

# Gumpert Studies

## Bill and Dorothe

October - November 2019

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## Our Family Tree

We had been working on the Kress family tree for two years and wanted to learn more about the German side of the family. Many sources had been used to build the family tree and we recently found an interesting gap (explained below) that required further investigation. We decided that during our yearly trip to Europe to include visits to some areas in Thuringia our ancestors lived.

The purpose of this document is to summarize our current efforts to search Gumpert ancestors and describe the trip to Thuringia in October, 2019.

**On the USA side**, many generations of the Molleston ancestors were born, had lived and died in the United States, and we were able to gather extensive information from the following sources:

1. State and federal census, birth, baptism, marriage and death records.
2. Military records.
3. Family records, bibles and photographs.
4. The Cunnings Christmas letters, and a

published diary, "*Marian's Story: My Rich Inheritance*" by Marian Adele Cunnings, were vital for our genealogy work. We have digitized it into the Kindle (.mobi) format.

5. FindAGrave information led directly or indirectly to finding many additional relatives, both USA and German origins. For example, personal notes and associated data on findagrave.com led to finding other children of Johann Andreas Kress who had emigrated to the USA.
6. We connected with a number of living relatives, and benefited from their ancestry records. Most shared current living family members.

**On the German side**, we had several sources:

1. Our Mühlfeld relatives, Erika (born Trier-Gumpert) and Franz Knauer, had many family pictures, a Mühlfeld chronicle, Ahnenpass documents and provided recent family information.
2. Christel Gottfriedsen (born Zöller-Gumpert) had done extensive research of church records and had documented discussions with her mother, Frieda Zöller. She provided family pictures, Frieda's Ahnenpass and many other documents and chronicles.
3. Eugen Wachs (mother: Karolina Laura Gumpert) had documented his family tree and had a draft of his Ahnenpass application. We had met Eugen in Cranbrook, Ontario and he visited us at our home in Portland, Oregon. We had further contacts with his daughter and family in Canada and they provided us with Eugen's entire genealogy collection. We were also able to extend the Wachs family tree to past and more recent generations using shared information from Rolf-Peter Göhmann, Germany.
4. Gerhard Rommel, a current resident of Mühlfeld, (a Kress relative) provided many generations of both Kress and Rommel genealogy from Mühlfeld church records.
5. A very old German family bible contained birth, death and marriage dates.

6. A German genealogy site Christel Gottfriedsen directed us to, <http://www.ortsfamilienbuecher.de>.
7. Recent contacts with other families in Germany:
  - Dieter Kress and family provided a PDF of the Ahnenpass of his father, Alexander Kress which included Kress and Rommel ancestors in Mühlfeld.  
In mid-November 2019 we sent our 23-page analysis of the Ahnenpass with links to other sources to Dieter and Veronika Kress for review.
  - Siegfried Krauss and family who we visited in Berkach in 2018 provided information about living family members.

While there are exceptions, German cemeteries recycle grave sites usually every 25 years so there is no FindAGrave analogy in Germany. Extensive ancestry information exists in Germany in church records that were not destroyed in the war, but while digitization of these records has begun, this data has not been available for the areas our ancestors lived.

## Other Sources

We used many internet sources for our studies.

- The LDS - FamilySearch people in Salt Lake City helped us start and their website continues to be a valuable resource. However, transferring information from their site is simple, but the information in FamilySearch is not always correct.
- We subscribe to the complete version of MyHeritage.com. While FamilySearch provides one tree containing everyone's contributions, MyHeritage has many trees, each contributed by a user, and evaluation of tree accuracy is important.
- Our Sun City Lincoln Hills Genealogy Club (<https://lincolnhillsgenealogy.com/>) subscribes to Ancestry.com, Newspapers.com and Fold3.com. Ancestry.com DNA is in the works.

## DNA Links

In mid-2019, we received autosomal DNA results from MyHeritage and uploaded the data to FamilyTreeDNA, and GEDMatch. We were surprised to find a number matches and proceeded to make contact with potential relatives.

Sometimes it worked, but often we received no

reply. We received the most results from MyHeritage and FamilyTreeDNA. GEDMatch was not so good, probably because only about 20% of testers will upload results to that site. In the future, we will extend our DNA testing and analysis to Ancestry.

DNA matches from the Russell, Reedy, Johnson, Gumpert and Waggoner families resulted in them sharing all Ancestry.com / MyHeritage.com information, including all their living relatives. Their trees reached far back, included living relatives, and many family connections were made.

Searching the name Gumpert on DNA sites resulted in identifying DNA matches with four Gumpert descendants (a fifth one implied from these). All of these were from persons in the USA.

