



## DALLAS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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### Finding Your Bavarian Ancestors

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#### Bavarian History

The Electorate of Bavaria was a quasi-independent hereditary electorate of the Holy Roman Empire from 1623 to 1806, when it was succeeded by the Kingdom of Bavaria. The Kingdom of Bavaria emerged from various historical territories in the Bavarian, Swabian and Franconian imperial circles during the Napoleonic wars (1803-1812) and the subsequent changes made at the congress of Vienna (1815).

In 1803 Bavaria received the bishoprics of Würzburg, Bamberg, Augsburg and Freisingen, part of Passau, the territories of twelve abbeys, and seventeen cities and villages.

In 1815 The Rhenish Palatinate and Franconia were annexed to Bavaria.

With the unification of the German Empire in 1871, the Bavaria kingdom became a federated state of the new empire. The Kingdom of Bavaria continued to exist as a German state to 1918. The Free State of Bavaria was created in 1919 within the Weimar Republic. In 1946 Bavaria lost its district on the Rhine, the Palatinate.

The Electorate of Bavaria (pre 1806) [https://wiki.genealogy.net/Kurf%C3%BCrstentum Bayern](https://wiki.genealogy.net/Kurf%C3%BCrstentum_Bayern)

The Kingdom of Bavaria (1806-1918) [https://wiki.genealogy.net/K%C3%B6nigreich Bayern](https://wiki.genealogy.net/K%C3%B6nigreich_Bayern)

The Federal State of Bavaria (1918-today) <https://wiki.genealogy.net/Bayern>

The *Historisches Lexikon Bayerns* is a specialized encyclopedia on the history of Bavaria that is published exclusively online. It offers all those interested in Bavarian history information based on the current state of research. The encyclopedia is intended to be a central academic reference work on all aspects of Bavarian history from its beginnings to the present day. [https://www.historisches-lexikon-bayerns.de/Lexikon/HLB:Das Lexikon](https://www.historisches-lexikon-bayerns.de/Lexikon/HLB:Das_Lexikon)

#### *The Two Palatinates*

Upper Palatinate [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Upper Palatinate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Upper_Palatinate)

Essentially has always part of Bavaria.

Rhenish Palatinate/Lower Palatinate [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palatinate \(region\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palatinate_(region))

Administered by Bavaria, France and others over time. Part of Rhineland-Palatinate state since 1946.

#### Bavarian Records (General)

Bavaria (Bayern) Online Genealogy Records at FamilySearch.

[https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Bavaria \(Bayern\) Online Genealogy Records](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Bavaria_(Bayern)_Online_Genealogy_Records)

Ancestry's Bavaria Family History Research Page.

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/places/europe/germany/bavaria/>

Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek (German Digital Library). Search Tips for Genealogy.

<https://www.deutsche-digitale-bibliothek.de/content/suchtipps-fuer-familienforschung?lang=en>

GermanRoots.co, 2025. Places to Find German Genealogy Records and Databases Online.

<https://www.germanroots.com/germandata.html>

Bavarian State Archives, 1980. Guidelines for Genealogical Research in Bavaria.

*NOTE: Dated, but contains useful information.*

[https://www.gda.bayern.de/fileadmin/ migrated/content uploads/genealogic research bavaria.pdf](https://www.gda.bayern.de/fileadmin/migrated/content/uploads/genealogic_research_bavaria.pdf)

GenWiki, 2024. Portal: Bavaria. <https://wiki.genealogy.net/Portal:Bavaria>

## Maps, Gazetteers, Place Name Indexes

### Maps

"The Kingdom of Bavaria began a detailed survey of each village in the kingdom, starting about 1810 and it was not completed until about 1850. One set of records that resulted from these surveys is a set of very detailed maps of every village of Bavaria at a scale of approximately 1:1000. This is detailed enough that almost every house and every barn is visible.

