

Back to the German Baptism Names

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[Note]: This document deals with the lament that Germans are not using recognized German names for the baptism of their children. The author follows his article with an alphabetical list of recognized German Baptism Names.

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[Translation Begins]

Back to the German Baptism Names

by Kuno Lambrecht

“What you have inherited from your fathers,
make use of it, in order to possess it!”

Today, when we read stories and legends from the time of our ancestors, we find that as far back as the twelfth century, the case is that all persons mentioned there German names; names that have become foreign, for the most part, in today's generation, which, however, stand unmatched for their pleasing sound, beauty and charm. In the historical legend Gottfried of Bouillon and the Heathen of the Holy Cross before Jerusalem, by Wilhelm Osterwald (1099), reference is made to names by which the heathen were called, for example: Gottfried, Baldwin (also Balduin), Tankred (=Dankrad), Bohemund, Reinold, Wilhelm, Hugo, Klothar, Robert, Adhemar, Gernand, Rüdiger, Romuald, Gerhard, Ubald, Rosmund, Otto Ridolf, Wido, Werner, Eberhard, Odward, Berthold, Reimund, Heinrich, Odalrich, and others. In another legend (King Aelfred the Great) by the same author, tells of an earlier time (819-901), where you will find following Germanic names: King Äthelbald, Äthelbrecht, Äthelred, Älfred, and Äthelswith, afterwards: Egbert, Äthelstan, Kinkmar, Bischof of Rheims, Ludwig, Balduin, Karl, Lothar, Ingwar, Rognar, Sigurd, Osbert, and more. Is there just one among them who had a Latin, Greek, or Hebrew name? Not a single one! That is how our fathers kept their names until the 14th century, so it still is with the monks in the old Benedictine monasteries; they do not allow themselves to be tempted to adopt the deterioration of names and hold on to all the valuable and beautiful good indigenous names, pure and unadulterated.

Towards the end of the 14th century, the number of German names in use gradually begins to decline and Latin, Greek, and, to some degree, also Hebrew begin to appear, “although they fit

neither the form or commendation for our language, nor the understandings for which they are recommended for us.” So, for example, as Pastor Dr. O. Kernstock reports, at the beginning of the 15th Century, of some 119 names from one of the oldest death registers of the Vorau Monastery, only 11 are of non-German origin, including, strange to say, six mentions of Judith”. —This name seems to have already penetrated Europe very early (already towards the end of the 9th century it shows up as the name of a "Romanesque" King's daughter). —In the 15th and 16th century, the number of foreign names increased particularly strongly, so much so that by 1500 barely half of the Germans had German names. Later (around 1550), after the Bible became more and more known among the people, a whole lot of old Jewish names came into use. Partly to blame for the wide-spread use of the foreign names, especially the biblical names, are the calendar makers of the 17th and 18th century. One only has to take a cursory look at our today's calendar, where one can find in the directories an heirloom of by-gone days, where not all are recommended biblical names. For example:

(January): Abel, Absolom, Seth, Methuselem, Simeon, Zacharias, Sara, Timotheus, Gideon; (February): Salomo, Susanna, Isabella; (March): Gabriel, Josef, Raphael, Salomo, Immanuel, Philipp(ine), among others. (NOTE*) The consequences of this passion for imitation is that the Abels, Benjamins, Solomons, Jonathans and Gabriels of German descent, have names still running around among the German people—through no fault of their own.

(NOTE*) “Most of these names are not even used,” some readers will object. But it is recommended to use them, otherwise, why are they listed in the calendar? Are we, maybe, required by our religion to preserve them? I mean the Protestants. The Catholics are less free in the choice of the baptismal name than we are, because the Catholic priests are constrained to only baptize with names of saints and venerable persons. Are there no saints who had German names? In the *Lexicon of Saints* by Dr. Stadler there are, among some 30,000 names, over two thousand saints and venerable personalities listed with German names, *so it would be a great mistake to believe that there would be no German holy names* which could be placed on most of our calendar days. The Catholics are also allowed to eradicate the foreign names from their treasure of names.

In the era of the Thirty Years War and the subsequent times, the corruption of our treasured names reached its peak through the inclusion of Italian, French, and Spanish names; and, around 1700, barely a fifth of the Germans carried indigenous names. Also, the following two centuries have changed nothing concerning these things; at most, even English and Slavic names were added and some remaining German names were transformed into the foreign forms, like Charles (NOTE**) for Karl, Henriette (**) for Heinrike, Harry and Henry (**) for Heinrich, and many others like that.

(NOTE**) There are many foreign names which few Germans are able to pronounce correctly. D.B..

This is the current condition of our baptismal names! And what are the reasons of this sad upside down situation? The answer to this question is given to us by Dr. Khull=Kholwald: “Indifference towards the domestic good (as it shows itself even in the displacement of our domestic German script with the Latin), an apelike imitation addiction, fashion folly and a lack

of understanding for the good and beautiful, that it is "not far away from here" (that is, if it stems from the homeland!)."

One or the other from the circle of readers will probably say that today's generation bears no blame on the repression of the indigenous name through the foreign languages and use of the foreign only, because the German ones are too little known. This question may remain unexamined here, only to say this much: If the present day generation is falling on this matter, would that promoting such things be gotten rid of by taking up the modest task of replacing the large and small foreign things with German. The indigenous German names are; first of all, much better sounding, more beautiful, and more charming than the foreign ones. Second of all, they can be explained more easily with less trouble, and their meaning can be better understood than the foreign ones, names which are often totally impossible to comprehend.

"So, you German parents, back to the German baptism names! Give your children German names!!

