granted to

property owners, but others could lease property and apply to live under the protection of the town.

Bürgerbücher are based on records of people applying for residence and are arranged in chronological order. Entries usually include the name of the person and sometimes the fees they paid for the privilege of taking up residence. The following are some examples.

Detmold

Title: *Bürgerbuch der Stadt Detmold von 1635 bis 1885*
[Citizen Register of the City of Detmold from 1635 to 1885]

Detmold is a city in North Rhine-Westphalia in the district of Lippe. Contents of the Detmold book include:

- Preface with explanations of city law, citizen rights, taxes and fees, and comments about the Bürgerbuch
- Year-by-year additions to the citizenship rolls
- Appendixes: extracts from city law, complete citizen register, mayors, honorary citizens, etc.
- Indexes: place name, personal name, occupations

The following entries for the year 1719 state (Fig 10):

- 638 Jan. 31: Herman Henrich Führung obtained admittance for his second wife, Anna Maria Blumen, née Breitters and her daughter Anna Catharinen Blumen by payment of 7 Taler.
- 639 Feb. 14: Johan Christoph Culeman
- 640 Feb. 16: Herman Wilhelm von Hagen
- 641 May 23: Johan Ernst Mellies...and his wife Annen Ilsabein, stockman, admitted by payment of 2 Taler.
- 642 May 30: Simon Adolph Jochert...and entry for him and his wife, Anna Maria Schneider, born in Birstein, payment of 10 Taler recorded.

Burgbernheim

Title: *Bürgerbuch des ehemaligen Markfleckens Burgbernheim 1597–1840* [Citizen Register of the Former Market Town of Burgbernheim, 1597–1840]

1719

- 638 Jan. 31: Herman Henrich Führung hat seiner 2ten Frauen Anna Maria Blumen gebornen Breitters und deren Tochter Anna Catharinen Blumen Einzug ad 7 Tlr. verakkordieret
- 639 Febr. 14: Johan Christoph Culeman [...]
- 640 Febr. 16: Herman Wilhelm von Hagen [...]
- 641 Mai 23: Johan Ernst Mellies [...] und seiner Frauen Annen Ilsabein Viehmeisters Einzug ad 2 Tlr. bedungen und bezahlt
- 642 Mai 30: Simon Adolph Jochert [...] und seinen Einzug vor sich und seiner Frauen Anna Maria Schneiderin, von Birstein bürtig, ad 10 Tlr. akkordiert und bezahlt
- 643 Juni 6: Johan Henrich Baks seiner

Figures 10 | *Bürgerbücher* feature year-by-year listings of applicants for residency, as shown in this example for the city of Detmold (*Bürgerbuch der Stadt Detmold von 1635–1885*, p. 19).

This is the same Burgberheim whose *Häusergeschichte* was discussed earlier. Its Bürgerbuch has following contents:

- Brief history of the community
- List of Neubürger (residents in a part of the town that expanded beyond the original city wall)
- Citizen register
- Texts of oaths
- Religious refugees listed in the Bürgerbuch
- Indexes: name, domestic place names, foreign place names
- Appendixes: list of subjects of the Department of Hoheneck, 1650/51; heraldry list of 1720

863. **Rüdel Hans Jakob**, ältester Sohn des Johann Rüdel, eines Weißbäckers zu Frommetsfelden [bei Leutershausen], hat Anna Maria geheiratet, die nachgelassene, jüngste Tochter des verstorbenen Hans Georg Pfundt, Wirts dahier, gibt 1 Gulden Bürgergeld.

KB Bgbhm 1721, Bl.39r, oo 7.1.1721

Riedel Johann Jakob, Meister, Weißbäcker und Bierbrauer allhier, ältester Sohn des Johann Riedel, Inwohners und Bäckers zu Frommetsfelden; Bürger;

Pfundt Anna Maria, jüngste Tochter des verstorbenen Johann Georg Pfundt, gewesenen Gastwirts, Büttners und Bierbrauers allhier.

114. **Börer Martin**, ein Büttner, ehelicher Bürgerssohn des Michael Börer und Margaretha [seiner Hausfrau], heiratet Margaretha, die ehelebliche Bürgerstochter des Leonhard Boß und Margaretha [seiner Hausfrau]. Leistet Pflicht.

Figures 11 & 12 | The *Bürgerbuch* for the town of Bergbernheim includes extractions from local church records, as seen in the example for Hans Jakob Rüdel. Martin Börer is the same person featured in the Bergbernheim *Häusergeschichte* (*Bürgerbuch des ehemaligen Marktfleckens Burgbernehim 1597–1840*, pp. 33 and 133).

