

The Koressel History

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An accounting of the Koressel's, more specifically relating to Franz (Frank) Koressel who was born in Rhenish Bavaria, Germany, and his descendants, as one who came from the old country to the United States of America in 1837.

Origins in Germany

In delving into the Koressel heritage from the old country civil and church records there is an array of information; in the civil records there is listed a Jakob Coressel north of Sulsbach in 1600, a Hans Peter Coressel from Hohenecken south west of Kaiserslautern in 1656, an Adam Choressel who lived in Siegelbach near Kaiserslautern 1662, a Hans Peter Choressel 1680, a Hans Peter Coressel 1685. Also located was a Heinr. Korezel a Bauern (farmer) from Rixheim. From the church records the oldest listing found is the baptism of Hans Choressel on January 9, 1596, the son of Linhard Choresel and Margarete Streihfuss from the state of Bayern, the county of Mittelfranken, the town of Winsheim. No parish name was listed for Hans but most of the other baptisms and marriages recorded were from Sankt Martin Katholisch Kirche. Saint Martin was built in the fourteenth century originally as a monastery church and it was later turned into a parish.



Map of Kaiserslautern, in
Rheinland-Palatinate, Germany
Source: Wikipedia.com

Evolution of the Surname

Through the microfiches provided by the Church of Jesus Christ of the Later-day Saints (Mormons) genealogy room, I was able to retrieve quite a few Catholic baptismal and marriage registries for Choressel going as far back as 1500's. It appears that the "Ch" was a common spelling until 1813 give or take a few years then the "H" was dropped and there was the going back and forth of the "K" spelling and the "C" spelling until the late 1830's then the name was predominantly spelled "Coressel" in Germany. In the Teutonic or Germanic vernacular, the "ch" had a hard sound in its pronunciation such as the "K" has, so it is understandable that the two spellings would have been interchangeable, the 'Ch' under the French influence and the 'K' under the German influence.

Geographic and Historical Context

In 1992 I contacted a Walter Hach from Hohenecken a suburb of Kaiserslautern about the location of Rheinbahern the place mentioned in the 1899 obituary of Franz Koressel as this is where Franz lived before coming to America.

According to Walter, Rheinbahern, is the old name from a part of Bayern, which is situated on the Rhein River. Today the name Rheinbayern is Pfalz, which is part of Rheinland-Pfalz or Bundesland von Deutschland.

The above-mentioned towns of Hohenecken and Kaiserslautern are just north east of the Alsace-Lorraine area. It is an area that was a cross roads between France and the country we know today as Germany. Kaiserslautern received its name from the favorite hunting retreat for the Holy Roman Emperor (Caesar) Frederick Barbarossa, Caesar in the Teutonic language is Kaiser, who ruled the Holy Roman Empire from 1155 until 1190 built his hunting retreat on the small river Lautern, thus the name Kaiserslautern. The castle that was located there was destroyed by the French in 1703.

The Alsace-Lorraine area was considered a very prosperous trade route and was afflicted with many wars within its' territory over the centuries. It is also believed to be here that the influence of the spelling of the Koressel name developed. In researching the church records and civil records the same family was recorded with two different spellings. In the civil records of a birth, if under the French influence, the last name was spelled Choressel. Then you go to the church record for this same person being baptized that was under the German influence and the last name is spelled Koressel. This was fairly consistent from the late 1700's to the early 1800's.

So, when Franz Koressel came from Rheinbahern 1837 the standard spelling for Koressel was with a "K". Those who came to America in the 1850's and later spelled their name with the "C" with the dropped "H", "Coressel" as was the case of those who settled in St. Michaels Ridge, in Defiance, Ohio near Toledo, Ohio. Those who live in Kaiserslautern and Hohenecken area today spell their name Coressel. It is with only one family, the descendants of a Henry (born December 14, 1817) and his wife Jacobina, who settled in Posey County, Indiana that spelled their name with the "C" without the "H", but adding an extra "R & L", which isn't consistent with that part of Germany from which they came.

I have not discovered a connection at this time of the Köessel in Bavaria. The "ö" in their spelling has a 'er' sound, thus 'Keressel or commonly spelled 'Koressel'. From what I understand under the French influence the umlaut 'O' (ö) doesn't exist in their language and thus spelling it was as it may have sounded in the German tongue.