The maps of the farm villages show the number of each house. The strips of farm land surrounding each village are numbered to show which strips of farmland belonged to which house. Although every village was surveyed, not all of the maps survive." [https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Bavaria\\_\(Bayern\)\\_Maps](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Bavaria_(Bayern)_Maps)

Bavaria Maps <https://ontheworldmap.com/germany/state/bavaria/>

David Rumsey Map Collection:

[https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/view/search/what/Atlas+Map/where/Bavaria+%28Germany%29?q=Bavaria&sort=Pub\\_List\\_No\\_InitialSort%2CPub\\_Date%2CPub\\_List\\_No%2C\\_Series\\_No](https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/view/search/what/Atlas+Map/where/Bavaria+%28Germany%29?q=Bavaria&sort=Pub_List_No_InitialSort%2CPub_Date%2CPub_List_No%2C_Series_No)

Bayern Atlas. <https://atlas.bayern.de/?c=677751,5422939&z=8&r=0&l=atkis&t=ba>

### Gazetteers

Meyers Gazetteer <https://www.meyersgaz.org/>

Genealogy.net The Historical Place Directory <https://gov.genealogy.net/search>

Bavarian State Library Online. Official town/city directories.

*NOTE: The Bavarian State Library Online will no longer be available from July 2025. The content has not been updated for some time and is gradually being moved to [bavarikon.de](https://www.bayerische-landesbibliothek-online.de/landesbeschreibungen-orte.html#1888)*

<https://www.bayerische-landesbibliothek-online.de/landesbeschreibungen-orte.html#1888>

### Place Name Indexes

Roger P. Minert, 2006. Bavaria Place Name Indexes. Identifying Place Names Using Alphabetical and Reverse Alphabetical Indexes. Search WorldCat® for a library near you: <https://search.worldcat.org/title/951219905>

## Bavarian Church Records

FamilySearch has digitized collections of Catholic and Lutheran Church records for Bavaria from 1591-1963.

Bavaria (Bayern), German Empire Church Records:

[https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Bavaria\\_\(Bayern\),\\_German\\_Empire\\_Church\\_Records](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Bavaria_(Bayern),_German_Empire_Church_Records)

Ancestry.com also has a collection of German Lutheran Church Records.

Ancestry.com, 2022. Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany, Church Record Extractions and Family Registers, 1600-1925. <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/62388/>

### Bavarian Catholic Church Records

Confirmations, marriages, deaths <100 yrs old, baptisms <120 yrs old not publicly accessible. This means that, on the one hand, the current books are still in the parishes. The lifespans of the individual registers are sometimes extremely long (> 100 years), so that even registers with entries from the end of the 19th century or the beginning of the 20th century may not yet be online.

- Augsburg <https://data.matricula-online.eu/de/deutschland/augsburg/>
- Bamberg <https://data.matricula-online.eu/de/deutschland/bamberg/>
- Eichstätt <https://data.matricula-online.eu/de/deutschland/eichstaett/>
- Munich and Freising <https://data.matricula-online.eu/de/deutschland/muenchen/>

On Matricula you will only find information on the parish history, church records, and the places belonging to each parish at the level of each parish. The registers of the Archdiocese of Munich and Freising are available on a separate website. Matricula provides links to the individual parish records on that site.

<https://www.erzbistum-muenchen.de/archiv-und-bibliothek/digitales-archiv>

- Passau <https://data.matricula-online.eu/de/deutschland/passau/>

In addition to the record images on Matricula, the Passau Diocese Archives has developed an index that records every single registration entry from the registers. For information:

<https://www.bistum-passau.de/bistum-pfarreien/geschichte-archiv/genealogische-datenbank>

For direct access to the index: <http://gendb.bistum-passau.de/>

#### *Bavarian Catholic Church Records (cont.)*

- Regensburg <https://data.matricula-online.eu/en/deutschland/regensburg/>
- Würzburg <https://data.matricula-online.eu/de/deutschland/wuerzburg/>

The approximately 6,000 official books from around 550 parishes of the Diocese of Würzburg (*i.e.* parish registers, but also parish chronicles or brotherhood books) are being made available online in alphabetical order with a completion goal of the end of 2026. Since December 10, 2024, it is possible to view the parish registers from Aidhausen to Großwenkheim as well as Schweinfurt and Würzburg.

