

Select Krückeberg Immigrants to the American Midwest

Steven T Krueckeberg - September, 2024

Introduction: Late 2019 was a time of transition. Newly retired, I was content with the past and optimistic for the future. However, the transition to the new year would prove to be anything but ordinary.

During the winter of 2019-2020, a novel and highly-contagious respiratory viral disease ([COVID-19](#)) began circulating in Wuhan, China. With astonishing speed, the virus ([SARS-CoV-2](#)) spread to nearly every corner of the globe. Nothing like this had been seen since the influenza pandemics of the late 1910s. Given the many unknowns — disease transmission, risk factors and susceptibility, optimal treatments — public health officials attempted to limit COVID's impact. Initial measures included prioritizing personal protective equipment for health care workers, and temporary "lockdowns" of businesses and schools. Additional guidelines (e.g. masking, social distancing) were promulgated, poorly conveyed, and largely ignored.

The crisis deepened during the winter of 2021-2022 when, despite the availability of safe and effective vaccines, large numbers of critically-ill and dying patients nearly stretched our health care system to its breaking point. Tragically, in March of 2022 the number of COVID-19 deaths in the United States surpassed one million.

Many who were infected, but survived, would go on to develop [Long COVID](#). Many more experienced [COVID fatigue](#), a condition marked by heightened anxiety, loneliness, boredom and despair. Adam Grant at the New York Times came up with an apt description of our collective distress — we were "[languishing](#)".

My method of coping was to start a new hobby. With guidance from experienced relatives (including two newly-discovered cousins) I became a genealogy hobbyist. In researching my surname, I identified twelve male Krückebergs immigrants of interest. These men — ten with families, two who were single — came from small villages in Germany. They arrived in the United States during the middle third of the 1800s, and eventually settled in what would become the great American Midwest.

From where in Germany did these people come from?

The home villages of these Krückebergs are well established. Vital records confirm their births, baptisms and marriages in Berenbusch, Fuhlen, Wehrbergen, Ockensen, Thüste and Bad Nenndorf. Today these villages are located in the adjacent districts (*Landkreise*) of Schaumburg and Hameln-Pyrmont in the state (*Land*) of Lower Saxony.

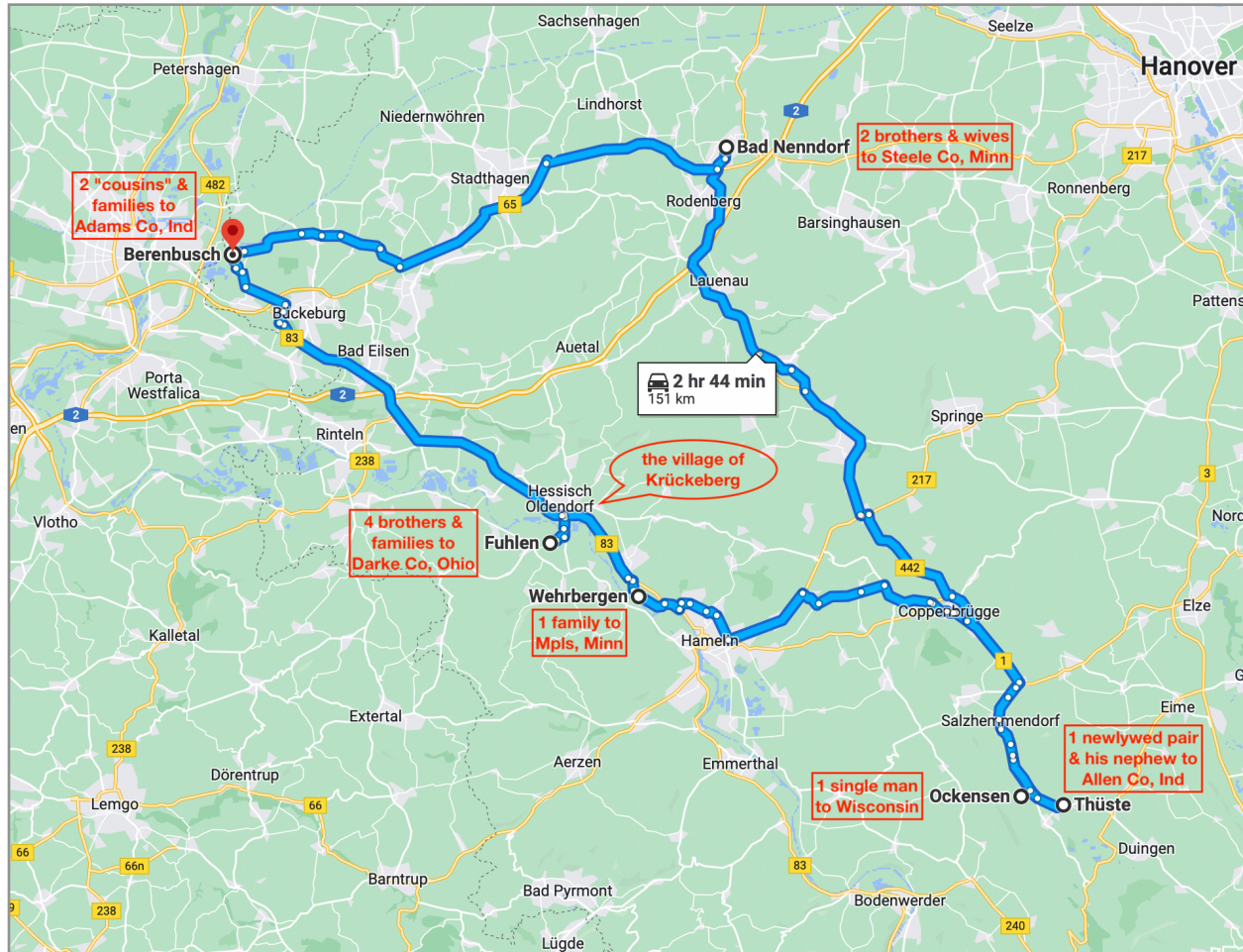
These six villages are arranged in what could be described as a "Krückeberg Triangle".

