

From Bavaria to Indiana: The Enduring Legacy of Martin and Catherine Barchet

*By Richard Barchet and Cheryl Herrmann
September 2026*

On a late autumn day in 1837, in the village of Fußgönheim (Fussgoenheim) in the Bavarian Palatinate, two lives were joined under circumstances both practical and deeply human.

Their story—marked by hardship, resilience, and quiet determination—would carry them across an ocean and into the fabric of early Midwestern America. Through preserved records, dates, and documents, the journey of Johann Martin Barchet and his wife Catherine Weiler unfolds as a testament to endurance, faith, and family.

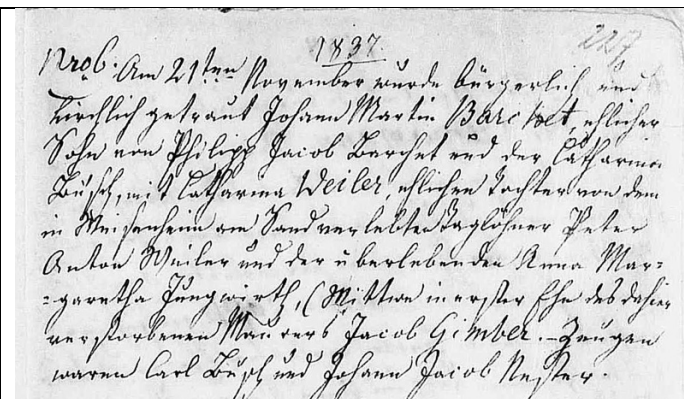
Per Wikipedia.org, Fußgönheim is a small municipality in the Rhein-Pfalz district of Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany. It is a member of the Verbandsgemeinde Maxdorf, together with Maxdorf and Birkenheide.

Situated in the Palatinate wine region near Ludwigshafen and Mannheim, it is primarily known for its rich local history, agricultural heritage, and unique cultural landmarks.



Location of Fußgönheim (Fussgoenheim),
now in the state of Rhineland-Palatinate,
in the country of Germany

On 21 November 1837, at age 27, Johann Martin Barchet, (Martin) son of Philipp Jacob Barchet and Catharina Maria Busch, married Catherine Weiler, age 30, daughter of Peter Anton Weiler and Anna Margaretha Jungwirth, in Fußgönheim, Pfalz, Bavaria, Germany.



Marriage Record of
Johann Martin Barchet and Catharina Weiler

Source: Kirchenbuch, 1726-1951
Authors: Evangelische Kirche Fußgönheim (BA, Ludwigshafen)
Publication: Salt Lake City, Utah :
Filmed through The Genealogical Society of Utah, 1958
Name: Catharina Weiler
Gender: Female
Marriage Date: 21 Nov 1837
Marriage Place: Fußgönheim, Bayern, Germany
Father: Peter Anton Weiler
Mother: Anna Margaretha Jungwirth
Spouse: Johann Martin Barchet
Spouse Father: Philipp Jacob
Spouse Mother: Catharina Maria Busch
FHL Film Number: 193850; Film # 004034825
Reference ID: v 2 p 227

Marriage Record of Johann Martin Barchet and Catharina Weiler	
German Transcription (Kurrent Script). 1837 Nro 6. Am 21ten November wurde bürgerlich und kirchlich getraut Johann Martin Barchet, ehelicher Sohn von Philipp Jacob Barchet und der Catharina Züsch, mit Catharina Weiler, ehelichen Tochter von dem in Meisenheim am Sand verstorbenen Tagelöhner Peter Anton Weiler und der überlebenden Anna Margaretha Jungwirth, (Wittwe in erster Ehe des dahier verstorbenen Marcus Jacob Gimber. – Zeugen waren Carl Züsch und Johann Jacob Nester.	English Translation 1837 No. 6. On November 21st, Johann Martin Barchet, legitimate son of Philipp Jacob Barchet and Catharina Züsch, was married civilly and religiously to Catharina Weiler, legitimate daughter of the day laborer Peter Anton Weiler (who passed away in Meisenheim am Sand) and the surviving Anna Margaretha Jungwirth (widow from her first marriage to Marcus Jacob Gimber, who passed away here). – Witnesses were Carl Züsch and Johann Jacob Nester.