These matches were between branches from

1. Johann Georg Gumpert, born in Lichtenau, Thuringia, Germany, in 1810 and
2. August Gumpert, born in Germany 1853 and died 1936 in the USA. From the 1880 US census of the August Gumpert family:
  - Resident: Ellsworth Village, Pierce County, Wisconsin.
  - Occupation: farmer.
  - Born: Prussia (*Prussia originated in 1525 and was abolished in 1871 when German states united to create the German Empire*).
  - Wife: Sarah, child: Clara.

From the ship manifest:

- August Gumpert arrived in the USA in 1872 on passenger ship S. S. Bremen, traveling from Bremen to New York, arrival 5 July 1872, age 18.
- His exact birthplace remains unknown.

Contacting one of these DNA matches, still with the family name of Gumpert, resulted in the sharing an extensive family tree of the USA descendants of August Gumpert (1853-1936).

An abbreviated Gumpert tree in Figure 1 shows these two branches linked by our DNA findings. It points out the gap in our tree, and identifies the area of further investigation – the children from Karl Gottlieb Gumpert and Eleonore Sophia Prüfer. This has turned out to be our most intriguing “Brick Wall.”

## Recent Searches in Germany

Christel Gottfriedsen provided contact information for Thorsten Müller who had access to Lichtenau church records. We contacted Thorsten, a resident of Trockenburn (a few kilometers from Lichtenau) by email (thorsten.h.mueller@t-online.de) several times, and in early October 2019 had a FaceTime video conference with him. We then scheduled a meeting at the Lichtenau church our ancestors attended.

On Tuesday, October 15, 2019, we met Thorsten Müller in Lichtenau. Ms. Müller, a Lichtenau resident (no relation to Thorsten), joined us and had keys to the church, and during our tour of the church, the city, and the cemetery we showed Thorsten Figure 1 and discussed the needed research.

As we had already found out from Christel Gottfriedsen, Thorsten confirmed that Karl Gottlieb Gumpert had seven children, all born in Lichtenau. He mentioned that many Gumperts were important members of the Lichtenau community and were involved in town management. He also provided more information about the Prüfer family – see Figure 4.

If August Gumpert (b. 1853) had been born in Lichtenau, we will find our connection. If not, we would have to wait until more German church records become digitized and available to the genealogists.

## Recent Results

We received the initial results from Thorsten's studies of the Trokenborn church records on October 30, 2019. They list names and birth dates of the children of Carl Gottlieb Gumpert (the only son of Johann Georg Gumpert, born 1757 and Eleonore Sophie Prüfer (parents and siblings shown in Figure 4). Johann Georg and Eleonore Sophie were married 12.10.1807 in Burkersdorf. Their children (female in red):

1. **Maria Rosina b. 17.04.1808**
2. Johann Georg b. 02.03.1810
3. **Ernestine b. 02.05.1810 (Date appears to be in error. We have asked for an explanation and correction).**
4. Stillborn son b. & d. 07.07.1815
5. Friedrich Michael b. 18.09.1816
6. **Caroline Friedericke b. 27.02.1819**

7. **Johanne Friedericke b. 09.05.1821**

8. Christian Gottfried b. 04.12.1824

Therefore, we are focusing our search on children #5 and #8. However, it is possible that one of the daughters, Caroline or Johanne, had a child and wasn't married and her son carried the Gumpert name. We had seen that before with other members of our family tree.

## Summary of Figures

**Figure 1:** Abbreviated Gumpert tree showing DNA links and "Brick Wall."

**Figure 2:** Simplified map of an area in Thuringia where many Gumpert ancestors lived.

**Figure 3:** (Page 8) The Dornburg ancestor tree.

**Figure 4:** (Page 12) The Prüfer family from a page provided by Thorsten during our Lichtenau visit.

...

Whenever we think we're approaching completion of our family tree, we discover another branch and find yet another group of "nth" cousins.

Currently, our family tree contains details of over 5,400 persons, and continues to grow.

Any family tree we maintain online is minimal – we do not upload a GEDCOM to these sites. All ancestry information from all sources, including records, books and photos is always transferred to [Legacy Family Tree](#).