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Krückeberg Triangle

start at Berenbusch and proceed counter-clockwise



Assigning the correct home state (*Land*) for these men is not straightforward. Due to frequent wars and shifting political boundaries, our ancestors would have had to ask themselves "To which state or ruler (e.g. elector, prince, king, emperor) do I owe my allegiance?" And, in the aftermath of the Protestant Reformation, "What religion do I need to practice in order to stay out of trouble?"

To help answer these questions, I've summarized the political histories of the districts and states near the Krückeberg Triangle. These histories confirm that the people who emigrated from Fuhlen and Bad Nenndorf were "Hessens", and that the people who emigrated from Wehrbergen, Ockensen and Thüste were from the Kingdom of Hanover.

I hope that the people, events, dates and places presented here will facilitate the investigation and appreciation of your own German heritage.

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Persons	Born / Died	Marriage	Emigration / Immigration	From / To
Carl Friedrich* wife & 6 children	1807 ~1852	1834 Petzen, SL	1850 43 yo	Berenbusch, SL Adams Co, Ind
Johann H.* wife & 3 daughters "cousin" of Carl Fr.	1806 1879	1833 Petzen, SL	1849 43 yo	Berenbusch, SL Adams Co, Ind
Fried. Ludwig & 3 brothers, all with families	1793 1871	1823 Fuhlen, HeK	1852 59 yo	Fuhlen, HeK Darke Co, Ohio
Joh. Heinrich "Friedrich" wife & 7 children	~1803 ?	~1823	1846 ~43 yo	Wehrbergen, KHa Chicago to Mpls
"Conrad Henry" a single man	1835 1905	1867 Jefferson, Wis	1859 23 yo	Ockensen, KHa Illinois to Wis
"H. August" & his bride	1822 1890	1851 Thüste, KHa	1851 28 yo	Thüste, KHa Soest, Allen, Ind
"Christian Jr." a single man nephew of H. Aug.	1850 1938	1873 Allen, Ind	1868 17 yo	Thüste, PHaPr St Joe, Allen, Ind
Joh. Friedrich & wife	1831 1894	1853, HeK	1854 23 yo	Bad Nenndorf, HeK / Steele Co, Minn
Joh. Otto & wife brother to Joh. Fr.	1842 1894	1871 Rice, Minn	1866 (?) 23 yo	Bad Nenndorf, HeK / Steele Co, Minn

All these men can be found at [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org) — just click on a name and log into your account.

*[Carl Friedrich Krückeberg](#) (my 2nd great-grandfather) & [Johann Heinrich](#) were half-first cousins.

SL=Schaumburg-Lippe HeK= Hesse-Kassel Mpls=Minneapolis

KHa=Kingdom of Hanover PHaPr=Province of Hanover in Prussia

Today, Berenbusch & Bad Nenndorf are in the Schaumburg *Kreis* of Lower Saxony; and
Fuhlen, Wehrbergen, Ockensen & Thüste are in the Hameln-Pyrmont *Kreis* of Lower Saxony.