At the time of their marriage, it is unlikely that Martin and Catharina imagined a future in the United States. Catherine was already with child, and securing a legitimate birth for their firstborn was of immediate importance. In early 19th-century German-speaking regions, like Bavaria and Prussia, marriage was tightly regulated both legally and socially. Couples often had to demonstrate financial stability before receiving permission to marry.

When pregnancy occurred beforehand, families and communities frequently urged a swift marriage to avoid the stigma of illegitimacy—especially among the lower classes. In some regions, a significant percentage of births were to poor unmarried mothers.

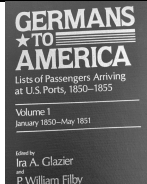
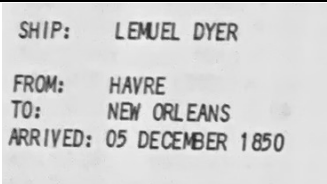
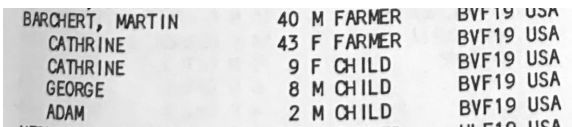
Records from Fußgönheim show how their family advanced. Shortly after their marriage, tragedy struck. Their first child, a son named Jacob, was born on 13 December 1837, but lived only four days, passing away on 17 December and was buried on 19 December. This sorrowful beginning marked their early married life, yet they persevered.

In the years that followed, their family grew. They welcomed additional children: Catherine (b. 1839), Georg (b. 1841), Gottfried (b. 1843), and twins Elizabeth and Adam (b. 1848).

As economic opportunities in America became widely known, news of available land and prosperity reached villages such as Ruchheim and Fußgönheim. Like many others, the Barchet family made the difficult decision to emigrate, leaving behind familiar surroundings and extended family.

According to *Germans to America* records, the Barchet family departed Bavaria and traveled to Le Havre, France, where they boarded the ship *Lemuel Dyer*.

They arrived in New Orleans on 5 December 1850, entering a vastly different world. The subtropical climate of Louisiana—with its heat, humidity, and disease risks—stood in stark contrast to Bavaria’s seasonal, continental climate.

			
		Entry in <i>Germans to America</i> Lists of Passengers Arriving at U.S. Ports, 1850-1855, Volume 1, January 1850-May 1851, Pages 380-	

LIST OF PASSENGERS ARRIVED FROM FOREIGN PORTS, In the Port of New-Orleans, during the Quarter, 185								
VESSEL'S NAME.	MASTER'S NAME.	WHERE FROM.	PASSENGER'S NAME.	AGE.	SEX.	OCCUPATION.	Country to which they belong.	Country to which
Ship Lemuel Dyer	Saggy	Havre	J. J. J. J.	29	m.	Farmer	France	U.S.
Cath. Barchet		9. S.	M. Barchet	40				
C. Barchet		40	G. Barchet	8				
			A. Barchet	2				
			C. Barchet	40				

List of Passengers Arrived From Foreign Ports
In the Port of New Orleans, on 5 December 1850, departing from Le Havre, France on Ship Lemuel Dyer Martin (40), George (8), Adam (2), Catherine (40) and Catherine (9)
Note: The family members were separated by gender and listed on three different pages in the manifest.

From New Orleans, the family made their way to Vanderburgh County, Indiana, where other Fußgönheim/Ruccheim emigrants had already begun to settle. The Claudius Dewig family had immigrated in 1840, and the Martin Ellspermann family immigrated in 1851. Among others that soon followed Martin and Catherine were Martin's younger brother Andreas Barchet and his wife Louisa, as well as the Ellspermann family. Also, the Gottfried Jourdan and Michael Magin (wife Susanna Weibel) families settled in Posey County, Indiana. Together, these families formed a growing German-American community rooted in shared heritage and mutual support.

Martin supported his family working as a farmer and teamster, a physically demanding occupation essential to transportation and trade. On Thursday, 5 June 1856, he achieved a significant milestone: he became a naturalized citizen of the United States, proudly taking the oath to support the Constitution. This formal declaration marked his full transition from Bavarian subject to American citizen.