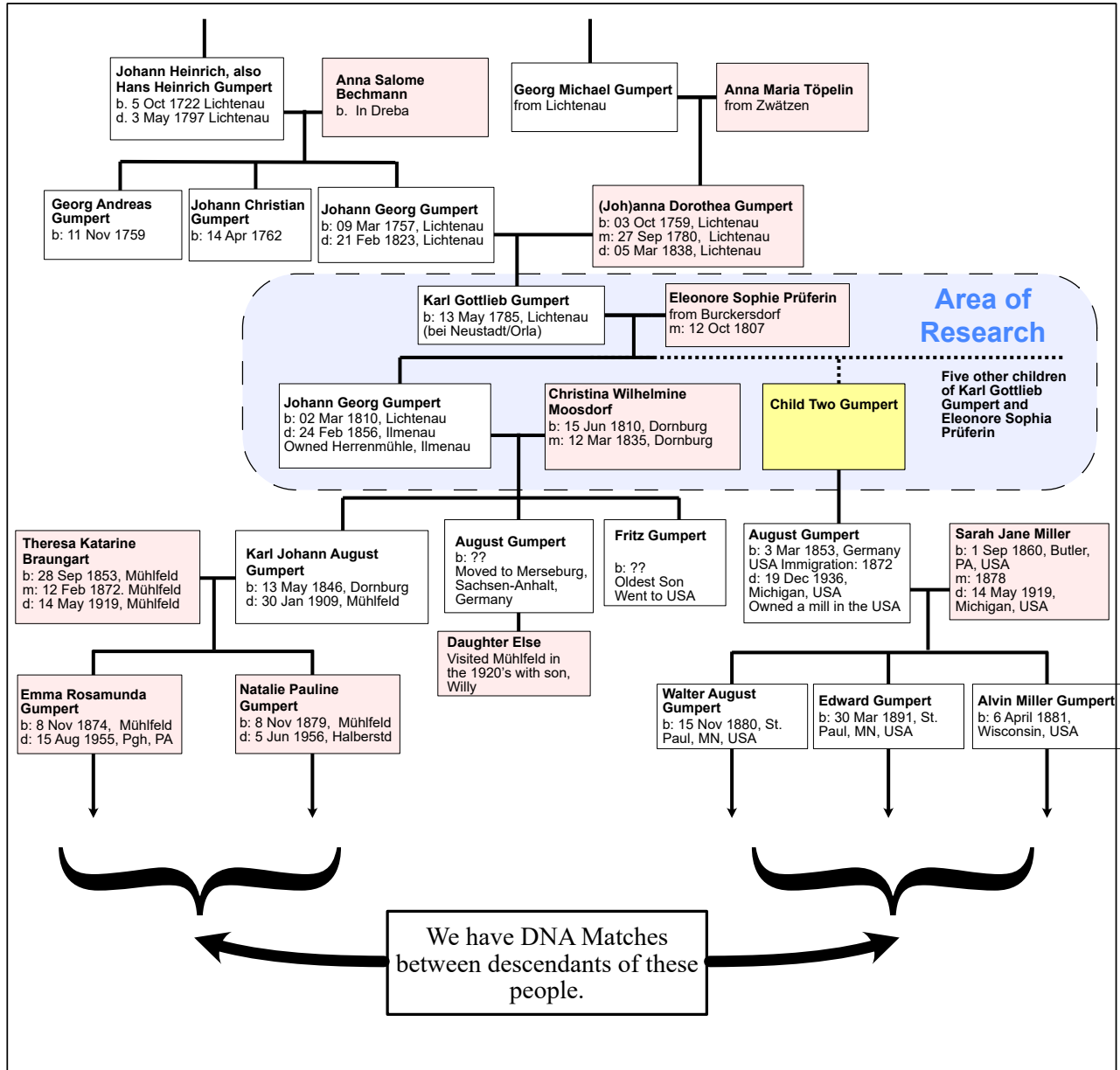


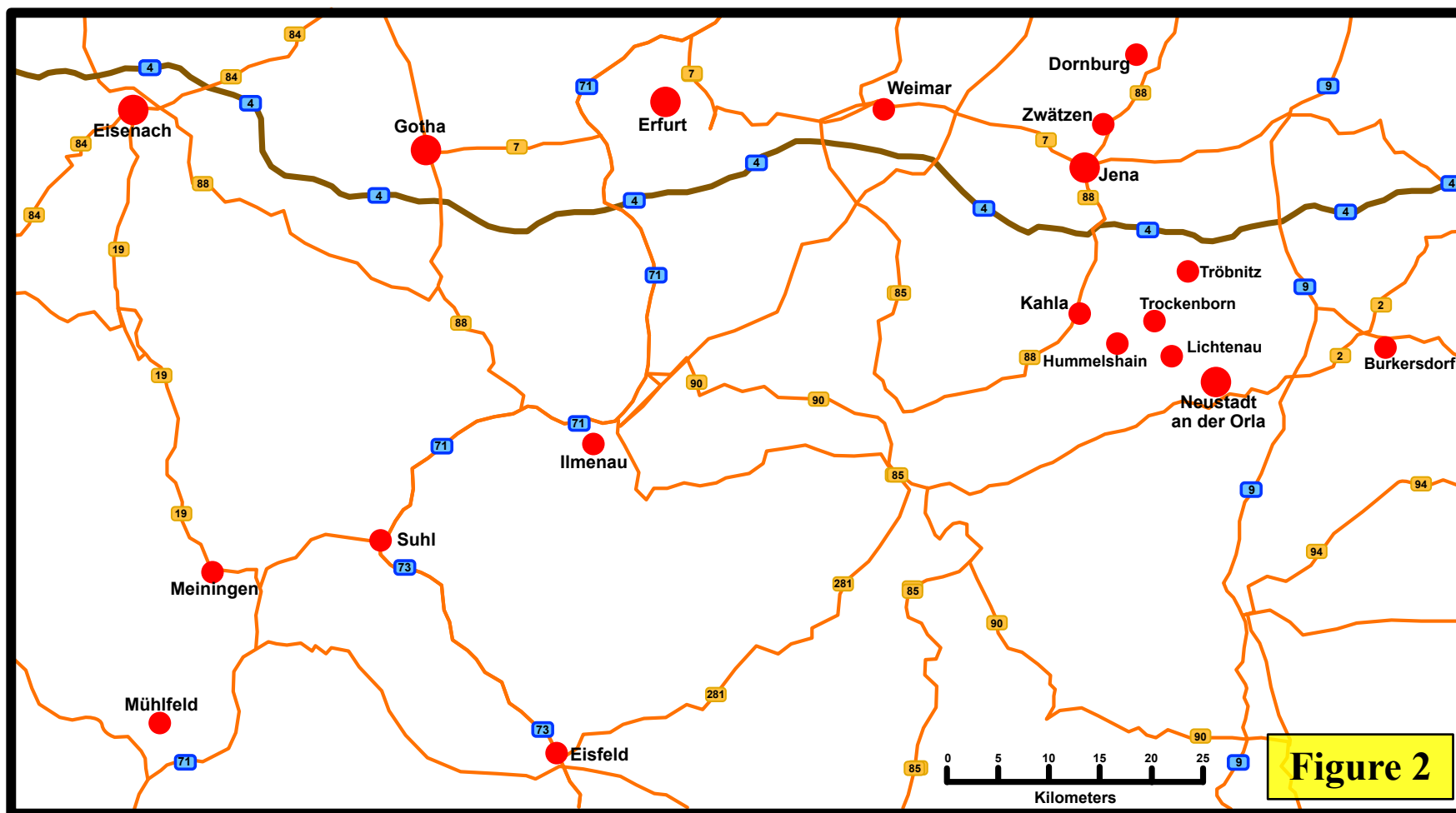
Dorothe and Bill at "Oktoberfest"  
Zagreb, Croatia September 2019  
Questions - comments - additions - contact us:  
Email - Dorothe: ddk2345@gmail.com  
Email - Bill: wck2345@gmail.com

**Figure 1**

**Gumpert DNA Links**

Illustrating the area of research needed to link two branches of Gumperts. We are searching for “Child Two Gumpert” which was a son of Karl Gottlieb Gumpert born 13 May 1785, and married Eleonore Sophie Prüfer 12 Oct 1807. Additional information about the Prüfer lineage is shown in [Figure 4](#).





### Ancestor Cities

The above abbreviated map of a section of the German state of Thuringia shows where many of our ancestors had lived.

During October 2019 we visited Lichtenau and Dornburg and several nearby cities. Lichtenau is southeast of Jena, and

Zwätzen and Dornburg are to the northeast of Jena.

At the bottom left is Mühlfeld, where Karl Johann August Gumpert (b. 13 May 1846) moved to from Lichtenau and married Theresa Katarine Braungart on 12 February 1872.

## Lichtenau, Thuringia

Thirty kilometers southeast of Jena and five kilometers northwest from Neustadt on the Orla River, along Route 1110, is the city of Lichtenau.

Lichtenau is in the German state of Thuringia and was incorporated into Neustadt on the Orla in 1994. It has a population of about 200.

Lichtenau means a bright damp clearing. The small village at an elevation of 345 meters has many half-timbered houses and is surrounded by fields and forests. A beautiful pond is alongside the highway 1110 and on the sunny, windless day, we took the picture shown below.

