



Dollhopf

600 Years in the Baking

The Unlimited Power of Taxation

Dollhopfs Under Feudalism

“An unlimited power to tax involves, necessarily, a power to destroy; because there is a limit beyond which no institution and no property can bear taxation.”¹

John Marshall
US Chief Justice, 1801 to 1835

John Marshall wrote this around the time when Johann Dollhopf, our 2nd great-grandfather, was born in 1830. Johann was plausibly the poorest of our ancestors, the nadir of Dollhopfs under feudalism. His generation bore the brunt of hundreds of years of unlimited feudal taxes – taxes that by the 1800s forced millions of Germans into poverty. He was crushed. He inherited a farm, yet died a pauper.² His son Johann (John) Dollhopf fled to America, driven by poverty; unable to “bear taxation.”

Charles Tylor, an English historian of that era, whose work we will revisit later, described it thus:

“The burden of taxes, imposed by the governments for the support of their monstrous standing-armies, drives the [Franconian] people by the thousands into the wilds of America, where they live with a freedom unknown in the Fatherland. No land-tax, no salt-monopoly,³ no tithes, no military conscription, no censorship of the press, no class legislation, pursue them there.”

Charles Tylor
A Historical Tour in Franconia in the Summer of 1852
Brighton, November 1852

Although our Dollhopf ancestors were peasants, they weren't always *poor*. From 1499 to 1649 they owned and operated the *Dorfmühle* (“village mill”) in Mistelbach, enjoying a higher standard of living than the average peasant farmer. But war, famine, disease, inheritance customs – and excessive taxation – caused a 200-year decline in the economic fortunes of our grandparents.

It wasn't necessarily what was being taxed or the amount of taxes that was so destructive. It was, as John Marshall intimated, the *unlimited power* to tax – the supposed “divine right” of the aristocracy to arbitrarily and capriciously impose their will on their feudal peasants.⁴ Because of this, there was limited social mobility; peasants were demonstratively kept in their place.

¹ John Marshall was the longest serving, and arguably most influential, of Chief Justices of the US Supreme Court. In the landmark case *Marbury vs. Madison*, he affirmed our long-cherished tradition of the separation of powers between the executive and judicial branches of our government.

² Six of Johann's nine brothers and sisters died as children from the effects of poverty. He couldn't marry – despite the fact that he and Margarethe Bär already had four children – because of government financial hurdles designed to discourage marriage. He eventually did marry; the process is described in blog #11: *Doorway*.

³ Salt was a precious commodity in the Middle Ages, and the nobility notoriously maintained a salt-monopoly over the peasants, controlling supply and prices.

⁴ Even Martin Luther affirmed the aristocracy's God-given right to rule.

The Larger Problem

In America today, we pay a graduated income tax of 10 to 37%, depending on our level of income. In some states we pay additional income taxes (sadly I'm in one of those states). But that's only the start. There are countless other taxes and government fees – *property* taxes on our homes, *sales* taxes on consumer goods and services; *user* taxes for toll roads, bridges, and tunnels; *transfer* taxes when we sell properties or securities; even *inheritance* taxes when we die.

Seems the government has us coming and going.

But if you think we have it bad, our Mistelbach ancestors had it worse.

It's not that they had more types of taxes, although they had many. It's that they began with so little to be taxed. If you are taxed 30% on an income of \$100,000, you have \$70,000 left. If you are taxed 30% on \$10,000, you have \$7,000 left, and you can't live on that. Arguably you could subsist, but barely. So it was with peasants, although they were taxed far more than 30%, sometimes 50% or more on their meager earnings.

Peasants had no say in the election of their public officials, those who would tax them. The "public officials" were the so-called margraves, burgraves,⁵ or imperial knights – the nobles who owned the land. In fact, there was nothing "public" about them. They were private individuals who were dictators. Couldn't be voted out of office.

Taxes were not only excessive, the nobles administered them capriciously and unfairly. Taxes could be changed on the spot. If the knight didn't like you, or your village, you paid more. If you didn't pay, or complained, the more vicious of the nobles plundered and torched your village. But that's another story.

And taxation in feudal Germany not only consisted of monetary and "in-kind" payments (a portion of one's crops and animal production); it also included forced labor. Up to 40 or more days per year had to be spent constructing or repairing the nobleman's buildings, farming his fields, or serving in his "army." (I use that term lightly; peasants with pitchforks are not exactly an army.) His crops came before your crops.

To add insult to injury, your local church also had a farm, and you had to farm that too – and provide for the pastor and his family.⁶

There are surviving accounts of the taxes that the Dollhopf's paid in several of their generations, but generalizing is admittedly difficult. The Middle Ages lasted for nearly a thousand years. That's a lot of dictators. Some were benevolent, some were downright nasty. Taxes went up; taxes went down. If there was a war, of which there were many and often, they went way up, because peasants ultimately paid for wars – during and after.

When Napoleon defeated the Prussians in 1806 (Mistelbach belonged to Prussia at the time) he imposed severe war reparation payments on the territories, fueling in part what would become the mass emigrant exodus of Germans.

⁵ "Burgrave" was a medieval term for the military governor or commander of a castle. The first burgraves to rule Mistelbach beginning in 1260 were the "commanders" of the famous Nürnberg Castle, which still stands today. The term burgrave was eventually replaced by the term margrave. A margrave (German: *Margraf*) was the term for a military commander assigned the defense of a Roman border province. The title eventually became hereditary, adopted by feudal noble families. The title was largely abolished when the Holy Roman Empire was dissolved in 1806.

⁶ In 1858, the year our 2nd great-grandfather died, the Mistelbach pastor had a family of 26 children. A lot of mouths to feed.

Render unto Caesar

To whom did our ancestors pay taxes?

Charlemagne was the first Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire (HRE), crowned in 800 CE.⁷ He ruled a territory that covered most of central and western Europe, an area today that includes Germany, northern Italy, parts of France (Burgundy) and the Czech Republic. The Holy Roman Empire survived, sort of, until the area was conquered by Napoleon in 1806, a significant event for peasants because it officially ended feudalism, although anti-feudalism laws were not enforced in Mistelbach until 1848, and some feudal taxes persisted until the 1920s.

Successive Holy Roman emperors actually had very limited power because the lands they ruled were so fragmented. German historians describe the Holy Roman Empire as *Flickenteppich* – a “patchwork carpet” of an estimated 1,500 large and small kingdoms, or “imperial estates.” Some of these feudal estates were only a few square miles in size, like Mistelbach. In fact, Franconia, the region that includes Mistelbach, was known as a *Kleinstateerei* – a territory of many “small estates,” all independently ruled.

These many estates were ruled by three types of aristocracy:

1. *Secular princes* – noblemen who ruled by virtue of heredity. Mistelbach was ruled at various times by margraves, burgraves, and knights. You were a noble because your parents were, thus you inherited their estates. There was a pecking order to the nobility; roughly, from highest rank to lowest in Germany: emperor, grand duke, duke, archduke, duke, landgrave, margrave, burgrave, count, and finally, knight.

Of the knights there was subset called *Freie Reichsritter* – “free imperial knights.” These knights were indeed the lowest in rank, save for one important difference: they did not report to any nobility above them; they “reported” directly to the emperor. (There was very little reporting; it was mostly in name only.) The Mistelbach knights fell into this category. The rest of the nobility paid little attention to these free knights because their “kingdoms,” such as Mistelbach, were so small – in 1632 Mistelbach consisted of only 35 peasant families.

2. *Clerical princes* – these “princes of the church” included bishops, archbishops, cardinals, Cathedral rectors, and abbots. They ruled just as secular princes would, over lands they controlled by virtue of their church authority or, inheritance. Until the Early Middle Ages, priests could marry, have children, and pass their church estates to their heirs (this ended with the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215).
3. *Town councils* – they ruled in a number of *Freie Reichsstadt*, or “free imperial cities.” These self-ruling town councils also reported directly to the emperor, not to a higher noble or cleric. Membership on a town council though was still mostly obtained by inheritance, although it was possible to purchase such a position.