#### *Bavarian Lutheran Church Records*

The Regional Church Archive of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria, located in Nuremberg, holds Lutheran Church records for the region.

<https://www.archion.de/en/all-archives/bayern/landeskirchliches-archiv-der-evangelisch-lutherischen-kirche-in-bayern>

Since 2019 the Church Archive has been comprehensively recording, editing, and digitizing the church books and make them largely accessible via Archion. The implementation of the extensive project is scheduled until 2030. When the project was launched, about half of the Protestant church books in Bavaria were still stored on site in the respective parishes. Each parish can choose whether its church books shall be centrally stored in the Nuremberg archive or returned to the original parish after their digitization. A current overview of the complete inventory that is stored in the Regional Church Archive and/or has already been digitized can be downloaded as PDF-file from the website of the archive: [www.archiv-elkb.de/kirchenb%C3%BCher-0](http://www.archiv-elkb.de/kirchenb%C3%BCher-0)

#### *Catholic and Lutheran Church Records for the Palatinate*

The Catholic Diocese of Speyer has placed its church books online - not on the Catholic platform Matricula (free), but on the Lutheran platform Archion (paid).

<https://www.archion.de/en/all-archives/rheinland-pfalz/bistumsarchiv-speyer>

Only church books that are no longer subject to the ecclesiastic protection periods can be viewed. The protection periods are 120 years for baptisms and 100 years for marriages and deaths.

The upload of historic church records is largely completed; an extension of the inventory by occasional subsequent deliveries is still possible. More than 2,300 church books from over 250 parishes are online.

Parish registers from the Central Archive of the Evangelical Church of the Palatinate are available on Archion.

<https://www.archion.de/en/all-archives/rheinland-pfalz/zentralarchiv-der-evangelischen-kirche-der-pfalz>

The territory of the Protestant Church of Palatinate covers the historical area of Palatinate that belonged to Bavaria until 1945 and has been a part of Rhineland-Palatinate and the Saarland since 1946.

Only church books that are no longer subject to the ecclesiastic protection periods can be viewed. The protection periods are 90 years for baptisms, 70 years for marriages, and 30 years for burials.

#### *Jewish Resources*

FamilySearch, 2025. Bavaria (Bayern), German Empire Jewish Records.

[https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Bavaria\\_\(Bayern\),\\_German\\_Empire\\_Jewish\\_Records](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Bavaria_(Bayern),_German_Empire_Jewish_Records)

Alemannia Judaica: Working Group for the Research of the History of the Jews in Southern Germany and the Adjacent Region. <https://www.alemannia-judaica.de/>

Judith Stahl Center Würzburg. The regional contact for Jewish history in Lower Franconia.

<https://www.johanna-stahl-zentrum.de/aktuelles/index.html>

#### **Bavarian Civil Records**

Civil registration records are records of births, marriages, and deaths kept by the government. In Bavaria (Bayern), they were started 1 January 1876. These records are kept by the civil registrar (Standesbeamte) at the civil registry office (Standesamt). Since 2009, birth records have been public after 110 years, marriages after 80 years and deaths after 30 years. A direct relationship (direct descendants and direct ancestors) to the subject of the record sought will be required in cases where the required time period has not yet elapsed.

*Bavaria (Bayern), German Empire Civil Registration*

[https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Bavaria\\_\(Bayern\),\\_German\\_Empire\\_Civil\\_Registration](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Bavaria_(Bayern),_German_Empire_Civil_Registration)

## Bavaria Immigration & Emigration

In addition to the traditional ports of Bremen and Hamburg many Bavarian emigrants chose to embark in the French harbor of LeHavre, for which few emigration records are available.

*Ancestry's Bavaria Immigration & Emigration Page:*

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/places/europe/germany/bavaria/?category=40&pg=1&related=true&tkn=null>

*FamilySearch:*

Bavaria (Bayern) Emigration and Immigration Page

[https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Bavaria\\_\(Bayern\)\\_Emigration\\_and\\_Immigration](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Bavaria_(Bayern)_Emigration_and_Immigration)

Germany, Bavaria, Fürth, Emigration and City Directories, 1805-1913

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/search/collection/1976142>

Historical Museum Bremerhaven. German Emigrant Database.