- List of sources and bibliography

Entries in the citizenship roll also include important genealogical information extracted from church records. A typical entry from 1722 states (Fig. 11):

863. Rüdel, Hans Jakob, oldest son of the baker Johann Rüdel at Frommetsfelden [near Leutershausen], citizen, has married Anna Maria, the youngest surviving daughter of the deceased Hans Georg Pfundt, inn keeper here, pays 1 Gulden citizenship fee.

Church records of Burgbernehim 1721, Bl.39r oo [married] 7 Jan. 1721 Riedel Johann Jakob, master baker and beer brewer from here, oldest son of Johann Riedel, resident and baker at Frommetsfelden, citizen; Pfund, Anna Maria, youngest daughter of the deceased Johann Georg Pfundt, innkeeper, cooper and beer brewer from here.

Another example from 1610 (Fig 12):

At the court session at [the feast of] St. Walburga, 11 April 1610, the following became citizens and turned in their weapons...

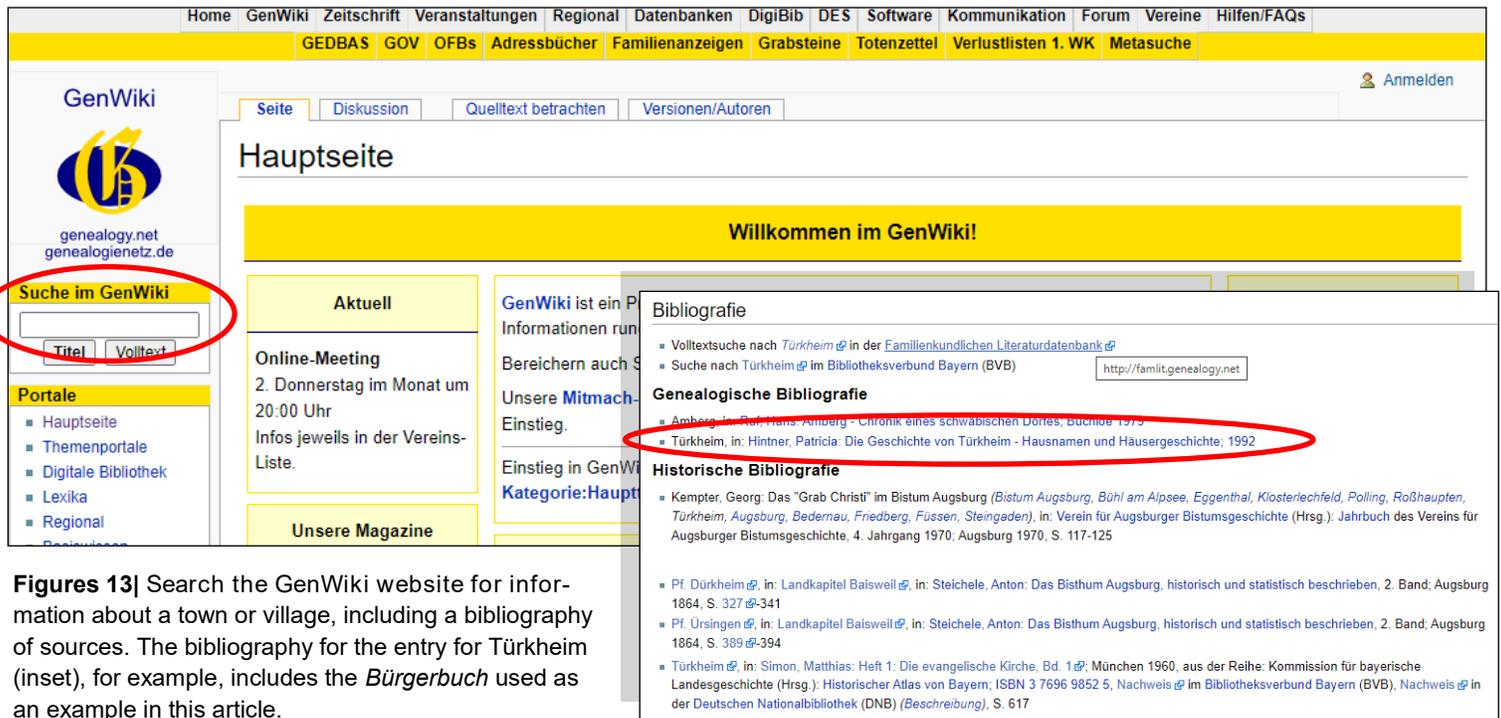
114. Börer, Martin, a cooper, legitimate son of citizen Michael Börer and Margaretha [his wife], married Margaretha, the marriageable daughter of citizen Leonhard Boß and Margaretha [his wife]. Performs duties.