While all of these authorities owed allegiance to the emperor, they were largely independent franchises. A peasant paid taxes to their local aristocrat, and depending on the aristocrat’s rank, the funds worked their way up to the top.

⁷ The formal title was the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation – or the First *Reich* (“Empire”), from 800 to 1806. The Second *Reich* was initiated by Otto von Bismarck in 1871, and lasted until Germany’s defeat in 1918. The Third *Reich* was Hitler’s Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945. (Some historians argue that the first *Reich* was the Bismarck period.) The Holy Roman Empire is not to be confused with the Roman Empire, which preceded it.

For most of the 600-year recorded history of the Dollhopfs, the majority paid taxes to the margrave in neighboring Bayreuth.⁸ In the time of the Roman Empire, before the Middle Ages, a *margrave* (German *margraf*) was the name or title given for a “military commander,” similar to the previously described burgrave (burggraves were castle commanders). Margraves were assigned to defend the border territories of the Roman Empire. At its largest, the Roman Empire extended into central Germany, and border defenses were necessary to guard the Empire against the Huns and other Germanic tribes. The position of margrave eventually became hereditary – a margrave’s son could inherit the title – and it thus evolved into a rank of nobility, above a count, but below a duke. (These relative rankings were loosely held, it really depended on who had the longest sword.)

For 242 years, from 1321 to 1563, a low-ranking family of free imperial knights occupied the castle in Mistelbach and controlled about a third of the land in the area. They were known, oddly enough, as the *von Mistelbachs*. As far as I can determine, none of our Dollhopf ancestors occupied land owned by the Mistelbachs. Although technically the free knights reported to no one except the emperor, the margrave in Bayreuth had supremacy, and in fact for many of those years the margrave owned the castle in Mistelbach. I assume that over time the Mistelbach knights, given their relative insignificance, lost power and prestige. When the line died out in 1563 their lands reverted to the margrave.

The last member of this ruling family was Christoph von Mistelbach, who died in 1563. A stone tablet and epitaph dedicated to Christoph is mounted on the wall of the Mistelbach church, immediately behind the pulpit. After Christoph died, his daughter sold the castle to Wolf Dietrich von Wiesenthau.⁹ It frequently changed hands until it was destroyed in 1632 during the Thirty Years War. It remained in ruins until 1763.

Appendix A (page 28) is a detailed list of the nobility of Bayreuth, the years they ruled, and the corresponding Dollhopfs who owed them taxes.

Key Differences

We pay taxes to a government of elected officials. We elect those who govern us. We get to choose. As was stated earlier, peasants paid taxes to a noble ruler who was not elected. They had no say in the matter. He was a ruler by virtue of his noble birth, his marriage, or his ability to conquer and overthrow the current ruler.

Our elected officials write, debate, vote on, and enact laws. We live by the rule of that law, and are given fair notice when those laws will go into effect. The nobleman on the other hand, whether secular or religious, *was* the law. He alone decided, and he could change his mind on the spur of the moment. If he thought you owed four chickens instead of three, you gave him the extra chicken. (This was an actual tax.) They also had the authority to dictate the terms of your marriage, your occupation, your property tenancy, and your inheritance. This is the “unlimited power” of which John Marshall wrote.



Epitaph to Christoph von Mistelbach, the last knight of the von Mistelbachs, who died in 1563. It is located on the wall of the village church behind the pulpit.

⁸ Bayreuth is the larger town adjoining Mistelbach, and for most of those 600 years it was the “seat” of the royal family. Not all Dollhopfs paid taxes to the margrave. Our 9th great grandfather Cuntz Dollhopf was granted a fief by the hospital in Bayreuth. The hospital was a church institution that indeed owned land. Cuntz paid the hospital.

⁹ Wiesenthau is a village not far from Mistelbach.

Furthermore, if we feel that we have been wronged by our government, we can sue, and an independent judiciary will make an impartial judgement (we hope). Peasants could not sue their ruler. They could rebel – by picking up their pitchforks and storming his castle – but this never ended well for the peasants.

Perhaps the biggest difference: we can own land, peasants could not. Peasants were not slaves; they were not owned by their lords, but they were “slaves” to the land, which was owned by the nobility. Throughout most of the Middle Ages, it is estimated that 85% to 90% of the European population were farmers, thus tied to the land. Outside of farming there was very little division and differentiation of labor, except in large cities.

For that reason, in rural peasant villages the practice of trades remained at primitive, subsistence levels. You could not specialize in a trade and expect to earn an income to support a family. You had to farm as well. A number of our Dollhopf ancestors were tailors, but what they made was for their own use and what they could barter or sell to their village neighbors. The thought of exporting their goods to another village, or to another territory, would have been fantastical. It was difficult to accumulate capital for the purpose of starting a “business. As a peasant you practiced a trade, you didn’t “run a business,” and there was little or no chance for upward mobility. In addition, the nobility had to approve of your trade. Existence was hand to mouth.

As mentioned above, not all rulers were secular princes; many were clerical princes – bishops, archbishops, cardinals, etc. – and they could be as ruthless as their secular counterparts. Their taxes approximated secular taxes, on top of which was added a mandatory tithe of 10% for the church. A *mandatory* tithe is a tax.¹⁰

The church owned land, even the local church, and you were expected to contribute a percentage of your time to farm the church land as well as your own. In many areas after the Reformation, including Mistelbach, the secular princes controlled the church, and they levied additional taxes in the guise of church tithes, similar to the second and third collections in the Catholic church of today – except of course, they were mandatory, and they did not directly support the pastor and the operation of the church, they lined the noble’s pockets.

And despite our romantic notions of Luther’s Reformation and its repercussions for personal freedom, peasants could not choose their religion. Before the Reformation there was no choice; everyone was Catholic in the Holy Roman Empire. *After* the Reformation there still was no choice – if you were a peasant. If the Catholic Church owned your land, you were Catholic. If the land was owned by secular nobility, they determined the religion, Catholic or Protestant. They picked the pastor, too, and this, as it turns out, was a major bone of contention. You of course could flee the village, but you gave up your land rights if you did. Beginning in the 1700s many fled to America.

Enough is Enough

Throughout the Middle Ages, peasants often rebelled, but with little result. The rebellions were local and unorganized. Peasants were armed with pitchforks and scythes; the nobles’ soldiers were armed with swords and battle axes, and after the 1300s, with guns. It was not much of a contest.

That being said, the peasants in Mistelbach were pretty quiet. This could have been due to the relative fairness of the nobility, or more likely, given the story that follows, it was due to the intimidating ruthlessness of the nobility.

There were several noted periods of peasant unrest in central Germany.

The first worthy of mention was the *Bundschuh Bewegung* or “Shoe Movement” from 1493 to 1517. A *bundschuh* was a type of leather shoe with laces worn by peasants, which distinguished them from the nobility, who wore

¹⁰ In what had to be extraordinarily awkward moments, the village priest was required to visit every house to collect the tithe. Tax collector and priest rolled into one. WWJD.

boots that did not have laces. They used this shoe as an emblem on their battle flags. These uprisings were mostly confined to the area of the upper Rhine River, about 200 miles west of Mistelbach.

The most important of the uprisings (not counting the French Revolution of course, which did affect Germany) was the *Deutscher Bauernkrieg* (the “German Peasant’s War”), from 1524 to 1526, which came immediately on the heels of Luther posting the 95 Theses. These far more wide-spread uprisings started in the western German area of Alsace, close to the area of the Shoe Movement, but then spread to central and eastern Germany. The uprisings were largely unsuccessful and lopsided – it is estimated that 100,000 to 300,000 hapless peasants were slaughtered in these rebellions.