<https://www.deutsche-auswanderer-datenbank.de/homepage>

*GermanRoots.com:* Online German Emigration Records, Lists and Indexes.

See *Bavaria and Rheinland-Pfalz, Palatinate* sections. <https://www.germanroots.com/emigration.html>

*Saginaw Genealogical Society:* 19th Century Emigrants from Central Franconia to North America

<https://www.sgsmi.org/19th-century-emigrants-list.html>

*Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society (membership required):*

Bremen Emigration Records, December 1833 to August 1836 mostly for emigrants from Mittelfranken, Bavaria

<https://www.magsgen.com/cpage.php?pt=37>

Immigrant Ships Transcribers Guild. Le Havre, France.

<https://www.immigrantships.net/departures/havre.html>

Gjenvick-Gjønvik Archives. Le Havre Passenger Lists 1887-1964. *NOTE: The Compagnie Générale Transatlantique passenger service carried merchandise, passengers, and mail between the United States and France.*

<https://www.ggarchives.com/OceanTravel/Passengers/Ports/LeHavre-PassengerLists.html>

## Bavarian State Archives

Amberg (for Upper Palatinate/Oberpfalz) <https://www.gda.bayern.de/archive/staatsarchiv-amberg/>

Augsburg (for Swabia/Schwaben) <https://www.gda.bayern.de/augsburg/>

Bamberg (for Upper Franconia/Oberfranken) <https://www.gda.bayern.de/bamberg/>

Coburg (for the city and kreis/county of Coburg, covers Saxony-Coburg) <https://www.gda.bayern.de/coburg>

Landshut (for Lower Bavaria/Niederbayern) <https://www.gda.bayern.de/landshut/>

Munich (for Upper Bavaria/Oberbayern) <https://www.gda.bayern.de/muenchen/>

Nuremberg (for Middle Franconia/Mittelfranken) <https://www.gda.bayern.de/nuernberg/>

Würzburg (for Lower Franconia/Unterfranken) <https://www.gda.bayern.de/wuerzburg/>

Primary Bavarian State Archive. <https://www.gda.bayern.de/die-staatlichen-archiv-bayerns>

## Bavarian Newspapers

The Bavarian State Library has an extensive newspaper collection. Bavarian newspapers in particular have been collected in large numbers since the beginnings in the 17th century. A large part of the historical newspaper collection has already been digitized and is now available via the newspaper portal digiPress. The digitized newspapers can be accessed individually via a list of titles. A special feature is the ability to sort by place of distribution. A calendar overview allows access based on dates, but also across titles. Most newspapers can also be searched in full text.

digiPress – The newspaper portal of the Bavarian State Library. <https://www.bavarikon.de/newspapers?lang=en>

German Digital Library. German Newspaper Portal.

<https://www.deutsche-digitale-bibliothek.de/newspaper?lang=en>

Brigham Young Library, 2021. Historic German Newspapers Online.

[https://eudocs.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Historic\\_German\\_Newspapers\\_Online](https://eudocs.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Historic_German_Newspapers_Online)

Genwiki, 2023. Newspapers in Bavaria. [https://wiki.genealogy.net/Kategorie:Zeitung\\_in\\_Bayern](https://wiki.genealogy.net/Kategorie:Zeitung_in_Bayern)

## Bavarian Census Records

"The first known census data were collected in Bavaria in 1825. In 1828 Bavaria joined with Württemberg in a customs union and census enumerations took place in 1830 and 1833. The kingdom joined the Zollverein on March 2, 1833 and a census was conducted there every three years from 1834 through 1864. Bavaria joined with all other German states in the census campaign on 1867. Under the German Empire, census enumerations took place in Bavaria in 1871, every five years from 1875 to 1910, and finally in 1916."