Meaning of the Name

There are many theories on the meaning of the Koressel name. One is that the “Choress” part of the name would mean a singer or one who sings in a choir. Another option would be as mentioned above from the spelling of a Henry Korezel. It has been suggested from the older Teutonic dialect that Kuriz having a remote meaning as a harness with variants in spelling such as koriz; with the addition of “el” which properly should be “els” giving a spelling of kurizel or korizel, emphasizing that this would be diminutive or small in size from where the latter would result in the spelling of Koresel, Choressel, for a small armor maker or something delicate of shape to include a shoe flax being that of someone who makes small shoes. This of course is all speculative.

One side note that may be of interest and there is no direct connection that I could find to the name of Koressel is that of Koressios from the Byzantine Empire (330-1453 A.D.) from which it ruled under the Western Empire until it deteriorated due to continuing migration and expansion by the Germanic nations. Their end is usually dated in 476 A.D. but was still an influence on western Europe much later. The name Koressios is noted among those of the Byzantine Empire.

Pronunciation Traditions

The pronunciation of the name Koressel has its differences also. As I was growing up my mother specifically said that we are to pronounce our name as “Koresl” with emphasis on “Kores” and not “Kor eszel”, with the emphasis being on the “eszel”, as was common among some circles. Yet when asked by some of the old timers of this German community who would ask my name during an introduction to them they would say I didn’t pronounce my name properly, that it should be “kor eszel” or “ker eszel” which would make since as spelled by those in Bavaria with the umlauted O ‘ö’. So, who knows! I still introduce myself as Charlie ‘Koresl’.

Immigration to America

As was relayed to me by Justin Coressel of Defiance, Ohio is that Father James Koressel told him that his great-grandfather came to America as a stow-away. Both of Father Jim Koressel parents have the last name of Koressel with his father Leo from Hans Jurich family and Matilda from the Franz Koressel family. As family tradition has it that Franz & Hans Jurich were cousins but no one knew how close of cousins.

In my genealogy search I found that John George (alter ‘elder’ Hans Jurich, pronounced Hans Yack) Koressel, a cousin to Franz, who came over from Europe later than Franz Koressel and also settled on Koressel Road. The reason this John George had the distinction of having “elder” before his name ‘John George’ or “Hans Jurich”, was due to him having a son with his same

name known as the “junge (younger) Hans Jurich” in place of Senior and Junior as is the common reference used today for a son being named after his father. Elder Hans Jurich was married while in Boerrstadt Bavaria and had several children there before coming to America. This elder Hans Jurich came to this country with his wife and children. This would be then highly unlikely that elder Hans Jurich would have been the stow-away. There is no port of entry that could be found on Franz Koressel and with him marrying after he arrived in Evansville to Katherine Born, March 23, 1844, he could be a candidate for that stow away story being that John George (elder Hans Jurich) Koressel and Franz Koressel are both Fr. Jim Koressel great grandparents.

With Franz Koressel being the earliest I could find of any of the Koressel settlers to come to America, he could have been the one who influenced the other Koressel's to migrate in this area by writing back to the home land about the potential he found here.

Other Koressel Immigrants

There were several other Koressel's that came to America in the same era of the 1830's to 1850's;

Here are a number of other sir named Koressel, other than Franz Koressel, that migrated to America with most of them settling in southern Indiana, St. Philip/Evansville, Posey/Vanderburgh counties respectively;

- John George (alter Hans Jurich, pronounced ‘elder’ Hans Yack) Koressel, born January 12, 1820 Bayren Pfalz, Boerrstadt –baptized Jaunary 13, 1820, (married to Elizabeth Graf in Germany and Sophia Josephine Weber Neff in America). According to Andrew J. Koressel Sr. alter Hans Jurich and Franz are cousins, who settled at the present day 3600 Koressel road.
- Franz Xavier Koressel (married to a Catherine Folz, January 11, 1853) Lived in the St. Philip area but uncertain of the exact location.
- Henry Corressell (born December 14, 1817, married to Jacobina Aubert in St. Philip, June 5, 1866), who settled in Posey County, Indiana, close to the Ford Road and Highway 62 area.
- John Koressel (married to Barbara Muller), there is not much known of him, who as a farmer resided next to the Michael Weinzapfel farm in St. Philip.
- John B. Koressel (married to Clementine Schaefer in St. Philip, June 25, 1850. They settled on and owned 40 acres located on the north west corner of Upper Mt. Vernon Road and Koressel

Road. They are buried in Saint Philip the Apostle Catholic Church Cemetery, Posey County, Indiana.