The Peasant’s War reputedly ignited over snail shells. In the summer of 1524 the Countess of Lupfen (Lupfen is a village in southern Germany, west of Munich) ordered her peasants to stop tending their fields, and instead devote their time to collecting snail shells to be used as spools for her thread. The peasants, facing starvation if they ignored their crops, revolted. Although some historians question the authenticity of this story, it had great propaganda value.



The extent and dates of the Peasant War uprisings. Mistelbach is located next to Bayreuth, which is circled. Note the proximity to the Hussite Insurgencies to the immediate east. Mistelbach suffered greatly from incursions by the Hussites in the 1430s.

The uprisings were in part fueled by Martin Luther’s radical reformation ideas. The peasants found a new voice in Luther, and were emboldened by his insurrectional language, as in “we are equal before God.” The invention in 1439 of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg in Mainz, about 180 miles due west of Mistelbach, helped spread the word among the peasantry, at least those who could read.

On March 6, 1525, representatives from peasant groups in Upper Swabia met to deliberate their demands. (Upper Swabia is the region around Augsburg, also on the map above, about 150 miles due south of Bayreuth.) They formalized these demands in the document *Die Grundelichen und rechten haupt Artickl* (“the basic and right articles”), known briefly as *The Twelve Articles*. This pamphlet of their twelve demands was indeed printed on a printing press and widely distributed. A picture of the first page of that pamphlet, along with an English translation, appears in Appendix B (page 33).

In brief, here is what the peasants wanted – some of these twelve demands might surprise you:

#1 The right to hire and fire their own pastors. And they wanted the pastors to preach the Gospel without talk of human laws or decrees. [The nobleman who appointed the pastor probably used him as mouthpiece to promote his causes.]

#2 Preachers should be paid from the tithe – the ten percent of their crops given to the church, and not any more. The nobility had devised other *additional* taxes that were levied on things such as livestock. As will be described below, peasants were expected to “donate” (not really a donation, since it was mandatory) a percentage of their animal “production” – eggs, cheese, milk, meat, etc.

#3 Freedom from serfdom “given that Christ redeemed *all* of his with his precious bloodshed,” not just the chosen few aristocrats. This reflects Luther’s writings. The Twelve Articles are often cited as the first declaration of basic human civil liberties, predating the French Revolution and the American Declaration of Impendence.

#4 The right to hunt and fish. They were not allowed to use the forests or streams without paying onerous user taxes, if they were allowed to use them at all.

#5 The right to gather timber and firewood. Many noble rulers had simply appropriated the forests, and did not allow peasants to gather wood without paying a tax. Wood was essential for cooking, heating, and lighting.



16th century woodcut of *The Peasant's War*. Note the farming implements used by the peasants as weapons – a flail, pitchfork, scythe...

#6 They did not want to work excessive hours for the nobility. Peasants were expected to work the farms of the nobles and the church before they worked their own. In the Mistelbach area they were expected to work a minimum of *40 days a year* on the noble's farm, and various other civic tasks like fixing castles, church buildings, roads, and bridges. This was essentially slave labor, too much for the peasants.

#7 The peasants were willing to pay the *taxes to which they agreed*, but they did not want to be forced to pay additional taxes at the whim of the noble.

#8 The peasants argued that much of their land was not worth the rent demanded by the nobles, and that there should be independent appraisals of that land and the taxes adjusted accordingly.

#9 Freedom from arbitrary fines and punishments at the sole discretion of the noble, and that they should be judged without partiality. The nobles liked some people, and others not.

#10 The return of village meadows and fields that the nobles had illegally appropriated. (Meadows were used for livestock grazing.)

#11 Elimination of the *todfall*, or "death tax." In Mistelbach, for example, upon the death of the peasant, his family had to surrender a cow to the noble. The peasants believed that widows and orphans were being robbed.

#12 In summation, the peasants agree that if the above demands were not in accordance with the word of God and scripture, then they will drop them.¹¹

These seem to be reasonable demands to us, but they were anathema to the nobility. How dare those peasants!

The full English translation is in Appendix B.

The Bloodhound of Bayreuth

There is no evidence that our Mistelbach grandparents directly took part in an uprising. This was probably due to the ruthlessness of their ruler at the time, Margrave Casimir of Brandenburg-Bayreuth, who reigned from 1515 to 1527. In those years our 13th great-grandfather, Cuntz Übellein Tolhopf, operated the village mill, which he had inherited from his father, Dietrich Übellein Tolhopf.

Casimir led a turbulent life. He and his brother Georg the Pious, Margrave of Ansbach, overthrew their father, Friederich I, blaming him for lavish spending and imbecility(!). Casimir had him locked up for 12 years in the Plassenburg Castle in Kulmbach, about 18 miles north of Mistelbach.

Casimir and his brother (they ruled adjoining territories resulting from the division of their overthrown father's kingdom) put down a number of peasant riots in villages throughout their territories.

The similarities to today's Black Lives Matter protests in "villages" throughout the US are not lost on me.

The brothers handled the protests differently. Georg the Pious lived up to his name and mostly forgave the peasants in his villages. Georg supported the Reformation inclinations of his peasants; Casimir did not.

Casimir earned the nickname "Bloodhound" because of his thirst for punishment. He couldn't find enough peasants who would fight for him, so he hired mercenaries from nearby Bohemia. He was fond of plundering,

¹¹ Luther was appalled that the peasants used the "word of God" to defend their position.

looting, and executing his rebellious peasants; no doubt it was in this way that he rewarded his hired guns – let them have the run of village and its booty.

From first-hand accounts we learn that in Kulmbach, site of the Plassenburg Castle and from where he ruled Mistelbach, Casimir slaughtered several thousand peasants – a number greater than the village’s population. (It is likely that the peasants were joined by peasants from other villages.) In Ostheim, 100 miles from Mistelbach, he slew 4,000. In Feuchtwangen, he “executed” 300. In Gothenburg and Schwienfurt, “the market squares were stained red by the blood of beheaded peasants.” In next-door Bayreuth, he publicly beheaded 14 men.

His punishment could be especially cruel and unusual, as if beheading wasn’t cruel enough. In the village of Kitzingen (80 miles from Mistelbach), he told the peasants that their lives would be spared if they surrendered. When they did, and in order to set an example for other villages, he chopped off their right-hand index and middle fingers (the fingers used to give oaths, as in “raise your right hand and repeat after me”), then he *blinded* them and exiled them from their village. The Church books recorded that “72 Kitzingen villagers were left to roam the countryside as blind fiddlers and singers.”

The captain of his mercenary army, a man by the name of Augustin, overheard other peasants say that they “never wanted to see the margrave again.” So, he stabbed out their eyes. Another 56 villagers became blind beggars.

I am certain that word of the public beheadings in Bayreuth reached our relatives in Mistelbach quickly – the town square in Bayreuth is only four miles from the Dollhopf house. If I were my great-grandfather Cuntz, hearing of these atrocities, I would think twice about appearing in the Mistelbach square with my “Down with the margrave!” sign. I can understand why the Mistelbachers were quiet.

Casimir’s acts were so cruel and unusual that his brother Georg stepped in to stop him, reminding him that the “princes need their peasants.” Don’t kill those who pay you taxes!

Martin Luther

Although his Reformation helped trigger the cause, Martin Luther curiously, and with stated viciousness, sided with the nobility.

The peasants thought Luther was on their side. In his tract *On Christian Freedom*, written in 1520, five years before the Twelve Articles that quoted him, Luther wrote,

“A Christian man is the most free_lord of all, and subject to none; a Christian man is the most dutiful servant of all, and subject to everyone.”

The peasants based their demands on the “divine justice” Luther espoused. Luther initially took the side of the peasants. In his *Admonition for Peace* (1525), he criticized the aristocracy for being “arrogant.”



Casimir, Margrave of Bayreuth, 1515-1527. Known as the “Bloodhound” because of his ruthless slaughtering and maiming of peasants.