The church was built in 1730 and has about 60

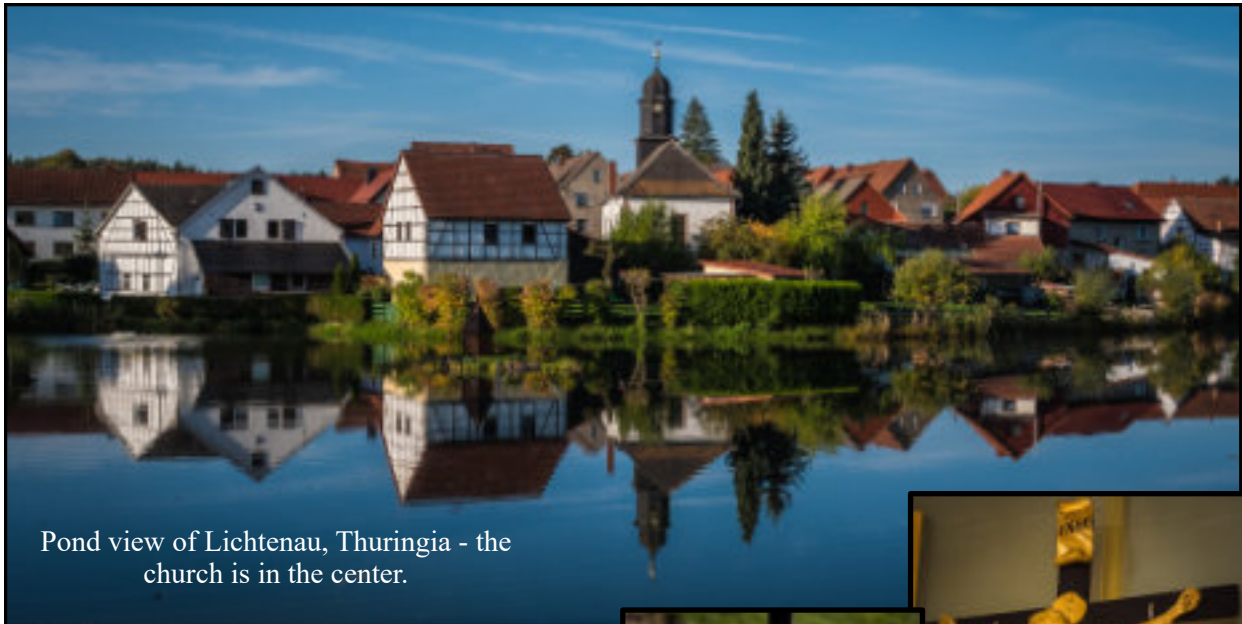
members. As funding has permitted, it has undergone some renovation and repair.

Thorsten Müller and Mrs. Müller (not related) met us on Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup> and opened the church. The inside was plain but nicely renovated.

All church records now reside in Trockenborn, a few kilometers north of Lichtenau.

Note that there is another city in Germany called Lichtenau, west of “our” Lichtenau and is north of Frankfurt am Main, in the German state of Hesse.

Similarly, there is a Dornburg, Hesse.



Pond view of Lichtenau, Thuringia - the church is in the center.



View of Lichtenau from cemetery. More recent burials are here. Our ancestors were probably buried next to the church - no evidence remains.



Cemetery gate

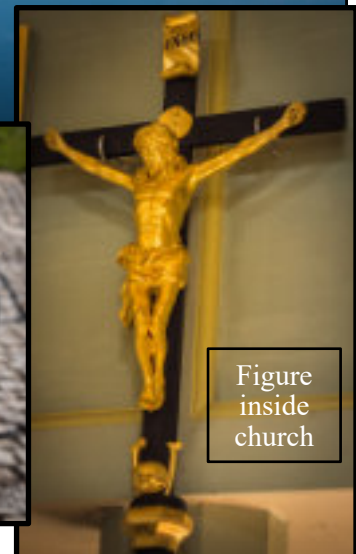
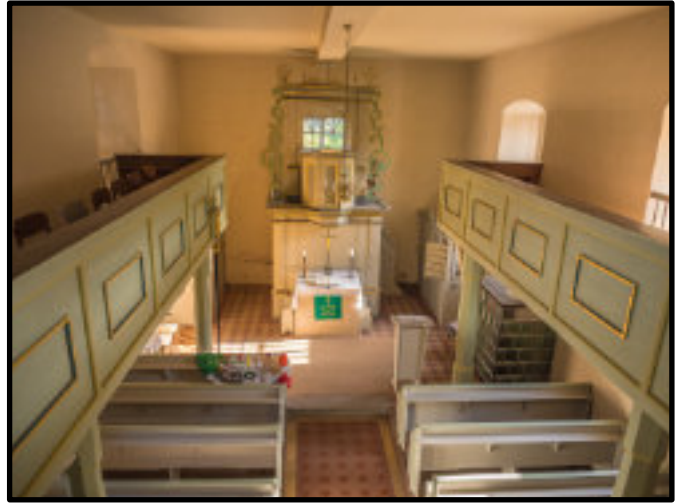