Most of these immigrants were farmers. The four brothers from Fuhlen emigrated over several years. Johann Heinrich "Friedrich" (came to Mpls) was a cabinet maker & carpenter. Two of his grandsons moved to Los Angeles & started a printing business - the *Krueckeberg Press*. Another grandson (a pharmacist) owned the *Krueckeberg Drug Store* in the Seward neighborhood of Mpls. When the drug store and its 2nd floor apartment were lost to urban renewal (1960s), the pharmacist & his family moved to Phoenix, Arizona. The two brothers from Bad Nenndorf (already married in Germany) registered their marriages in Crete, Illinois, and in Rice county, Minnesota, respectively.

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History of the German Lands (800-1815) - Wikipedia

800-1806 Holy Roman Empire (HRE) - was romanticized by Nazis as the *1st Reich*
1517 Martin Luther & the Protestant Reformation 1545 Counter Reformation
1542-1648 the European Wars of Religion & Great Powers Struggles
1555 the Augsburg Settlement did not sustain peace - Christianity was split into Catholic & Lutheran confessions but Calvinists, Anabaptists & others were still considered heretics
1648 Peace of Westphalia 1756-63 Seven Years' War & Treaty of Paris
1789-99 French Revolution 1803-1815 Napoleonic Wars & end of the HRE
1802-14 German Mediatisation 1815 Battle of Waterloo & Congress of Vienna

Schaumburg-Lippe (SL) - 1647 to 1946

1647-1807 a small county in the HRE - **my ancestors came from Berenbusch, SL**
1807-71 SL became a Principality, first in the Confederation of the Rhein and then in the German & North German Confederations - its capital city was **Bückeberg**
1871-1918 the Principality of SL was a state in the German Empire
1918-46 Principality of SL was renamed the Free State of Schaumburg-Lippe in Germany
in 1946, SL became the Schaumburg Kr. (*Kreis* or district) in Lower Saxony

Hesse-Kassel (HeK) - 1567 to 1946

1567 HeK created from northern half of the *Landgraviate Hesse* - its capital was Kassel
1567-1803 HeK became a state in the Holy Roman Empire, directly subject to the Emperor
1648 HK was awarded territory from Schaumburg, including **Fuhlen & Bad Nenndorf**
1803-07 Electorate of Hesse = Kurhessen 1807-14 occupied by French troops
1814-66 Electorate of Hesse = Kurhessen 1866-1918 Hesse-Nassau in Prussia
today, Bad Nenndorf is in the Schaumburg Kr. of Lower Saxony

Hessisch-Oldendorf (HeK) vs. Kingdom / Province of Hanover

1640-1932 **Hessisch-Oldendorf, Krückeberg & Fuhlen** belonged to Hesse-Kassel (HeK)
1692-1814 the Electorate of Hanover (officially the Electorate of Brunswick-Lüneburg)
1807-14 Electorate of Hanover merged into the Napoleonic Kingdom of Westphalia
1814-66 the Kingdom of Hanover included **Fuhlen, Wehrbergen, Ockensen & Thüste**
1866-1918 the Province of Hanover in the Kingdom of Prussia
today, these six villages are located in the Hameln-Pyrmont Kr. of Lower Saxony

Prussia, the German Confederations & the German Empire

1701-1918 was marked by an expanding Kingdom of Prussia (Berlin, in Brandenburg)
Prussia became the driving force of German unification
1815-48 & 1850-66 the existence of a German Confederation (*Deutscher Bund*)
1848-50 a prototypical German empire 1866-71 North German Confederation
1866 Prusso-Austrian War 1870 Franco-Prussian War
1871-1918 German Empire (*2nd Reich*) 1918-33 Weimar Republic 1933-45 (*3rd Reich*)

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Westphalia & North Rhein-Westphalia (NR-W)

1102-1803 Duchy of Westphalia in the Holy Roman Empire
Westphalia was held by the Archbishop & Electors of Cologne
1803-07 Westphalia was secularized & expanded by the French Emperor Napoleon
1807-13 the Kingdom of Westphalia
1815-1946 Province of Westphalia in Kingdom of Prussia - its capital was Münster
Westphalia merged with north Rhein (1946) & Lippe (1947) - Düsseldorf is capital of NR-W