But when Luther learned that peasants had assassinated a count from Weinsberg, he did a dramatic about-face, much to the delight of the Catholic nobility. Luther encouraged the nobles to “swiftly and violently eliminate the rebelling peasants.”



Martin Luther was against the peasant uprisings, calling them murderous hordes.

In his all too obviously named treatise *Against the Robbing Murderous Hordes of Peasants*, he wrote:

“The peasants have taken upon themselves the burden of three terrible sins against God and man; by this they have merited death in body and soul. They have sworn to be true and faithful, submissive and obedient, to their rulers...now deliberately and violently breaking this oath. They are starting a rebellion, and are violently robbing and plundering monasteries and castles which are not theirs. They have doubly deserved death in body and soul as highwaymen and murderers. They cloak this terrible and horrible sin with the gospel...thus they become the worst blasphemers of God and slanderers of his holy name.”

As justification, Luther quoted Paul in Romans 13:1, invoking the divine right of kings:

“Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.”

Luther went on...

"[The peasants] must be sliced, choked, stabbed, secretly and publicly, by those who can, like one must kill a rabid dog.”

Good Lord. So much for divine justice. Proud to be Lutheran.

Albrecht II, Son of Casimir

And good riddance to Casimir, who died in 1527. His son Albrecht II Alcibiades (1522–1557) was next in line for the crown, but was only five years old when his father died. Thankfully Casimir’s brother Georg the Pious was appointed guardian – thankfully because Georg was a supporter of the Reformation. While Mistelbach was under his temporary guardianship, he joined the Reformation in 1528. Martin Luther gave his personal blessing for the conversion.

Albrecht assumed the throne when he reached the majority age of 19. Unfortunately, he was no better than his father. He too was fond of plundering his own villages. And because of his penchant for raiding villages that weren’t his, he sparked the *Second Margraves War*, pitting his realm against others, including the imperial city of Nürnberg. Warring factions from Nürnberg attacked Mistelbach in 1553 and destroyed the Mistelbach castle.

According to the Mistelbach pastor, from 1553 to 1556 “Mistelbach suffered from severe afflictions of hunger, misery, and the worst cruelties” under Albrecht.

In the midst of these miseries and cruelties, our 12th great-grandfather Cuntz Dollhopf was the village miller and *Gotteshaus Master* (“God’s house master”) – the warden and manager of the St. Bartholomew church. It was during this time that Protestant churches were required to officially begin recording marriages (baptism and death

records soon followed). But the Mistelbach parish records are spotty and incomplete. No wonder. I am certain that our great-grandfather had his hands full trying to maintain some semblance of order in the face of devastation and chaos. Because of his social standing as mill owner and church warden, he undoubtedly bore the difficult mantle of leadership in that terrible time.

After the failure of the peasant revolt, according to the Mistelbach Chronicle, the “plight of the Mistelbach peasants worsened, and the darkest period of peasantry began, not ending until after 1848.”

Even Luther had abandoned them.

The Dollhopf Properties

In 1398, Johann III of Nürnberg (c. 1369–1420), became the margrave of Bayreuth, inheriting the throne from his father. Under his rule, highly detailed property registers were created in 1398 and 1420. These registers, known as *Lehenbuch A*,¹² drafted in 1398, and *Lehenbuch B*, drafted in 1420/1422, listed the properties *enfeoffed* (“rented”) to the peasants, along with the peasants’ names. It is in *Lehenbuch B*, appended at some later point in the 1430s, that we first learn that a peasant named Hans Tolhopff was granted a farm in Mistelbach.

There was yet another register known as *Lehenbuch C*, which was recorded in 1499 during the reign of Friederich III (the father of Casimir the Bloodhound and George the Pious) – the year that Hans Tolhopff’s son, Dietrich Übelein Dollhopf, acquired the village mill in Mistelbach.

These registers are a valuable source of information, not only because of their detailed lists of property owners, but because they also list the type and amount of taxes that were owed by the peasants – a first-hand account of what our Dollhopf ancestors were required to pay.

In order to appreciate how the Dollhopf taxes were calculated, it is necessary to understand what they “owned” and produced. (Again, they really didn’t own anything, they rented.)

The most common type of peasant land holding was called a *Zinshof*, an “interest farm.” An interest farm was land held by a peasant on condition of payments, service, and loyalty to the feudal lord (the “land” lord), in our case the Margrave of Bayreuth.¹³ This condition, or contract, was called a *fief*, from which the term *fiefdom* is derived. The fief that the landlord granted included the right of inheritance – the house and farm could be passed down from one generation to the next, or sold, with the consent of the landlord, which was almost always granted.

The *Zinshof*, or interest farm, was further divided into three types depending on its size:

Ein Ganzer Hof, (“one whole farm”) – 30-60 acres of fields and 5-10 tagwerk meadows.¹⁴
Ein Gut, (“one good”) –15-30 acres of fields and a few tagwerk of meadows.



Albrecht II Alcibiades (1522–1557), who plundered Mistelbach in the 1550s. At that time our 12th great grandfather Cuntz Dollhopf owned the village mill and served Mistelbach as Gotteshaus Master – the warden and manager of St. Bartholomew church.

¹² *Lehen* = “land;” *buch* = “book.”

¹³ Now you know the origin of the term “landlord.”

¹⁴ *Tagwerk* = “day’s work” – the amount of land that can be plowed by one man in a day.

Ein Selde or *Sölde* (“one selde”¹⁵) – 1-2 acres of fields and 1–2 tagwerk of meadows.

Taxes were based on the size of the farm, so in a sense the taxes were graduated, although very few peasants in Mistelbach owned *Ganzer Hof*, or whole farms. To my knowledge, no Dollhopf ever owned a whole farm. With the exception of the millers, our ancestors were described in the church books as *seldenbauer*. A *seldenbauer* was a “farmer owning a selde,” or as it is most often translated, “peasant farmer” owning just a few acres.

In the Middle Ages, because of primitive farming methods, it is estimated that seven to nine acres of farmland were required to feed the average family of five¹⁶ – and that would be at a subsistence level, no surplus of crops to sell. If you did not own seven to nine acres, as our ancestors did not, then you had to supplement your farming with a trade – in the case of the Dollhopfs, with milling or tailoring. By the late 1700s the Dollhopfs were no longer tailors, only farmers, forcing them into even greater poverty. Their farms were a bit larger, but not large enough.

From the *Lehenbuch* we also learn of their crops and animals. In the fields they grew millet, oats, barley, winter wheat, peas, lentils, beans, buckwheat, flax, hemp, beets, cabbage and poppy. In the gardens they grew aromatic and medicinal herbs (like dill and mustard), vegetables, and sweet wood, a type of licorice.¹⁷ Sweet wood roots would be chopped up and boiled, yielding a “tea.” Because this licorice tea contained alkaline salts, it dissolved phlegm, thereby easing coughs, congestion, and sore throats – common ailments in houses with little heat.

In the 1400s there were not many cattle in Mistelbach, although sheep, goats, and pigs were common. Fish streams and ponds were also common, but almost exclusively owned and controlled by the nobility. By the 1600s more cattle were to be found. When 2nd great-grandfather Johann Dollhopf died in 1858, he owned two oxen (highly uncommon until the late 1700s) two cows, one bull, one goat, and two hogs.

The above lists give us a good sense of their diet. Most meals – including breakfast, lunch, and dinner – consisted of “one pot” porridges. Porridge is cooked grain. (What we know as oatmeal, for example, is oat porridge.) Gruel is watered down porridge. All types of grain could be boiled for porridge, the most common of which were wheat, barley, rye, and oats. Barley and rye were the easiest to grow, hence they were used most often.

To the porridge one added the frequently grown vegetables of beets, turnips, peas, cabbage, kale, onions, and broad beans. The gardens did not have the more “exotic” vegetables that originated in Asia, such as broccoli and cauliflower, or in the Americas, such as corn and tomatoes. Tomatoes were unknown in Europe until they were brought back by the Spanish conquistadors in the late 1500s, not reaching northern Europe until much later.