Figure inside church



Lichtenau church



Balcony view of the church



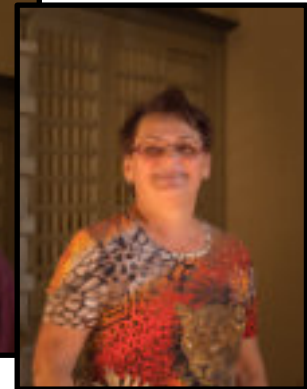
Another view of the Lichtenau church



Bill and Dorothe in the Lichtenau Church



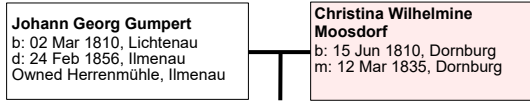
Thorsten Müller



Frau Müller

## Dornburg, Thuringia

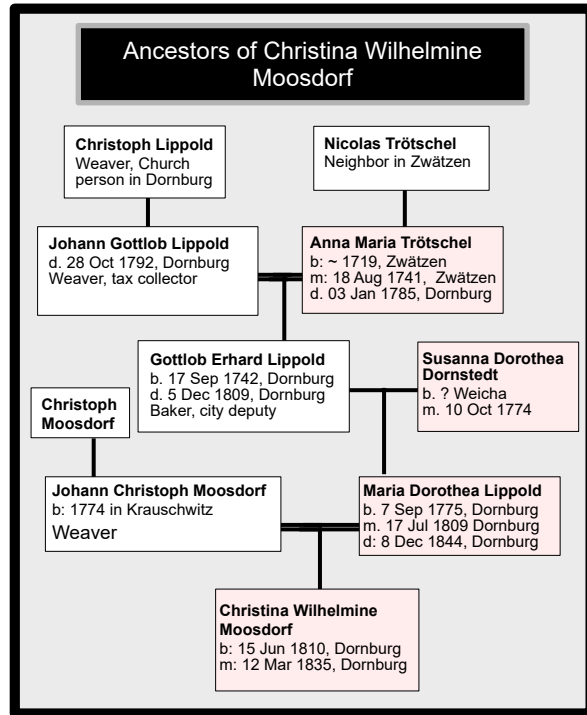
Christina Wilhelmine Moosdorf married Johann Georg Gumpert in 1835 in Dornburg, about 12 kilometers northeast of Jena.



Her ancestors were from both Dornburg and nearby Zwätzen. Figure 2 shows Zwätzen midway between Jena and Dornburg. Figure 3 shows an abbreviated family tree of her ancestors.

As you drive from Jena going northeast on state route 88, the Dornburg castles appear on the left about 100 meters above the Saale River (see picture below). We drove up the steep, narrow road, parked in the center of Dornburg, visited the old church and then the castles.

We toured the Renaissance Castle, and the Rococo Palace. The Old Castle was closed, but walking around it was possible and the view to the Saale valley and Thuringia forests was beautiful. Goethe stayed in Dornburg multiple times.



**Figure 3**



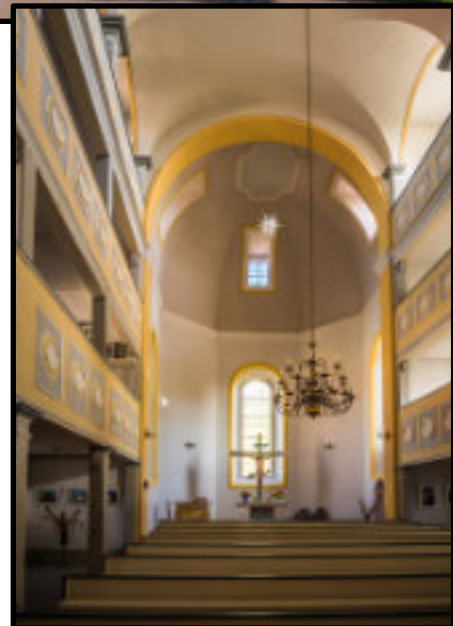
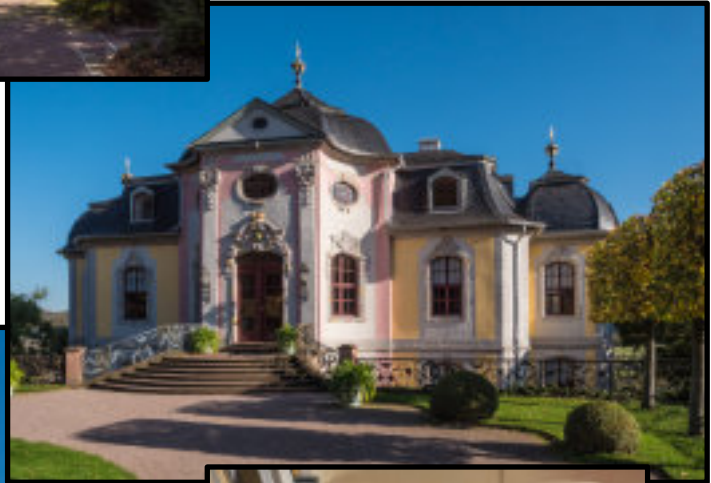
The three castles of Dornburg as seen from state route 88. On the left is the Renaissance, the middle is the Rococo and to the right is the Old Castle.