Look for multiple sources

As demonstrated above, the History & Genealogy Department has both a *Häusergeschichte* and a *Bürgerbuch* for Bergbernheim. Both have information about Martin Börer/Böhlers, as shown in the examples given for each publication. Likewise, the department has an *Ortssippenbuch* for Epe that offers basic genealogical information about the Eckelmann family mentioned in the *Hofgeschichte*. Researchers should investigate the possibility that multiple publications exist an ancestor's place of origin.

Finding these sources

Knowing the name and location of ancestral place of origin is essential for finding these publications. The sources covered in this article can be stand-alone publications, chapters in local histories, or articles in historical and genealogical journals.



Figures 13| Search the GenWiki website for information about a town or village, including a bibliography of sources. The bibliography for the entry for Türkheim (inset), for example, includes the *Bürgerbuch* used as an example in this article.

Finding books

One of the challenges of finding a publication is simply knowing that it exists. The following are some tips:

- The History & Genealogy Department actively collects Hofgeschichten, Häusergeschichten and Bürgerbücher. Search the St. Louis County Library catalog <webpac.slcl.org> using the place name as a keyword.
- The National Library of Germany has many in its collection, so searching its [online catalog](https://bit.ly/3rpc9D5) <https://bit.ly/3rpc9D5> might reveal titles. Search by keyword using the place name and other words, such as Hofgeschichte, Häusergeschichte, Höfefolgen, Besitzfolgen, Geschichte, Ortsgeschichte, Chronik, or Ortschronik.
- [GenWiki.de](http://genwiki.de) <http://genwiki.de/Hauptseite>, a German website. Offers information about towns and village with a list of genealogical sources. Search for information about village using the search box on the sites home page (Fig. 13).

Once a book is discovered, search for the title in WorldCat.org

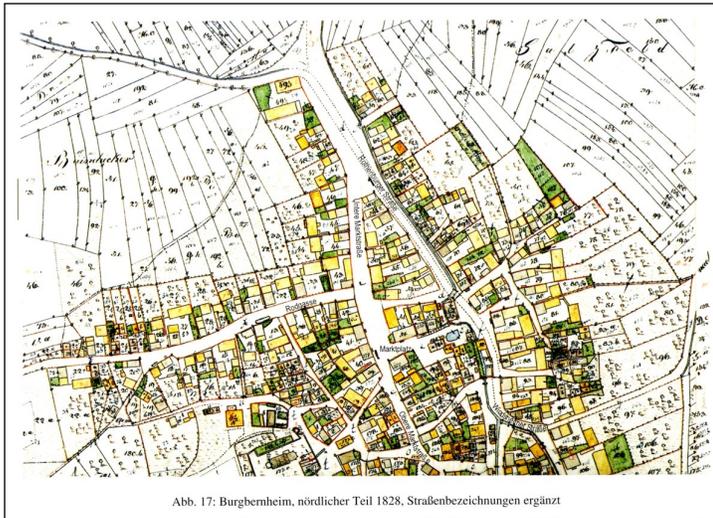
<<https://www.worldcat.org/>> to ascertain if it is available in a U.S. library.

Journal articles

Finding a journal article can be more challenging. Library catalog records include the titles of journals but do not include the titles or subjects of articles within them. One possible way of finding journal articles is to visit the websites of regional German genealogical societies. Society websites sometimes list the contents of their journal issues and occasionally even make them available to download. The GenWiki website, mentioned above, provides [a list of German genealogical societies](http://genwiki.de/Portal:Vereine) <<http://genwiki.de/Portal:Vereine>>.

Once a journal of interest is found, search for the journal title in Worldcat.org to find a U.S. library that has the publication. A visit to the repository might be necessary to see what the contents of the journals might be.

Hofgeschichten, Häusergeschichten, and Bürgerbücher are valuable and interesting publications that can provide much insight into the life of an ancestral family. Although they may



Hofgeschichten, Häusergeschichten and Bürgerbücher often include detailed maps of the community, including plat maps indicating individual properties, as seen in this example published in *Burgbernheim: Orts- und Häusergeschichte bis ins 21. Jahrhundert*.

be challenging to find and use, the information in them can be well worth the effort.

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- Worldcat.org: <https://www.worldcat.org>



Additions to the National Genealogical Society Book Loan Collection Dec. 1, 2018–Nov. 30, 2019

The National Genealogical Society Book Loan Collection (NGS Collection) features more than 28,000 books for family history research, including more than 10,000 published family histories. Originally housed at NGS headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, the collection was relocated to St. Louis County Library in St. Louis, Missouri in 2001. Although once limited to the NGS membership, the NGS Collection is now accessible to everyone through local libraries via interlibrary loan services by visiting the collection onsite at St. Louis County Library.