Bread was another staple. In the early Middle Ages, it was not baked in pans, but rather as a flattened disk of dough placed under the ashes of a fire. The resulting disk of rock-hard bread would be used as a plate, the porridge or a stew often poured on top. By the late Middle Ages, earthen cookware for bread became common, as evidenced by the origin of the name Dollhopf – Dollhopf means *napfkuchen* or “fruited yeast cake.” A *napfkuchen* was baked in a fluted clay mold. Yeast was introduced into baked goods in Franconia in the mid 1300s.

A typical peasant ate, on average, very little meat – 30 pounds of meat in an entire year, or roughly one pig per year for a family of five. And these would have been the good years. Church records from the 1600s indicate that there were many, many years when peasants did not have *any* meat. *Years*. There were eggs and cheese, but not in abundance. Think porridge, every meal.¹⁸

¹⁵ *Selde* is a medieval term with no modern equivalent. The closest translation would be “small.”

¹⁶ Estimates on the amount of land needed varied widely based on climate and soil conditions.

¹⁷ In the absence of medicines, peasants were great believers in the supposed curative properties of herbs.

¹⁸ When 2nd great grandfather Johann died, the inventory of his estate listed only spoons in the kitchen, no knives or forks, another clue indicative of their “one pot” diet.

And to drink: water and whey¹⁹ – no tea, no coffee. Certainly, they had beer, but in lean times there was very little. Grains were needed for porridge and bread.

The Dollhopf Tax Bill

Following is a list of the types of taxes and service obligations²⁰ that our Dollhopf grandparents had to pay to the margrave and the church, as enumerated in *Lehenbuch A of 1398*:

The taxes and obligations paid to the margrave:

1. *Ackergeld*²¹: “arable land fee” – a portion of one’s crops – typically one third, more or less, of the yield, based on the size of the farm. This was to be surrendered to the landlord every May 1st and September 29th (this included the spring and fall harvests. If the deadline was missed the landlord could double the amount. (Holy cow, no pressure there.)
2. *Abgaben an Boden- und Wirtschaftserzeugnissen*: “Taxes on land and economic products” – a portion of one’s animal production, in addition to the above portion of crops. This included:
 - *Einen Käse*, “one cheese” – per cow provided to the landlord on Easter, Christmas, and Whitsun (Pentecost). Although only a guess, “one cheese” was perhaps a block, weighing tens of pounds.
 - *Eier*, “eggs” – of a “sufficient number” also provided on the above religious days.
 - *Schweinegeld*, “pig money” – a monetary tax to allow one’s pigs to forage in the forest for acorns.
 - *Fastnachtshenne*, “carnival (pre-Lenten carnival) chickens” – to be surrendered prior to Lent.
 - *Herbsthühner*, “harvest chickens” – to be surrendered in the autumn at harvest time.
 - *Handlohn* (literally “hand wages”) – a death or inheritance tax of one cow, surrendered by the family to the landlord after the death of the farmer. (This in particular was a huge burden since most farmers only had few cows, if any).
3. *Frondienst*, “frontline service” – personal labor working for the landlord. This was forced conscription. The peasant had to work a certain number of days (typically 40 days per year, but it varied widely) on the landlord’s property or fields, doing whatever the landlord needed. The service also depended on the size of one’s farm – smaller farmers had to contribute *more* since they didn’t have to tend much of their own. In most cases it involved harvesting the landlord’s grain and mowing his hay. The peasant had to take care of the landlord’s fields before he took care of his own.
4. *Kriegsdienst*, “military service” – for the landlord when needed in time of disputes, regional conflicts, or wars. No uniforms or weapons; you showed up armed with your farm tools.
5. *Steuer* – a “tax” paid to the bailiff, or sheriff, whose job, as an agent of the margrave, was to collect the taxes, roughly 2% to 15% of the value of the property.
6. *Reutzehnt*, (very loosely translated, “right of the tenth”) – a form of tax applied to land that was newly cleared, if for example a peasant enlarged his farm.

¹⁹ Whey is the watery part of milk – usually goat or sheep milk – left over after the curds have been removed to make cheese.

²⁰ A “service obligation” was the required forced labor of the peasants on noble’s or church farms.

²¹ *Acker* = “acre;” *geld* = “money”

Thus, our Dollhopf ancestors had to surrender to the margrave a third to a half *or more* of their crops (even in times of poor harvests), their animal production, their time, and their money. If you are farming at a subsistence level, this is a mighty burden.

As if all this weren't enough, every peasant had to surrender a tithe – 10% of their crop, animal production, and wages – to the church. The taxes and obligations paid to the church included:

7. *Zehnt*, a “tithe” (from the Bible, “a tenth of the harvest”) was the duty paid to the church. The tithe was not optional. After the Reformation, the tithe went in part to the lords, since the lords then controlled the church. (This is why the Reformation was just as much a grab for wealth and power as it was a religious conversion.) The church tithe was divided into three types:
 - a. *Praedial*, or “farm” tithe, also known as the “dead” tithe – based on the production of the soil (not “living” animals). This included ten percent of all “grain, fruits, and wood.” These tithes were stored in the parish warehouses (barns). They were divided into the “large” tithe for cereals, and the “small” tithe for beets, cabbage, flax, hemp, onions, garlic, and fruit.
 - b. *Mixed*, or “living” tithe – based on animal production, one cheese per bovine animal and a tenth of the meat of the lamb, pig, cow, chicken, goose, etc.
 - c. *Personal* tithes – or “personal industry” tithe, i.e., the income one derives from being a tailor, blacksmith, miller, etc. This was not mentioned in the *Lehenbuch* but was a commonly imposed tithe by the church in northern and central Europe.

If you did not surrender your tithe, you faced excommunication by the church – eternal hell. That was a motivator.

The church was enormously wealthy in the Middle Ages. The tithe supported the parish priest and his relatives; additional tithes were collected to support the church hierarchy, including the building and operation of cathedrals, monasteries, and hospitals. Peasant money built the Cathedral of St. Lorenz in Nürnberg, completed in 1477 (Nürnberg was the seat of the burgraves who ruled Bayreuth at the time), and it built the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. George in Bamberg, completed in the mid 1200s, the closest cathedral to Mistelbach.

Indeed, all of the great cathedrals of the Middle Ages were built on the backs of peasants. Lest we forget, indulgences, the bane of Martin Luther, were peasant contributions used to rebuild St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome. By purchasing an indulgence, a peasant's sins were pardoned, and they could forego purgatory. Sort of like a “get out of jail free” card. The Reformation was the result of fraudulent fundraising.

We have a distant *namencousin* (“cousin in name”), Johannes Tolhopf²² of Kemnath, who was a priest and canon of the Cathedral of St. Peter in Regensburg. His substantial income came from the tithe levied on the peasants of Forcheim, a village within the district of the Cathedral, about 30 miles from Mistelbach. (Forcheim can be seen on the map on page six.) Clergy from the Cathedral collected their incomes, including money to operate the Cathedral and its school, from other villages. There will be more of Johannes Tolhopf in a later blog.

The collection of the tithes continued even after the Reformation, when, in the Mistelbach region, most churches had converted to Protestantism. The secular nobility took responsibility for the church away from the Catholic

²² Johann Tolhopf (1429-1503) was a famous humanist, astrologer, academic, and cleric. He was rector of the Cathedral of St. Peter in Regensburg. Regensburg is located in the *Oberpfalz*, the “Upper Palatinate,” a territory adjoining Franconia, about 100 miles from Mistelbach. Tolhopf also served as astrologer to King Mathias Corvinus of Hungary, and was the first rector (president), and one of the founders, of the University of Ingolstadt. We do not know how we are directly related to this Tolhopf, but our ancestors came from the same general area.