Every German state participated in all 10 Empire censuses from 1871 to 1916. Between 1816 and 1867, the primary purpose was the distribution of customs revenues, so those early censuses only included the count of individuals (no names). Later censuses began to include the name of head of household, with tick marks for all other household members, members by gender, status, occupation, religion.

A national census in Germany was conducted every five years from 1875 to 1910. After the World Wars, only a few full population censuses have been held, the last in 1987. This later evolved to include names of all persons with gender, age/birthdate, birthplace, religion, status or occupation, etc.

Most original census records are in city and town archives, with some in regional archives, and a few in state or national archives. Indexes of German census records are extremely rare. First contact the town where the person of interest is believed to have lived. If no results, then contact the county. Be prepared to pay a fee for searching and copying of census records.

Minert, Roger P., 2016. *German Census Records 1816 to 1916: The When, Where, and How of A Valuable Genealogical Resource*. <https://archive.org/details/germancensusreco0000mine/mode/2up>

Wikipedia, 2024. Census in Germany. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Census\\_in\\_Germany](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Census_in_Germany)

## Ortssippenbücher

Hall, Scott, 2019. Ortssippenbücher: Important Sources for German Genealogical Research.

<https://germanologyunlocked.com/ortssippenbuecher-important-sources-german-genealogical-research-guest-post-scott-holl/>

Ortssippenbücher, also known as Ortsfamilienbücher, Familienbücher, Dorfsippenbücher, or Sippenbücher, provide a printed abstraction of genealogical information from a village or group of villages comprising a parish or administrative unit. Their use of a standard format and common symbols, terminology, and abbreviations makes the entries easy to decipher, even if you do not know German. Families are listed alphabetically by surname, and some include surname and place-name indexes.

The Central Office for Personal and Family History, Institute for Genealogy in Frankfurt am Main maintains standards for the creation of Ortssippenbücher. If a society or individual writes an Ortssippenbuch in compliance with the standards of the organization, they will include it in their series of *Deutsche Ortssippenbücher*.

<https://wiki.genealogy.net/Kategorie:Online-Ortsfamilienbuch>

The German Association for Computer Genealogy maintains a webpage of online Ortssippenbücher at:

<http://www.online-ofb.de>

A complete (alphabetical) overview can be found at: <http://www.online-ofb.de/statistics.php>

The History & Genealogy Department at St. Louis County Library owns the largest collection of Ortssippenbücher in North America. The books cannot be checked out or requested through interlibrary loan, but the library staff will do lookups and copy up to 30 pages. Send requests to [genealogy@slcl.org](mailto:genealogy@slcl.org), with a limit of three requests per email.

More info at: <https://www.slcl.org/research-learn/genealogy/german-genealogy/ortssippenbuecher-familienbuecher>

Lists of Ortssippenbücher available in the Library can be downloaded as a PDFs from the following links:

By country, state, and district

<https://www.slcl.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/hg-OFBs-DEC-2024-by-country-state-district.pdf>

By village names A-Z

<https://www.slcl.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/hg-OFBs-DEC-2024-by-place-village-names.pdf>

## **Military Indexes and Records**

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 can be found:

Reschke, Horst A., 1990. *German Military Records as Genealogical Sources*, 13pp.  
(FS Library book 943 M2r; fiche6,001,596.)

*Ancestry.com* search for:

- German Casualties in the Franco-Prussian War, 1870-1871
- Germany, World War I Casualty Lists, 1914-1917
- Germany, World War II Military Killed in Action, 1939-1948
- Bavaria, Germany, World War I Personnel Rosters, 1914-1918

*FamilySearch*

Germany Military Records [https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Germany\\_Military\\_Records](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Germany_Military_Records)

*MyHeritage Wiki*

German Military Records [https://www.myheritage.com/wiki/German\\_military\\_records](https://www.myheritage.com/wiki/German_military_records)

GenealogyVoyage.com, 2024. German Military Records: Understanding Your Ancestors' Service.

<https://genealogyvoyage.com/cultural-ancestry/german/german-military-records-understanding-your-ancestors-service/>