Thursday June 5th 1856. Common Pleas of Vanderburgh County Now here comes Martin Barchet, a native of Germany, and makes application to become a citizen of the United States of America; and the Court being satisfied, that he has fully complied with the acts of Congress in such case made and provided, the said Martin Barchet is now here admitted to become a citizen of the United States; and now here takes the final oath to support the Constitution of the United States and otherwise demean himself as a good and peaceable citizen thereof, and that he now renounces and abjures forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign Prince, Potentate, State, and Sovereignty whatever, and more particularly to the King of Bavaria of whom he was heretofore a Subject. Thursday June 5th 1856, Court of Common Pleas of Vanderburgh County, Indiana	Now here comes Martin Barchet, a native of Germany, and makes application to become a Citizen of the United States of America; and the Court being satisfied, that he has fully complied with the acts of Congress in such case made and provided, the said Martin Barchet is now here admitted to become a Citizen of the United States; and now here takes the final oath to support the Constitution of the United States and otherwise demean himself as a good and peaceable Citizen thereof, and that he now renounces and abjures forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign Prince, Potentate, State, and Sovereignty whatever, and more particularly to the King of Bavaria of whom he was heretofore a Subject.
--	--

Just days earlier, an incident involving his household was reported in *The Evansville Daily Journal* (3 June 1856, Page 3). A man named Martin Brown caused a disturbance by beating on the Barchet fence. When Catherine attempted to intervene, she was pushed violently against the fence. Martin brought the complaint before Esq. Kempf, and Brown was fined \$3 and court costs. The account offers a rare glimpse into the daily challenges faced by immigrant families.

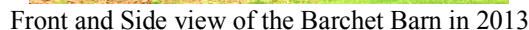
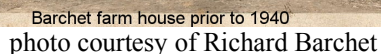
Warranty Deed
Late January 12, 1857
Filed November 3, 1857
Recorded in Deed Records
Vanderburgh County, Indiana
Volume 5 page 201
Consideration: \$1000.00

George Granger and Catherine
Granger, his wife,
---to---
Martin Baroet

The northeast quarter of the northeast quarter of section 10,
township 6 south, range 11 west, containing 40.13 acres.

[illegible]

Source: Griffing's Atlas of Vanderburgh County, Indiana, Published by D. J Lake & Co., 1880



By the 1860 U.S. Census, Martin and Catherine were recorded with sons *George* and *Adam*. Their daughter *Catherina* had married Peter Schaefer in January 1859 and relocated to Posey County. Children *Jacob*, *Gottfried* and *Elizabeth* had died in early childhood. Martin's occupation as a farmer is reflected in his real estate valued at \$1,200 and personal estate at \$400—evidence of growing stability and success.

Page No. 66 85

SCHEDULE 1—Free Inhabitants in German Township in the County of Vanderburgh State of Indiana enumerated by me, on the 21st day of June 1860. Martin C. Schuman Asst Marshal

Post Office Evansville

Dwelling-house numbered in the order of visitation.	Family numbered in the order of birth.	The name of every person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1860, was in this family.	Description.			Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each person, male and female, over 15 years of age.	Value of Estate Owned.		Place of Birth, Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	Married within the year.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.		
			Age.	Sex.	Color.		Value of Real Estate.	Value of Personal Estate.					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	498	Martin Barchet	49	M	X	Farmer	1200	400	Prussia				
2		Catherine "	53	F	✓				do				
3		George "	19	M	X	Farmer laborer			do				
4		Adam "	12	M	X				do				

1860 U.S. Census – Indiana – Vanderburgh County – German Township, Page 66

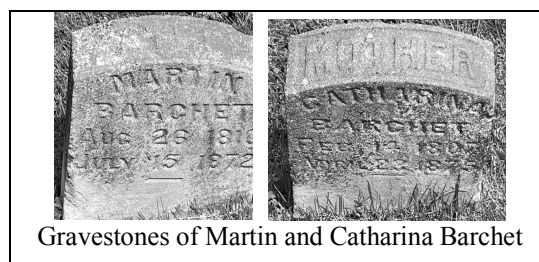
During the Civil War, Martin and Catherine may have experienced a complex mix of pride, fear, and uncertainty when their son George had to register in June 1863. George Barchet was registered in the *Records of the Provost Marshal General's Bureau (Civil War), Consolidated List, Class I, First District, Indiana (1863–1865)*. His entry describes him as age 22, a single farmer, born in Germany, with no prior military service.

The possibility of losing George—whether to battle, disease, or injury—could have threatened both Martin and Catherine's emotional world and their livelihood. For immigrant families especially, each child represented stability, labor and continuity in a new land.