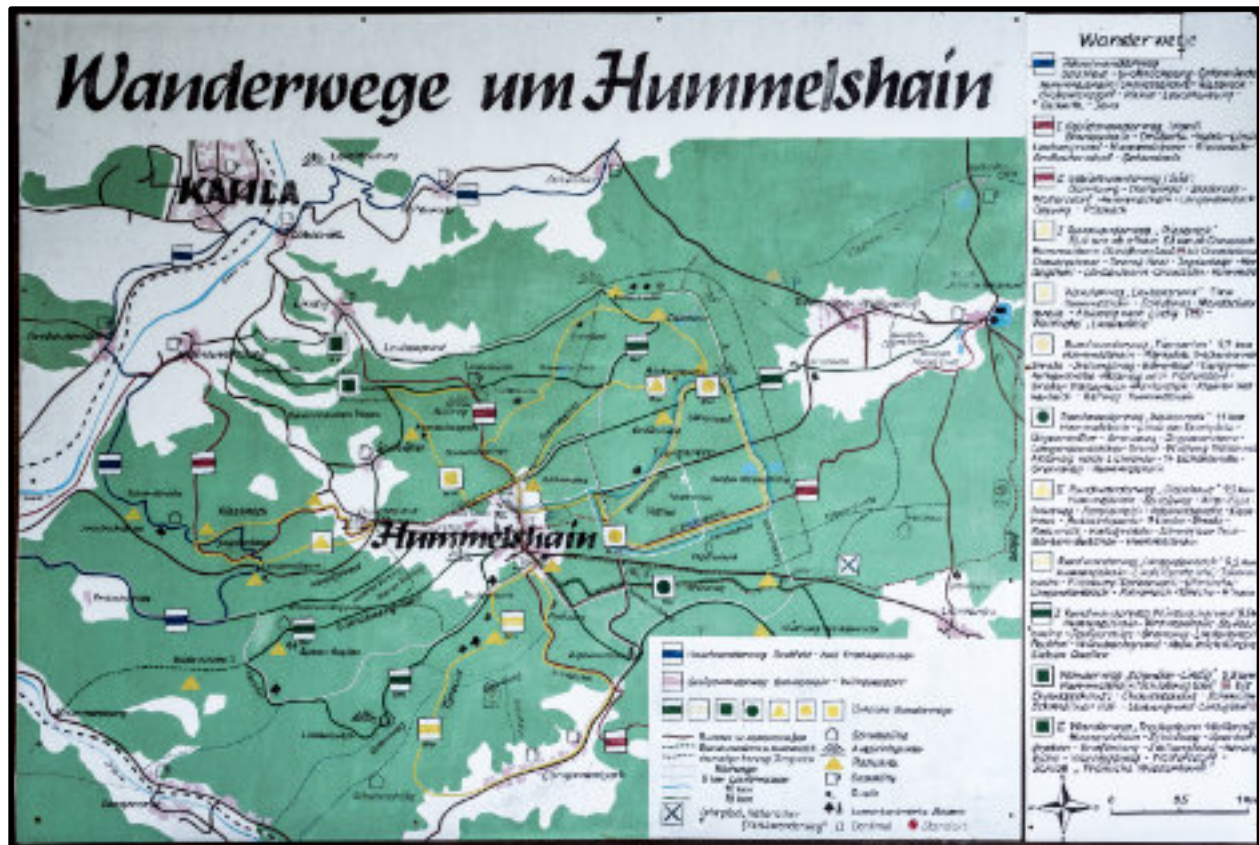


The Renaissance castle in Dornburg was built in the 17th century on the site of an older castle. Goethe stayed there during the summer of 1828.