Church, but continued to collect the tithe, ostensibly for church upkeep, but undoubtedly to line their pockets. Villages throughout Germany converted to Protestantism not necessarily because of religious principles, but because the nobility saw this as an opportunity to grab the vast properties and income that came with the churches. Excess tithes were usurped by unscrupulous middlemen and sold for profit.

The tithe was not abolished in Franconia until 1848, around the time our great grandfather Johann (John) Dollhopf was born. We are not so far removed from feudalism.

There were many other taxes and fees; they varied greatly from region to region depending on the ruler. There were baptism, marriage, and burial fees (including a tax on the number of people who attended your wedding!); fees for certain religious holy day observances; fees levied on beer; fees to hunt in the woods; fees to collect firewood; fees to use the mills; fees to use certain bridges, waterways, and roads.

There was no lack of creativity employed by the ruling class to oppress the peasantry. To be sure, they varied greatly by region.



The Cathedral of St. Peter and St. George in Bamberg, completed in the 13th century, is about 30 miles from Mistelbach. There are several medieval cathedrals near Mistelbach including St. Peter's in Regensburg and St. Lorenz in Nürnberg. Given its proximity our Dollhopf ancestors were likely taxed to pay for St. Peter and St. George.

A First-Hand Account: A Visit to Mistelbach in 1852

In the opening paragraphs I quoted the English historian Charles Tylor. He published an account of his travels through Franconia in the summer of 1852, the year our great-grandfather Johann was born, that vividly illustrated the plight of Franconian peasants. He documented his exploits for the purpose of delivering lectures on German culture in England. Here is an excerpt from his travelogue about the over-taxed Franconian peasant:

The next day (the 10th of July 1852) we returned to Baireuth [sic]. Halting to partake of a noon-day meal at Gefrees²³, a caricature sheet²⁴ was brought to us, "The Village Barber," a paper published in Saxony in imitation of "Punch and the Charivari."²⁵

The jests were coarse and irreverent, two characteristics of German free-thinking; but one of them may be retailed as a good specimen of German wit, and but too true in its signification:

A peasant, (who was planning to immigrate to America), comes into the presence of a government official with his hat under his arm and a book in his hand.

"So," says the official, "he will forsake his fatherland, and be off to America. What has induced you to think of such a thing?"

"A book, Mr. Steward," replied the husbandman.²⁶

"A book," cries the Steward; "what book?"

"One that has cost me a great deal of money," answers the farmer.

"Let me see it," is the reply;

...and the husbandman hands up to the officer the TAX BOOK!

The burden of taxes, imposed by the governments for the support of their monstrous standing-armies, drives the [Franconian] people by the thousands into the wilds of America, where they live with a freedom unknown in the Fatherland. No land-tax, no salt-monopoly,²⁷ no tithes, no military conscription, no censorship of the press, no class legislation, pursue them there.

Charles Tylor

A Historical Tour in Franconia, in the Summer of 1852

Brighton, November 1852

Tylor's travelogue gives us a first-hand account of the plight of our Dollhopf ancestors. On his way from Nürnberg to Bayreuth, he traveled through the so-called *Hummelgau* – the hills and valleys of the Mistelbach region – stopping for lunch in Plankenfels, a village about ten miles west of Mistelbach.

One of the main roads leading to Bayreuth passes through Mistelbach, and although we don't know for sure, he could have traveled through our village after his lunch in Plankenfels. That road, called *Bayreuther Strasse* ("Bayreuth Street"), actually skirts the wall of the Dollhopf house in Mistelbach, passing within three feet. Johann

²³ Gefrees is a village 20 miles from Mistelbach. We have a number of ancestors from this village.

²⁴ Page of cartoons.

²⁵ *Punch and the Charivari* was a nineteenth century London periodical of wit and humor.

²⁶ Peasant farmer.

²⁷ Throughout the Middle Ages the nobility notoriously maintained a salt-monopoly over the peasants, controlling the prices.

Dollhopf (1830-1858) was living in the house at that time, the summer of 1852, with his mother Margarethe and his three sisters, Margarethe, Catharina, and Barbara. Johann wasn't married because of his lack of money, but his future wife Margarethe Bär had already given birth to our great-grandfather Johann (John) Dollhopf, three months earlier in March.

As I described in blog #11 on the inventory of Johann Dollhopf's "estate," times were bad; peasants lived in abject poverty – the reason that so many left for America.

Tylor described the area west of Bayreuth, the vicinity of Mistelbach, as among the filthiest he had seen. The village square in Mistelbach, in front of the Dollhopf house, is four miles from Bayreuth. I imagine that if Tylor set off for Bayreuth after stopping for lunch in Plankenfels, he would have passed the Dollhopf house at about 4 or 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

Here's how he described that day's travel:

In this day's ride the beggars were more numerous than ever, the majority being young children, and several of them scarcely better than idiots. Women were mowing grass with the men; and the villages were poor and filthy. This was especially the case at Plankenfels, where we stopped to obtain some noonday refreshment.

A rude repast was all we could procure, bread of wheat and rye mixed, strong cheese, and salt. Dung heaps guarded the houses, which, with beggars, old and young, reminded us of Ireland. Here we emerged from the plateau into a more open country, and a little beyond Trübersdorf came into the high road between Bamberg and Baireuth.

True to his description, a dung heap stood in front of the Dollhopf house, immediately outside the front stable door, as was customary in the territory, up until the 1970s. Yes, 1970.

I would hope not, but perhaps Johann Dollhopf was one of those beggars.

Dollhopf Economic Status

Historians argue that the failure of the peasants to win any concessions in the uprisings of the 1500s caused their slide into dark and uncertain times. For the next 200 years, until the French Revolution and the end of feudalism in the early 1800s, the plight of the peasant worsened.

After the 1500's the Mistelbach church pastor reported:

"The peasant food is black *rockenbrod* (*rocken or roggen* = "rye"), *Haberbrei* ("porridge" of cooked grain or cereal), cooked peas and lentils – their almost only drink is water and whey, many get all year round not a bite of meat, not a drop of beer to taste."

This era of darkness parallels the plight of our Dollhopf grandparents. It is in the late 1700s and early 1800s when we find the Dollhopf family at its most impoverished.

In tracking taxation through the accounts of the Bayreuth land books, a number of important clues help us better understand the relative prosperity of the Dollhopfs over the 600 years of our known history. These clues include Dollhopf mill ownership, their occupations, and the size of their farms.



*This is one of the oldest photographs of the Dollhopf house, probably taken shortly after 1910. Notice, true to Tylor’s narrative, the dung heap in front of the house to the left. The stable occupied the first floor, to the left of the vine-covered door. This photo would have been taken while standing on Bayreuther Strasse, which passes in front of, and to the immediate right of, the house. The church is on the other side of the street to the right. Standing in front is our great-grandfather’s brother **Johann Konrad Dollhopf** (1856-1947), and his third wife **Margarethe Hartung** (1868-?). They were married in 1910. Johann’s son Adam would be the next owner.*

The economic history of the Dollhopfs can be divided into four major eras – I. millers, II. tailors, III. farmers, and IV. Americans:

I. Millers
c. 1400-1570

From the late 1300s (and possibly before) until 1632, our Dollhopf ancestors “owned” and operated mills. We know that in the late 1300s and early 1400s Heintz Dollhopf owned a mill in Bayreuth. Beginning in 1499 and ending in 1632 the Dollhopfs owned and operated the village mill in Mistelbach. Millers enjoyed higher wages and elevated economic status.

(16x = 16 x great-grandfather, etc.)

16x **Heintz Dollhopf** (~1370-~1430) owned mill in Bayreuth. Heintz’s relationship with Hans is not confirmed, but he is probably Hans’ father.

15x **Hans Dollhopf** (~1400-~1454) was enfeoffed with a small farm in Mistelbach, but he likely continued to participate in the operation of the mill in Bayreuth. This also is not confirmed.