- John Koressel (married to Christina Folz in St. Philip, May 14, 1861) I have nothing more on them.
- John Coressel (born January 9, 1810 and married to Ann Mary Donager) came to the United States in 1845, they settled in the St. Michaels Ridge outside of Defiance, Ohio near Toledo, Ohio.

These are the known Misses who came from Germany and married in The U.S. of A.:

- Catherine Koressel, born around 1800 that married a Wendell Marx and settled in the Saint Philip, Posey county area.
- Ann Marie Koressel who came to America with Wendell Wolf, she was born February 25, 1832 in Hohenecken, baptized at Saint Martin Roman Catholic Church Kaiserslautern and is first cousin to John George (alter Hans Jurich,) Koressel and Margaret Koressel-Zilch, they were married in St. Philip, January 1, 1852.
- Margaret Koressel (married to Martin Zilch in St. Philip, April 3, 1855). Margaret is the sister of John George (alter Hans Jurich,) Koressel, Born in Boerrstadt, Pfalz, Bayren, birth date unknown but was baptized April 5, 1823

And there were probably others who came from the old country that I have no information on.

Settlement in Indiana

Historically on this side of the Atlantic, March 27, 1812, Hugh McGary Jr. purchased about 441 acres and named it "McGary's Landing". In 1814, (the year that Franz Koressel was born) to attract more people, McGary renamed his village "Evansville" in honor of Colonel Robert Morgan Evans. December 11, 1816 Indiana became a state. Evansville was incorporated in 1817 and became a county seat on January 7, 1818. The county was named for Henry Vanderburgh, a deceased chief judge of the Indiana territorial supreme court. Evansville soon became a thriving commercial town with an extensive river trade, and the town began to expand outside of its original footprint.

The west side of Evansville was for many years cut off from the main part of the city by Pigeon Creek. There developed a wide swath of factories that made the creek an important industrial

corridor. The land comprising the former town of Lamasco was platted in 1837, (the year that Franz Koressel landed in America).

As relayed to me by my father, Andrew John Koressel Sr., his grandfather, Franz Koressel came to America through the port of New Orleans, La. 1837. He worked his way up to Evansville in the late 1830's and settled there. It is not known why he stopped at Evansville in his migration into America but it may be in part due to employment. I was told by my father that Franz worked as a laborer for the Wabash and Erie Canal, as it was being constructed at that time, and later for the Rail Road which replaced the Wabash and Erie Canal as a source of public transportation and for commerce.

According to the land deed the first 39.75 acres of Franz Koressel eventual 170 acres of acquisitions was in January 27, 1843 at what is now 3030 Koressel Rd. Perry Township, Vanderburgh County. According to the Abstract of Title the land purchased by Franz Koressel was originally deeded to Daniel Miller October 31, 1836 by the United States of America. Warranty Deed was issued by Daniel Miller to Franz Koressel January 27, 1843 consisting of 39.75 acres for \$ 100.00.



According to my uncles, Lawrence and Peter Koressel, Franz resided in Rheinbahern long enough to finish his schooling. With Franz's arrival in America in 1837 that would have put him at 24 years of age. The time from when he finished school, if comparable to our educational system of him being 16 to 18 years old, to his arrival to the United States would be a period of some six to eight years +/- of which there is no known accounting.

As stated in Frank Koressel 1899 obituary, Franz met Katherine (Kate) Born in Evansville because this is where she and her parents (Peter and Margarita Egler-Born) settled, along with Kate's siblings in Evansville, after their entry into the United States via Baltimore, Md. in 1836. They traveled down the Ohio River and it is said that Katherine had a brother who died on the journey to Evansville and is buried in Ohio (Cincinnati?).

Franz and Kate were married in March 23, 1844 though there is no official marriage license or church entry of this marriage that I could locate. By 1850, they had 3 children. In total, they had 11 children, and 89 grandchildren.