The Rococo castle was built in the years 1728–1748. The Baroque garden was well cared for and is very beautiful.



Saint Jacobus town church, Dornburg. The church and its foundations belong to the oldest buildings of the town. It was rebuilt after a fire in 1718. Worth mentioning is the Gerhardt organ, which was installed in 1820, and which was the biggest organ of its kind at that time. Unusual are the three galleries, offering room for 200 people.



The hiking map showing trails between Kahla, Hummelshain, Lichtenau and Trockenborn.



The hunting lodge in Hummelshain was built in the 1880s. It was an impressive structure but appeared to be in a state of disrepair.

## **Marienkirche Trockenborn**

The inside and outside of the Trokenborn church.

The pneumatic organ was built in 1909.



## The Prüfer family

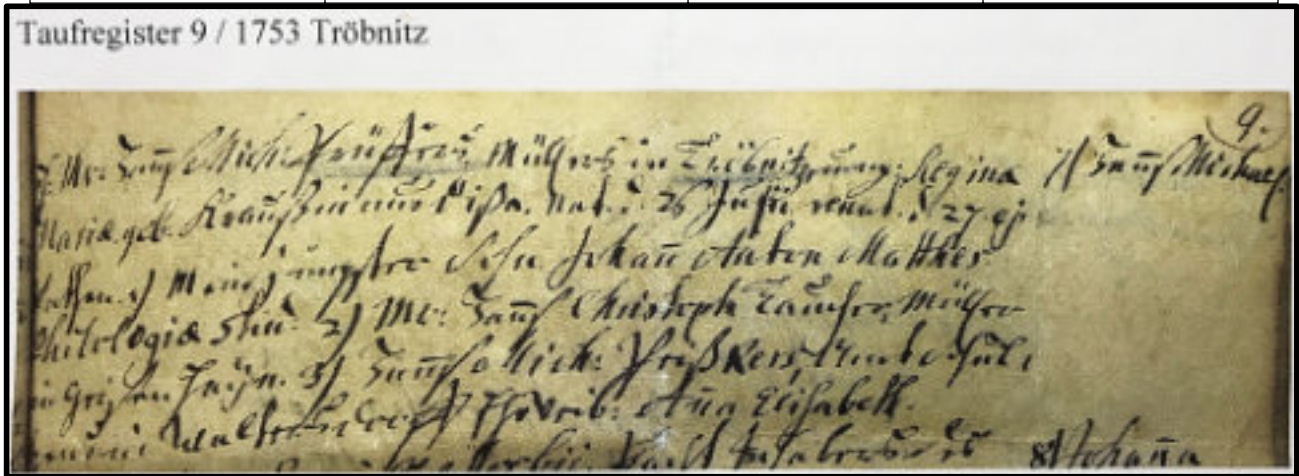
### Figure 4

Thorsten provided the following information about the Prüfer family. Our fourth great grandmother was Eleonore Sophie Prüfer, born 02 July 1783. He noted that in the church books, she was

referred to as Prüferin, apparently the feminine form of Prüfer at that time.

Thorsten provided a photo of a Taufregister (baptism record) from 1753 showing some other family members. See photo below.

Johann Michael Prüfer Jr.		Eleonore Sophia Döring	
b. 26.07.1753 in Tröbnitz		b. 18.11.1753 in Burkersdorf	
d. 06.12.1816 in Burkersdorf		d. 16.09.1827 in Burkersdorf	
Father: Johann Michael Prüfer, Sr.		Father: Just Döring	
Mother: Regina Maria Krause		Mother: Anna Catharina Jacob	
Married 25.11.1773 in Burkersdorf			
Children			
Johann Gottfried	15.10.1775		+ 06.11.1775
Maria Elisabeth	25.10.1776		+ 06.06.1777
Carolina Sophia	12.05.1778	m. 1801 Joh. Adam Haase in Pillingsdorf	
Christian Friedrich	09.02.1780	m. 1816 Elisabeth Maria Querengässer aus der Harrasmühle bei Neunhofen	
Johann Erdmann	21.10.1781		
<b>Eleonore Sophia</b>	<b>02.07.1783</b>	<b>m. 1807 Carl Gottlieb Gumpert</b>	
Johann Michael	26.07.1785		
Maria Rosina	10.08.1787	m. 1816 Joh. Friedrich Kraft aus Trokenborn	
Stillborn Girl	13.02.1790		



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