I. Millers
c. 1400-1570
(cont.)

- 14x **Dietrich (aka Ubelein) Dollhopf** (~1440-~1511) acquired the Mistelbach village mill in 1499. He still owned his father's house in Bayreuth.
- 13x **Cuntz (aka Ubelein) Dollhopf** (~1470-~1526) inherited mill from his father.
- 12x **Cuntz Dollhopf** (~1500 - ~1570) inherited mill from his father, and also served as *Gotteshaus Master*, or church warden.
- 11x **Cuntz (aka Conrad) Dollhopf** (~1545-1581) likely worked in the mill but did not inherit it. Cuntz was the third oldest son in the family, and he might have had the opportunity to inherit the mill from his oldest brother Georg when Georg died prematurely. But alas Cuntz also died prematurely and his younger brother, also named Georg, assumed ownership instead. Thus ends our direct line of mill ownership.

Beginning in this generation our line of Dollhopfs are tailors (as well as peasant farmers). Tailors earned far less than mill owners.

II. Tailors
c. 1570-1750

- 10x **Cuntz Dollhopf** (1581-1635) was a tailor. He never knew his father who died when he was a month old. Cuntz also served as the Church warden. Cuntz is an enigma, he gave 20 florins, or a year's wages, to the church in 1632. How did he earn so much money? Still a mystery.
- 9x **Cuntz (aka Conrad) Dollhopf** (1607-1683) was a tailor, church warden, and mayor. He had a small farm (when he died he owned six plots of land worth 200 guilders, not a very large farm). He is listed in church records owning a *söldengut* – a peasant farm.
- 8x **Hans der Ältere Dollhopf** (1629-1710) was listed as a journeyman tailor. He married the daughter of the owner of the Zeckenmühle, and lived there. His grandson Georg Dollhopf took ownership of the Zeckenmühle c. 1720.
- 7x **Hans der Junge Dollhopf** (1656-1705) is not cited as being a tailor, but his father and son were both tailors, so it is fair to assume he was as well. He purchased a very small farm from his grandfather Cuntz for 50 guilders.
- 6x **Conrad Dollhopf** (1693-1759) was a master tailor and peasant farmer, and the church warden for 26 years. He was also listed as the church treasurer.
- 5x **Johann Dollhopf** (1718-1771) was a tailor and peasant farmer; he inherited only six acres from his father. He must have purchased an additional six, because when he died he had 12, which was enough for subsistence. (Again, seven to nine acres was considered subsistence level.) From 1770 to 1772, a number of severe storms destroyed the Mistelbach crops, leading to famine. This could have been a contributing cause of his death at age 52 in 1771.

As farmers, our Dollhopf ancestors, as did all peasants, suffered from the tradition of *partible inheritance*, the custom of dividing estates equally among all children, including daughters, rather than the tradition of *primogeniture*, passing on the estate to the oldest son. Today, partible is the norm, and is of course, the fairest. But for peasants this practice had an unintended deleterious consequence – over hundreds of years family farms were subdivided, then subdivided again, and again, and again, etc. The farms kept getting smaller, making it nearly impossible to earn a living from the small plots that remained. One could acquire additional farmland by purchase, but that required money, which one had to earn by growing more crops, which was nearly impossible because you didn't have enough land. It was a vicious cycle.

III. Farmers
c. 1750-1860

- 4x **Johann Dollhopf** (1752-1828) was a peasant farmer who received only four acres from his father's 12-acre estate, which had been divided among three brothers. He also

III. Farmers
c. 1750-1860
(cont.)

- inherited house #19 from his father-in-law, and presumably any fields that went with it. He was the first Dollhopf to live in house #19.
- 3x **Eberhardt Dollhopf** (1789-1843) was a peasant farmer who also inherited his father’s fields. Either Johann the father, or Eberhardt the son, was enormously industrious, because when Eberhardt died he owned 34.55 tagwerk, or about 29 acres. They must have purchased fields. This is probably the largest farm owned by our direct ancestors, but it still did not qualify as a “whole farm.” In the period between the world wars the Dollhopf farm was the largest in Mistelbach, but long before then our great grandfather had emigrated. Despite the size of the farm, crop failures, war, and rampant inflation in the early 1800s caused enormous poverty, most likely the worst poverty our ancestors had to endure.
 - 2x **Johann Dollhopf** (1830 –1858) was a peasant farmer who inherited his father’s estate in 1857, but then died less than a year later.

IV. America
c. 1870-

- As we know, the economic circumstances of the Dollhopfs drastically improved in America – and that includes all of us.
- 1x **Johann Dollhopf** (1852-1934) came to America as a cooper, eventually became a cabinet and furniture maker. He started two companies – Dollhopf & Platz Cabinet Makers in the 1890’s; and Nelson, Keenan & Dollhopf, Co. in the 1900s. Arguably he was middle class and living the American dream since he could afford to buy a house on Spring Hill. But he was probably not living much above official poverty levels when he died in 1934 in the midst of the Great Depression. He and his wife Lizzy had to survive without the safety net of social security, which did not exist at the time. Lizzy still owned the house when it became dilapidated in the early 1950s. It was then condemned by the city of Pittsburgh, and razed in 1954.
 - gf **Edward Dollhopf** (1889-1982) was an office manager and salesman for Burrell Scientific Instruments. He began working on the loading docks of Burrell, which were located next door to his father’s furniture business. Edward was comfortably middle class – the first Dollhopf to own not only a house, but also a car, and the first to afford a college education for four of his five children.

The Miller Era: c. 1400-1570

A miller at work. *Ständebuch* by Jost Amman, 1568, Deutsche Fotothek

From the land books we learn that mill owners earned substantially more income than day laborers or farmers, as much as three to five times more.

The mills were the economic engines – the factories – of their day, and the mill owners likely enjoyed the favor of the nobility. The relative prosperity of a village depended on the production and output of its mills.

From the land book of 1420 we learn that Heintz Dollhopf owned a mill on the Red Main River at the upper gates to the city of Bayreuth.

We also learn that Hans Dollhopf acquired a small farm in Mistelbach around 1430, and that his son Übelien Dietrich Dollhopf acquired the Mistelbach mill in 1499.

It is not clear from the records whether Hans actually lived in Mistelbach. He continued to own a house in Bayreuth, which was later sold by his son. Given the mill connection, Heintz and Hans could have been brothers, or father and son. Further research is needed.

The Dollhopfs owned the mill in Mistelbach from 1499 until it was destroyed in 1634 during the Thirty Years War, and then abandoned. In 1649 it was either sold or merely taken over, we don't know.

In those 150 years, despite intervening peasant uprisings, crop failures, pandemics, plundering, et al., our great-grandfathers Ubelein Dietrich, Cuntz Ubelein, and Cuntz, successive owners of the mill, likely enjoyed *relative* prosperity.

This culminated in the extraordinary contribution by our 10th great-grandfather Cuntz Dollhopf (1581-1635) of 20 florins, made in 1632, to the church. At the time, 20 florins was an amount equivalent to more than a year's wages; so Cuntz, and I assume the family, were relatively well off. Who among us today is prepared to give the church more than a year's entire salary?

The Tailor Era: c. 1570-1750

After the Thirty Year's War and the destruction of the mill, and for the next 100 years, until the mid 1700s, our Dollhopf grandfathers were tailors. In all likelihood they did not enjoy the same economic status, the wealthy Cuntz mentioned above notwithstanding. They did own farm land, but not enough to earn a living wage. In church records they are listed as *söldenbaueren*, or "peasant farmers."

Most of the villagers in Mistelbach practiced a trade in addition to farming. In the municipal records of 1855, we learn of the distribution of trades:

It is also noted in these records that all inhabitants of Mistelbach are engaged in agriculture, but only 40 of the 73 landowners are engaged in farming and livestock farming.

The following trades are mentioned: an inn keeper who was also a butcher and chipper, four weavers, five miller masters, two tailors, a blacksmith master, two shoemakers, a saddle master, six additional weavers, five bricklayers, a carpenter, a stone mason, a glass cutter, and a wagon coach driver.