Yet, alongside that fear, there was likely a quiet sense of duty and pride. By 1856, Martin had taken a solemn oath to become a citizen of the United States, renouncing allegiance to the King of Bavaria. That oath was not merely legal—it was deeply personal. George's registration could be seen as a continuation of that commitment: a sign that their family truly belonged to this new nation.

Fortunately, George married Margaret Deutsch in December 1867. The following year, in June 1868, Martin and Catherine sold their land to George and continued to reside on the homestead. Surrounded by children and grandchildren, they entered a season of life marked by family continuity. By 1872, they had welcomed nine grandchildren. Their son, Adam, married in 1873.

As Martin's health declined, he prepared for the future. On 8 April 1872, he wrote his will, distributing his estate among his wife and three surviving children. He passed away on 15 July 1872, at the age of 61. Catherine followed on 23 April 1875, at age 68. Both were laid to rest in Locust Hill Cemetery, Evansville, Indiana.



From a hurried marriage in the Kingdom of Bavaria to the establishment of a thriving farm in Indiana, Martin and Catherine Barchet's journey reflects the broader immigrant experience—marked by sacrifice, perseverance, and hope. Though their lives began with uncertainty and loss, they built something lasting: a family rooted in resilience and strengthened by faith.

From humble beginnings, to a solid family farm, Martin and Catherine were rich. In the end, their wealth was not measured in land or possessions, but in the generations that followed—children, grandchildren, and a legacy carried forward through time.

Three Generations in America

Johann Martin Barchet (1810 - 1872) & **Catherine Weiler** (1807 - 1875)

| **Jacob Barchet** (1837 - 1837)

| **Catherina Barchet** (1839 - 1899) & **Peter Schafer** (1827 - 1888)

| **Louisa Schafer** (1859 - 1914) & **John F Winternheimer** (1855 - 1928)

| **Katherine Schafer** (1863 - 1928) & **Henry Mitz** (1859 - 1945)

| **George Schafer** (1864 -)

| **Peter Schafer Jr.** (1866 - 1953) & **Katherine Geiss** (1860 - 1943)

| **Mary Anna Schafer** (1868 - 1908) & **William D Schauss** (1862 - 1944)

| **John Schafer** (1870 - 1947) & **Kathryn Huff** (1877 - 1967)

| **William Schafer** (~1874 -)

| **Jacob Schafer** (1877 - 1945) & **Ida Florella Martin** (1891 - 1959)

| **George Barchet** (1841 - 1926) & **Margaret Deutsch** (1848 - 1940)

| **Mary Margaret Barchet*** (1868 - 1955) & **William Schmitt** (1863 - 1902)

| **Mary Margaret Barchet*** (1868 - 1955) & **Herman Linke** (1864 - 1924)

| **Anna K Barchet** (1870 - 1940) & **Andrew Rueger** (1870 - 1942)

| **Adam Barchet** (1872 - 1965) & **Anna Mathilde Pfeiffer** (1878 - 1958)

| **Susana Barchet*** (1873 - 1944) & **Johann Peter Klauss** (1868 - 1906)

| **Susana Barchet*** (1873 - 1944) & **Peter C Winternheimer** (1874 - 1958)

| **Louisa Barchet** (1875 - 1962) & **Jacob Neu** (1878 - 1948)

| **William Barchet** (1877 - 1945) & **Sophia Maasberg** (1881 - 1974)

| **Albert A Barchet** (1881 - 1941) & **Margaret Kissinger** (1884 - 1970)

| **Rosa Barchet** (1887 - 1964) & **Jacob Edward Bosecker** (1882 - 1968)

| **Bertha Caroline Barchet** (1889 - 1913) & **Henry Andrew Niehaus** (1888 - 1967)

| **Gottfried Barchet** (1843 - 1845)

| **Elizabeth Barchet** (1848 - <1850)

| **Adam Barchet** (1848 - 1914) & **Louise Elizabeth Jaegler** (1854 - 1938)

| **Carrie L Barchet** (1876 - 1938) & **William S Barner** (1872 - 1954)

| **George Barchet** (1879 - 1946) & **Martha Gnas** (1882 - 1911)

| **Carl Samuel Barchet** (1881 - 1882)

| **Helen Laura Barchet** (1883 - 1887)

| **Fredericka Elizabeth Barchet** (1887 - 1908) & **Sylvester Courtley Reasor** (1878 -)

| **Lillian Elizabeth Barchet** (1890 - 1970) & **Louis Daniel Hudson** (1886 - 1958)

The End