Minden town & Minden-Lübbecke Kreis in NR-W

1648 Peace of Westphalia secularized Minden from a Prince-Bishopric to a Principality
1719-1807 Minden was capital of the Minden-Ravensberg territory in Kingdom of Prussia
1807 Napoleon created the Kingdom of Westphalia, a part of his French Empire
1813 Minden reverted back to the Kingdom of Prussia
1843 emigration was legalized; **my Bleeke ancestors came from Leteln, near Minden**
today, Minden is capital of the Minden-Lübbecke Kr. (*Kreis* or district) in NR-W

Detmold in NR-W

Detmold city was capital of the Principality of Lippe & the Free State of Lippe
Detmold city is now capital of Lippe Kr. in NR-W
Detmold is also the name of an "administrative region" in North Rhein-Westphalia
which includes the *Kreise* (districts) of Minden-Lübbecke, Herford, Lippe, Gütersloh,
Paderborn, Höxter, and the city of Bielefeld
the four other administrative regions in NR-W are Münster, Arnsberg, Düsseldorf & Cologne

Lippe & Lippe Kreis in NR-W

1528-1789 county of Lippe in the Holy Roman Empire
1789-1806 Principality of Lippe in the Holy Roman Empire
1815-1918 Principality of Lippe in the German Confederations & German Empire
1918-47 the Free State of Lippe in Germany
1947 was merged into the the new state of North Rhein-Westphalia
1973 creation of the Lippe Kr. (district) in NR-W - its capital is Detmold

Soest & Soest Kreis in NR-W

a 13th century Norwegian saga identified Soest as capital of Attila's Hunnic Empire
in medieval times, Soest was the largest town in Westphalia
1444-49 the "Soest Feud" - the city liberated itself from the Bishop of Cologne
1449-1609 Soest was an Imperial Hanseatic city in the Holy Roman Empire
1816 now a part of Prussia, Soest city was named capital of the Soest Kr.
today, the Soest Kr. (district) is in North Rhein-Westphalia

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Baden

1112-1535 Margraviate of Baden, HRE 1535-1771 Baden-Durlach & Baden-Baden, HRE
1771-1803 Margraviate of Baden in the HRE - its capital was Karlsruhe
1803-06 Electorate of Baden in the HRE
1806-1918 Grand Duchy of Baden in the German Confederations & German Empire
1918-1945 Republic of Baden in the Weimar Republic, later in Nazi Germany
1945-1952 occupied South Baden (France) & Württemberg-Baden (US)
1952 So Baden, Wür-Baden & Wür-Hohenzollern became the *Land* Baden-Württemberg

Württemberg & Baden-Württemberg

1495-1803 Duchy of Württemberg in HRE 1803-06 Electorate of Württemberg in HRE
1806-1918 Kingdom of Württemberg, which eventually became a part
of the Kingdom of Prussia & the German Empire
1918-1945 Free Peoples' State of Württemberg
1945-1952 occupied Württemberg-Baden (US) and Württemberg-Hohenzollern (France)
1952 final integration into the state (*Land*) of Baden-Württemberg - its capital is Stuttgart

Saarland

for centuries, Saarland was a part of contested territories along the Franco-German border
1792 armies of the French Revolution conquered the region (rich with coal)
1815 most of the region became part the Rhine Province in the Kingdom of Prussia
1920 the "Territory of the Saar Basin" was governed by France
1935 "Saar status referendum" - 90% of voters returned Saarland to Nazi Germany
1947 the occupied Saarland Protectorate (France)
1957 became a state (*Land*) in the Federal Republic of Germany - its capital is Saarbrücken

Imperial Territory of Alsace-Lorraine - 1871 to 1918

for more than 300 years, the political status of Alsace & Lorraine was heavily contested
between France and the various German states
1871 Alsace & the Moselle Department of Lorraine became part of the German Empire
annexed areas were formally designated the "Emperor's Land" or the "Imperial Territory"
1918-20 ceded back to France. 1940 occupied by Nazi Germany
post WW2 - the Allies returned the areas to France

Rheinland-Palatinate

the state (*Land*) of Rhineland-Palatinate was founded shortly after WW2
it was formed mainly from the southern parts of the Prussian Rhine Province (districts of
Koblenz & Trier), Rhenish Hesse, western part of Nassau & Bavarian Rhenish Palatinate

in the past, these areas have been contested by the Franks and Holy Roman Empire
these areas saw heavy fighting in WW1 & WW2