SCHEDULE I.—Free Inhabitants in <i>Perry Township</i> in the County of <i>Vanderburgh</i> State of <i>Indiana</i> enumerated by me, on the <i>9th</i> day of <i>Oct</i> 1850. <i>Abrian Youngs</i> Ass't Marshal									
17	5	5	<i>Franz Koressel</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>German</i>	<i>400</i>	<i>German</i>	
18			<i>Katharina</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>3</i>				
19			<i>Peter</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>2</i>				
20			<i>Katharina</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>				
21			<i>Margaret</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>				

1850 U.S. Census – Indiana – Vanderburgh County – Perry Township

Franz and Katharina are listed with children Peter, Catherine and Margaret. They are farmers.

Family Life and Homestead

As published by the Mt. Vernon Democrat newspaper as an obituary article of Katherine “Kate” Koressel in 1911 it stated that when she and Franz set up housekeeping on the present day Koressel Road “all was wilderness in this part of the state”. The land was cleared for farming and cattle raising by Franz Koressel. A two-room log home was constructed and as sketched by Tom Koressel (son of George Bernard (Ben) Koressel), from his recollection of the structure showed that it did not have a “dog trot” between the two rooms as was typical of many of the log homes built at that time. It had an upstairs, attic dormitory type bed room. The structure eventually had a stud frame and clap board sided kitchen added on the back side of the log home along with a cellar that was also added.

The one log room was used as a parlor and no one but guests were allowed in that one room, the other log room housed Frank and Kate’s bed along with the kitchen until the addition was put on the back of the log house and this one room was used as their daily living quarters. The original log home place was destroyed by fire reportedly due to an improperly installed stove flue in 1943 according to Gilbert Koressel who lived in his grandparents' home, George & Bernadina Folz-Koressel, which was across the road from the original Koressel home place. He would have been 16 years old at the time.

A framed summer kitchen was constructed in the late 1800’s, located a few yards south east of the original log home. This structured stood until the 1980’s when it eventually collapsed due to years of neglect. The original hand dug well that was located a few yards east of the original log home still exists. You can see how the stones were laid to where there are foot and hand holds to give a person access for climbing in and out of the well. Today it is capped by a concrete slab with a square access hole in the center. The story that was relayed to me is that this is the well that my great uncle Henry Koressel (son of Franz and Kate Koressel) kept his home brew chilled by lowering the bottles in a bucket just a few inches above the water line.

A barn was situated in a ravine north east of the log home where there is presently a dam and a small lake.

On the north end of the property line was a drive (a dirt buggy path) that went west (which today is the drive way for the 3030 Koressel Rd. residence) along the northern property line you went up a hill and down the ravine to the barn from Koressel Road. It was at the descent from the ravine towards the barn that Henry Koressel, who just started to learn how to drive those new ‘machines’ (automobiles). He wanted to slow the ever-increasing speed of the car that was going towards the barn yelling out “woa, woa” (as if the car would respond like a horse) but to no avail until the car ran into the barn, frustrated at not knowing how the breaking system worked.

Legacy

Franz Koressel’s early arrival and settlement likely influenced other family members to follow, possibly through letters describing opportunities in America.

Today, the Koressel name—though rare—carries a rich legacy shaped by migration, cultural exchange, and perseverance. From its origins in the contested regions of Europe to its establishment in the American Midwest, the family story reflects both historical forces and personal determination.

Descendants of Franz and Katharina Koressel

Franz Koressel (1814 - 1899) & Katharina Born (1825 - 1911)

Peter Koressel (1845 - 1912) & Theresa Kissel (1849 - 1930)

John George Koressel (1869 - 1926) & Magdalena Anna Schucker (1872 - 1944)

William Koressel (1872 - 1944) & Elizabeth Feulner (1881 - 1978)

Mary Koressel (1874 - 1964) & Frederick Joseph Muensterman (1874 - 1960)

Margaret Koressel (1877 - 1965) & Frank Henry Niemeier (1874 - 1958)

Henry B Koressel (1879 - 1941) & Elizabeth Kern (1873 - 1962)

Joseph Aloysius Koressel (1880 - 1956) & Julia Wolf (1884 - 1925)

Magdalena Koressel OSB (1882 - 1955)