For those of you who have read this far, some are thinking, "That's all well and good. I would like to give my children German names. How should I go about becoming familiar with German names?" Since it is now the duty our calendar men to make good on the mischief that their predecessors contributed to, let them put into the hands of their readers a choice of German names so that they can change their given names, or if this should not be possible (? !), simply make a list of German names, in alphabetical order, with their meanings, their days of the week (*Namenstage*), and print this in another section of the calendar.

A List of German Baptism Names

by Kuno Lambrecht

Ada, Adela, Adelbert, Adalgisa, Adalgunde, Adelheid, Adelhilde, Adeline, Ademar, Adolf, Adolfa, Adolfine, Agate, Agnes, Alberich, Albert, Alberte, Alboin, Albrecht, Alfons, Alfred, Alma, Alois, Aloisia, Alwin, Amalberga, Amalia, Anselm, Anselma, Ansbert, Ansfried, Anton, Arnberl, Arnold, Arnolde, August, Auguste, Axel.

Baldefried, Baldemar, Balderich, Balduin, Barbara, Beate, Bernhard, Bernharde, Bernhelm, Bernolde, Beria, Berthold, Bertilie, Bertram, Bertrand, Berolde, Bodo, Brunhilde, Bruno, Burkhard.

Christian, Christine, Christoph.

Dagmar, Dagobert, Dankrad, Dankward, Degenhard, Dietbald, Dietberga, Diethard, Diethelm, Diethilde, Dietlinde, Dietrich, Dorothea.

Ebbo, Eberhard, Edelbert, Edelburg, Edelfriede, Edgar, Edmund, Eduard, Egmund, Egon, Ehrenfried, Ekkehard, Elfriede, Eleonore, Elisabeth, Emma, Engelbert, Engelberta, Erhard, Erich, Ernesta, Ernestine, Ernst, Erwin, Erwine, Eugen.

Felix, Ferdinand, Filiberta, Florentine, Frank, Franka, Franz, Franziska, Friedebert, Friedeburg, Friederike, Friedolin, Friedrich.

Gebhard, Gerald, Gerbald, Gerburg, Gerhard, Gerharde, Gerhilde, Germud, Gernot, Gerold, Gerolf, Gertraud, Gertrude, Gilda, Gildeberte, Gisela, Giselbert, Giselheid, Gisla, Gismund, Gottbert, Gottfried, Gotthard, Gotthold, Gottlieb, Gottliebe, Gottwin, Guda, Guido, Gundaker, Gundolf, Gunter, Gunthard, Gunthilde, Guntrade, Guntram, Gustav.

Hadmoda, Hadmuta, Hadwine, Hans, Hartmann, Hartwig, Hartwiga, Hartwin, Hartwine, Hedwig, Heinrich, Heinrike, Helga, Helma, Herbert, Herburg, Herfried, Herfriede, Herline, Hermann, Hermanfried, Hermine, Herta, Herward, Herwig, Hilda, Hildebert, Hildeberte, Hildeberga, Hildebrand, Hildefons, Hildegard, Hildegunde, Hildemar, Hilderich, Hildwin, Hilmar, Hubald, Hubert, Huberta, Hugo, Hulda, Humbert, Humberta.

Ida, Idaberga, Ilse, Imma, Immo, Ingeburg, Ingomar, Irma, Irmfried, Irmenfried, Irmengard, Irmentraut, Irmgard, Irmhilde, Irmtraut.

Jakob, Jakobine, Johann, Johanna, Johannes, Josef, Juliane, Julie, Justine.

Karl, Karla, Karoline, Katherine, Klodwig, Klothilde, Konrad, Konradin, Konradine, Konstatin, Kunibert, Kuniburg, Kunigunde, Kuno, Kunold.

Lambert, Lamberta, Lebrecht, Leobrecht, Leodegar, Leonid, Leonide, Leonhard, Leopold, Liebwin, Lilli, Lorenz, Lothar, Ludolf, Ludwig, Ludwine, Luise, Luitbrand, Luitgard, Luitpold, Lydia.

Magdalene, Margarete, Marie, Mathilde, Max, Mechthilde, Meinhard, Meinrad, Meinrich, Metilta, Meralde, Meta, Michel, Milreda, Minna, Moritz.

Norbert, Notburga.

Obmund, Oda, Odo, Olga, Orlrud, Oskar, Oswald, Oswalde, Oswin, Otbert, Otfried, Othilde, Otmar, Ottilie, Otto, Ottokar, Otwin.

Pauline, Philippine.

Rado, Rathold, Reimoda, Reimund, Reimute, Reinald, Reinalde, Reinbrecht, Reiner, Reinfried, Reinfriede, Reingard, Reinhard, Reinhilde, Reinhold, Reinolf, Richard, Richarda, Richtrud, Rigobert, Rigoberta, Roberta, Rodegang, Roderich, Roland, Rolande, Romarich, Rosamunde, Roswinde, Roswitha, Rudolf, Rudolfa, Ruthilde, Rupert, Ruperta.

Sebald, Selma, Siegbert, Siegfried, Sieghard, Sieglinde, Siegmar, Sophie, Stillfried.

Tankred, Teda, Thekla, Theobold, Theodelinde, Theoderich, Theofried.

Ulrich.

Valentine, Volkrad.

Walburg, Waldefried, Waldemar, Walderich, Walfried, Walfriede, Walrich, Walter, Waltraud, Waltrud, Wido, Wilfrich, Wilhelm, Wilhelma, Wilhelmine, Wilma, Wiltraud, Wiltrud, Winfriede, Wolfgang, Wolfram, Wolfriede.

[Translation End]