

**Finding Ancestors in Germany Using Family Registers and Church Registers**  
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This presentation describes one approach to genealogical research in Germany. In a few months of on-and-off effort, these methods allowed me to extend my German pedigree chart five generations farther into the past on some lines. The methods briefly described and illustrated in this Power-Point show are thoroughly detailed in the two research reports emailed to you.

Research in old German records is possible even if you don't understand German, but you will need some reading aids: alphabets, word lists, and a dictionary or internet translation site. With enough patience and persistence you will be able to read and understand the relevant records. If you are lucky, you might get another person to help you read.

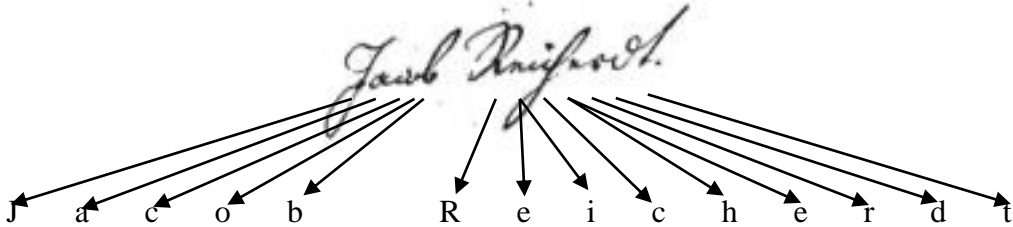
**ALPHABETS:** Old German alphabets are different from modern English alphabets, whether printed or cursive. Do an internet image search for "old German alphabet" without those quotes. You will find several items that appear slightly different. Bookmark several and/or save those images to your hard disk. Print them so you can compare to documents without flipping back and forth between two computer screens.

My immigrant ancestor's signature on his naturalization document can be transliterated by using the following chart of letters. Notice that this person's cursive doesn't perfectly imitate each letter's ideal form.

Overview of the letters [edit]

0123456789

Aa	Bb	Cc	Dd	Ee
Ff	Gg	Hh	Ii	Jj
Kk	Ll	Mm	Nn	Oo
Pp	Qq	Rr	Ss	Tt
Vv	Uu	Vv	Ww	Xx
Yy	Zz	Aa	Oo	Uu



WORD LISTS: Do an internet search for “genealogy word list German English” without the quotes. Bookmark and/or save as many lists as you think worthwhile if they are different. Use these lists to translate as much as you can of documents you find.

DICTIONARY: Use a German-English dictionary to translate your documents, or use a German-to-English translation site on the internet.

Realize that some handwriting will be easier to read because the author closely imitates the ideal form of each letter, but other writing can be unclear or even difficult to read. Patience will help you learn to read those hands, just as it can help you read sloppy writing in a modern English letter from a friend.

You can practice by looking at the document images in my research reports emailed to you, and then reading the caption of each image.

If you want a professional genealogical translator to read your documents, contact Katherine Schober at [www.sktranslations.com](http://www.sktranslations.com) or <https://germanologyunlocked.com> . She gave an impressive presentation at a genealogy conference in Denver, and I've been pleased with work she's done for me. Reading her book *Tips and Tricks of Deciphering German Handwriting* will make your German research project easier and more successful.