Elisabeth Koressel OSB (1885 - 1918)

Frederick Joseph Koressel (1886 - 1959) & Emma Botzum (1900 - 1928)

Leonard Koressel (1889 - 1890)

Anton Julius Koressel (1892 - 1979) & Rose J Bassemier (1888 - 1979)

Catherine Koressel (1846 - 1869) & Phillip Spiegel (1832 - 1889)

Mary Lucia Spiegel (1865 - 1955) & Gustav H Reitz (1866 - 1935)

Francis Paul Spiegel (1867 - 1952) & Louise Ritter (1866 - 1934)

Margaret Koressel (1848 - 1917) & **Barthel Gauer** (1846 - 1904)

Elizabeth Gauer (1869 - 1958) & **Valentin Charles Kasz** (1857 - <1910)

Mary Gauer (1873 - 1957) & **Henry John Gossman** (1870 - 1951)

Paul John Gauer (1875 - 1969) & **Mary Elisabeth Kuebler** (1881 - 1967)

Theresa B Gauer (1878 - 1967) & **Elmer J Seliger** (1886 - 1959)

Frank Gauer (1880 - 1969) & **Lillie Regina Kuebler** (1885 - 1973)

George Barthel Gauer (1884 - 1956) & **Nora Marie Vollmer** (1891 - 1937)

Elizabeth Koressel (1850 - 1924) & **Johann Kercher** (1841 - 1887)

Frederick Kercher* (1869 - 1954) & **Elizabeth Barbara Nurrenbern** (1869 - 1897)

Frederick Kercher* (1869 - 1954) & **Anna Mary Lindenschmidt** (1861 - 1930)

John Kercher (1870 - 1922) & **Katherine Schili** (1871 - 1947)

Elisabeth A Kercher (1872 - 1872)

Mary Anna Kercher* (1874 - 1955) & **John Joseph Loeffler** (1873 - 1934)

Mary Anna Kercher* (1874 - 1955) & **Unknown Father**

Henry William Kercher (1876 - 1961) & **Anna Eva Klein** (1882 - 1949)

Catherine Kercher (1878 - 1957) & **Anton Frank Schili Jr.** (1874 - 1952)

Barthel Kercher (1881 - 1958) & **Mary Katherine Niemeier** (1883 - 1962)

Peter Kercher* (1883 - 1961) & **Ida Kathryn Rouff** (1886 - 1910)

Peter Kercher* (1883 - 1961) & **Alma Jennie Dunham** (1896 - 1975)

George Kercher (1886 - 1960) & **Amelia Elizabeth Happe** (1890 - 1970)

Joseph Kercher (1887 - 1891)

John Koressel (1853 - 1932) & **Anna Maria Schenk** (1852 - 1933)

Susan Koressel (1875 - 1888)

Katherine Koressel (1877 - 1962) & **Henry Steinkamp** (1870 - 1940)

Josephine Koressel (1878 - 1878)

Theresa Koressel (1878 - 1878)

George F Koressel (1879 - 1955) & **Bernadine Stallman** (1885 - 1963)

Barbary Koressel (1882 - 1883)

Anna (Sr. Mary Avitus) Koressel (1884 - 1972)

John Adam Koressel (1886 - 1967) & **Lena Ricker** (~1888 -)

Francis William Koressel (1887 - 1888)

Mary Margaret Koressel (1887 - 1888)

Caroline Catherine Koressel (1889 - 1985)

Henry William Koressel (1892 - 1954) & **Loretta F Herr** (1897 - 1984)

Veronica Elizabeth Koressel (1895 - 1939) & **Paul Bernard Fieth** (1891 - 1969)

Unknown Name Koressel

Mary Koressel (1855 - 1896) & **Frederick Behme** (1849 - 1896)

Henry Behme* (1875 - 1957) & **Millie A Gwaltney** (1877 - 1907)

Henry Behme* (1875 - 1957) & **Martha Taylor** (1881 - 1911)

Henry Behme* (1875 - 1957) & **Laura Turner / & Anna May Kinney** (1894 - 1976)

Catharine Behme (1877 - <1896)