The collection grows through contributions from authors publishers, and individual NGS members. Books submitted to the National Genealogical Society for award consideration at its annual conference are automatically added to the collection. Select books are reviewed in the NGS *Quarterly*. Books donated by NGS members are noted in *NGS Magazine*.

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Events

St. Louis Genealogical Society meetings are free and open to the public. Registration is required.

Saturday, Jan. 8 | 10:00 a.m.

St. Louis Genealogical Society Membership Meeting

Ask Louie

Do you have a burning question but have not asked for help? Our panel of genealogists will field questions and try to help break down your brick wall. It's likely that someone else has the same question! Please email your questions to programs@stlgs.org by the first of January so we can best assist you, although additional questions from the audience will be addressed at the meeting. [Register](#)

Wednesday, Jan. 19 | 7:00 p.m.

StLGS German Special Interest Group

Using German Newspapers

You can find German newspapers; they are more available than you think. And, you can break through the language barrier too. Besides obituaries, learn what genealogical information you may find in German newspapers. Carol Whitton, speaker. [Register](#)

Tuesday, Jan. 25 | 7:00 p.m.

StLGS Irish Special Interest Group

Finding Your Irish Ancestors: My Favorite Websites for Irish Genealogy Research

Learn about and visit "live" the websites that our speaker Susan Rogers finds most useful for researching both Northern Ireland and Ireland. A case study will show how Susan stitched together information from six different websites to identify her son's Irish paternal third and fourth great-grandparents. Susan Rogers, speaker. Register

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Journal

Rhode Island Roots. Special Bonus Issues: April 2006, April 2007, April 2014, April 2021.

Classes

Classes are free and open to the public. Registration is required. Classes will be conducted by Zoom. [Register online after January 1](https://bit.ly/3jJ8bxq) <<https://bit.ly/3jJ8bxq>>

Wednesday, Feb. 2 | 6:30 p.m.

Tracing Your African American Ancestors: Getting Started in Genealogical Research

Do you want to research your African American family but don't know where to start? This class will teach you the basics of genealogical research including resources available in History & Genealogy at St. Louis County Library.

Wednesday, Feb. 9 | 6:30 p.m.

Tracing Your African American Ancestors: Digging Deeper

Learn about additional sources and techniques to deepen your research and overcome roadblocks. This course will use specific examples of records available and show you how to use them. Prerequisite: "Tracing your African American Ancestors: Getting Started in Genealogical Research" or comparable research experience.

Wednesday, Feb. 16 | 6:30 p.m.

Tracing Your African American Ancestors: Advanced Techniques

The usual techniques can often lead to roadblocks in African American research. The instructor will use case studies to demonstrate how researchers can fill gaps in missing information. Prerequisite: "Tracing Your African American Ancestors: Digging Deeper" or comparable research experience.

Wednesday, Feb. 23 | 6:30 p.m.

Tracing Your African American Ancestors: Records of Slave Owning Families

Slave owning families often kept detailed records of their enslaved African Americans. Discover ways to find the last slave owner and learn how to find and use these private records to reveal more information about your family. Prerequisite: "Tracing Your African American Ancestors: Advanced Techniques" or comparable research experience.

History & Genealogy services

The following H&G services are free and available to researchers who are unable to visit the library.

Lookup service

H&G can provide photocopies, prints, or digital scans of many library materials from indexed sources or when given a specific citation:

- Up to 30 pages from one book or one article from a journal issue. Staff can also photocopy or scan tables of contents and index pages.
- Microfilmed records—A list of microfilm available in the H&G collection can be viewed [online](https://bit.ly/3jrqrw3j) <<https://bit.ly/3jrqrw3j>>.
- Print outs from database records if patrons cannot access the database at home.
- Please use the [online lookup request form](https://bit.ly/2UQXJKE) <<https://bit.ly/2UQXJKE>> to submit requests.

Print collection

More than 27,000 books in the collection can be checked out. The entire collection is included in the library's [online catalog](http://webpac.slcl.org) <<http://webpac.slcl.org>>. Books with call numbers that **do not** begin with "R" are available to check out. Patrons can request books online or by calling 314-994-3300.

Research guidance

H&G staff members can provide research assistance by phone.

Book-a-Genealogist

Researchers encountering brick-walls or who would like assistance in developing a plan to achieve specific research goals can schedule a phone consultation with an H&G staff member. Requests can be made using the online [Book-a-Genealogist form](https://bit.ly/3fQbB0r) <<https://bit.ly/3fQbB0r>>.

Database access

Many library databases can be used at home by St. Louis County Library card holders living in the metropolitan area. The Ancestry Library Edition database, normally restricted to in-library use, can be accessed remotely on a temporary basis. View the list of genealogical databases on the [library's website](https://bit.ly/37GRBtF) <<https://bit.ly/37GRBtF>>.

For more information, please contact the History & Genealogy