	Frederick Behme Jr (1879 - 1946)
	Francis Behme (1882 -)
	Magdalena Behme (1883 - 1947)
	John Behme (1885 - 1942) & Ida M Hill (1874 - 1950)
	Philipp Behme (1888 - 1966) & Gertrude M Beck (1896 - 1970)
	Elizabeth Behme (1891 - 1970) & Edward Anthony Windhaus (1889 - 1970)
	Thomas Behme (1893 - 1896)
	George Koressel (1858 - 1942) & Bernhardina Folz (1861 - 1910)
	Magdalena Koressel* (1883 - 1968) & John Wendel Litzelman (1877 - 1940)
	Magdalena Koressel* (1883 - 1968) & George Sylvester Niemeier (1885 - 1972)
	Elizabeth Koressel (1885 - 1891)
	Mary B Koressel (1887 - 1954) & John Herman Goebel (1887 - 1983)
	Katherine Koressel (1889 - 1969) & Anton G Schenk (1888 - 1946)
	Anna M Koressel (1892 - 1987) & Henry Frank Wolf (1889 - 1951)
	Theresa Koressel (1894 - 1981) & John Bernard Schenk (1888 - 1961)
	Stephan Koressel (1896 - 1898)
	Matilda Katherine Koressel (1898 - 1990) & Leo Frank Koressel Sr (1896 - 1973)
	Henrietta Cecilia Koressel (1902 - 1978) & William Herman Elpers (1900 - 1988)
	Rose Bernadine Koressel (1905 - 1970) & Victor T Lamey (1901 - 1977)
	Henry Koressel (1860 - 1937) & Gertrude Reine (1863 - 1929)
	Katharina Koressel (1887 - 1887)
	Mary Anna Koressel (1889 - 1967) & Michael A Kissel (1882 - 1970)
	George Bernard Koressel (1890 - 1968) & Susana Koressel (1891 - 1981)
	Magdalena Helen Koressel (1863 - 1937) & Frederick Kirchhoff (1860 - 1941)
	Francisca Kirchhoff (1886 - 1968)
	Conrad Henry Kirchhoff (1888 - 1983)
	Catherine Magdalena Kirchhoff (1889 - 1990) & Henry J Wolf (1889 - 1952)
	Laurence Kirchhoff (1892 - 1896)
	George Adam Kirchhoff (1893 - 1978) & Clara Josephina Schutte (1894 - 1962)
	Henry Jacob Kirchhoff (1894 - 1992) & Theresa Eleanor Lutterbach (1901 - 1991)
	Mary Magdalena Kirchhoff (1897 - 1993) & Fred William Deken (1898 - 1962)
	Anna Cecilia Kirchhoff (1899 - 1991)
	Francis Joseph Kirchhoff* (1902 - 1995) & Olivia Catharine Schutte (1901 - 1965)
	Francis Joseph Kirchhoff* (1902 - 1995) & Agnes Mary Folz (1906 - 2007)
	Veronica Mary Kirchhoff (1904 - 1968)
	Bernard Anton Kirchhoff (1907 - 1959)
	William P Koressel (1866 - 1949) & Elizabeth Folz (1863 - 1951)
	George G Koressel (1888 - 1985) & Lillian Waite Schenk (1888 - 1973)
	Frank F Koressel (1890 - 1966)
	Regina Koressel (1891 - 1965) & Ernest Hardin

		Stephen Joseph Koressel (1892 - 1949)
		Olivia Gertrude Koressel (1893 - 1976) & Joseph Wolf (1887 - 1967)
		Frederick Koressel (1895 - 1979)
		Gustav Hubert Koressel (1896 - 1925) & Mary Cecelia Wolf (1898 - 1986)
		Rudolph John Koressel (1898 - 1983) & Lucille C Morris (1914 - 1979)
		Katherine Koressel (1900 - 1969) & Frank John Bettag (1883 - 1964)
		Phillip George Koressel (1902 - 1983) & Amelia Sophia Feldhaus (1904 - 1979)
		Peter P Koressel (1904 - 2001) & Esther Selma Meier (1919 - 1991)
		Lawrence Bernard Koressel (1907 - 1997) & Marie Anna Schenk (1918 - 2001)
		Andrew John Koressel Sr. (1909 - 2003) & Dorothy Louise Stratman (1921 - 2011)
		Friederick Koressel (1868 - 1868)
		* denotes more than one marriage

The End