No mention has been made so far of the women – they typically did not participate in the trades, although they did participate in the farming.

We know from accounts in the 1800s that women were still, at that time, responsible for gathering the daily green fodder necessary to feed the animals. They also participated in the threshing and winnowing of the grains, and, in the case of tailors, especially, women did much of the weaving of the flax and hemp fibers (and probably sheep wool) for cloth.

Mostly, of course, they were responsible for raising children and taking care of the house – backbreaking work in the days when fires had to be tended for cooking, heat, and light; water fetched for drinking, cooking, and cleaning; and foods prepared from “scratch” – literally – for meals.

The Farmer Era: c. 1750-1860

Because of partible inheritance, the land held by Dollhopfs through the generations did not appreciably increase in size, with the exception of the land held by Eberhardt Dollhopf. The size of the Dollhopf farms never exceeded the size categorized as a *Ganzer Hof*, or “whole peasant farm.”

We know that life was extremely hard for the farmers because of natural disasters and inflation, topics that will be covered in another blog. We also know that the Dollhopf farmers suffered from extreme poverty as evidenced by the high mortality rate of their children – the highest mortality rates experienced in the 600 years – not counting the Thirty Years War:

5x great-grandfather Johann Dollhopf (1718-1771) and his wife Kunigunde Seuffert had five children – only three lived to adulthood.

4x Johann Dollhopf (1752-1828) and his wife Anna Catherina Hagen had six children – two died as young children, one died in her 20s.

3x Eberhardt Dollhopf (1789-1843) and his wife Margarethe Graisinger had ten children – five died under the age of four, only three survived past the age of 20, only two past the age of 30. One who died at the age of 28 was our 2x great-grandfather, Johann.

Out of total of 21 children in these three contiguous farming generations, nine died before the age of four, four died before the age of 30, only eight lived to be older than 30.



16th century German peasant garb. Our ancestor Dollhopf tailors likely used wool, flax, or hemp – cotton did not grow in this northern climate. Cloth was made by weavers, although poor peasants weaved their own – our 2x-great-grandfather Johann had a pflugwetter, a spinning wheel for weaving linen out of flax fibers.

The Hospital Records

In addition to the land books and church records, there was another important source detailing the land dealings of our ancestors: the hospital in Bayreuth. Our 9th great-grandfather Cuntz Dollhopf acquired the fief for his land (next to the village mill) from the hospital, which in the early middle ages was a church institution. In the 1600s, after the Reformation, when Cuntz acquired the land, the hospital was overseen by the Bayreuth town council. Whether it was still church property at that time is uncertain.

Cuntz paid his taxes to the hospital, and the hospital kept records of all real estate and tax transactions.

Two of these hospital documents follow. The first is dated April 10, 1679. On that date Cuntz, who was then 72 years old, was selling a portion of his farm to his grandson, Hans *die Junge* (“the younger”) Dollhopf. The sale price of only 50 guilders gives us the clue that it was a *very* small farm – it was a house, a barn, and a meadow of only ½ acre. (Clearly Cuntz did not do much farming.) Hans had to pay a sales tax of five guilders (10%) on the sale of the property, and then pay an annual “rent,” or tax, to the hospital of 11½ *kreuzer* and one *shrovetide* hen.²⁸ For some reason the property was exempt from the church tithe, perhaps because the church owned the hospital.

This contract is remarkable not for the sale itself, but for the fact that it details how Cuntz planned to live his “retirement.”

In the days before nursing homes, elderly parents lived in the family home until they died. In the case where a farm was sold to another party (Cuntz sold to his grandson, for whatever reason skipping a generation) the terms of the living arrangements had to be spelled out. The following document stipulates that Cuntz and his fourth wife, Barbara Wolfel, could continue to live rent free in the house, for as long as they lived, and they would be provided with wood for light and heat – and the right to use the stove pot for bathing. The contract even stipulates that Hans the younger has to pay two silver coins for the wine to celebrate the sale!

The following agreement is translated from the hospital books of 1512-1704. Absolutely fascinating:

Bayreuth, 10 April, 1679.

Hereby notice is given that between the industrious Cuntz Dohlhopff, seller, as one party, and Hans Dohlhopff the younger, buyer, as the other party, both of whom are residents of Mistelbach, the following binding sales agreement has been settled and concluded.

By virtue of this the seller, said Cuntz Dohlhopff, for himself, his wife and their mutual heirs, after thorough consideration and voluntarily, by no means persuaded or cunningly cheated, only for his own benefit, makes an upright, honest and irrevocable hereditary sale, according to the rights and customs of the city of Bayreuth, in the best way this shall, can or may be done, and sells to said Hans Dohlhopff the younger, his [Cuntz'] grandson, his [Hans'] wife and their mutual heirs, a small farm, located in said Mistelbach, which is a fief from and under the jurisdiction of the hospital in Bayreuth, with its belongings and the like buildings are now standing before one's eyes, in particular the residential house and the attached little barn, the courtyard and the little garden and a meadow in the size of ½ tagwerk, located at *zur Herrösten*, above the *Wischholtz*,²⁹ adjoining the lordship's meadows, with all rights and privileges in its proper plot boundaries and everything inside the house and barn fixed to floor and wall, and all other reasonable rights, here mentioned or not mentioned, including all rights of use and obligations. In particular this small

²⁸ A *kreuzer* was a coin, 60 *kreuzer* = one guilder. *Shrovetide* is the Tuesday before Lent.

²⁹ These are geographical points of reference, e.g., *Wischholtz* = the “Wisch woods.”

farm or its owner every year on St. Michael's Day as a constant rent has to deliver money in the amount of 11 ½ *kreuzer* and one *shrovetide* hen to said hospital in Bayreuth and in the case of sale or transfer is committed to pay a transfer fee of 10 per cent, otherwise this house is tithe-exempt, in the way said Cuntz Dohlhopff, the seller, has owned and used it for considerable time up to this day without disturbance, or would have been entitled to use it according to the laws.

This small farm has been sold for the amount of 50 guilders and two *reichstaler Leihkauf*³⁰, in good Franconian currency, which of the buyer paid the *Leihkauf* and as a first installment 10 guilders cash in good and acceptable coins, which the seller has received into his hand without any deduction and by virtue of this properly acknowledges receipt. Then the buyer with mouth and hand³¹ pledged to successively pay the 40 guilders in arrears to his grandfather, the seller, upon he and his wife's requirement and demand until payment is made in full.

Thereupon said small farm and belongings hereby with full rights have been transferred and ceded to him, buyer, his heirs and descendants, to own and use it for his best benefit.

Once the price has been paid in full (every time an installment is being paid it shall be recorded below this deed, which two copies have been made of, by certified people) the buyer and his heirs - besides a waiver - shall be acknowledged full receipt.

The seller and his wife shall have their free abode in this sold small farm, as long as they live, as well as wood, light, and the right to use the *Offenhaffen*³² for their washing, besides a place in the stable for one cow, a little place in the barn for their crops and hay, and in the little garden for their fruit, which they explicitly reserve for themselves and the buyer after thorough consideration and voluntarily agreed to.

Eventually the frequently mentioned Hans Dohlhopff against payment of the usual transfer fee in the amount of 5 guilders - whose receipt is hereby acknowledged - has obtained said small farm as a fief and the same committed himself to keep it always in good structural condition and not have anything of it wasted, to not pledge or alienate it without previous knowledge of the respective administrator of the hospital in Bayreuth, to every time pay his annual dues properly and at the right time, to acknowledge the hospital or the Mayor and the city council of Bayreuth as his hereditary lordship, seek and give justice before them, and otherwise, so regarding state taxes, other common dues and military duties, obediently act like any other subject has to.³³

Faithfully and without malice.

For reassurance this letter of sale and fief after previous statements and both parties' obedient requests was deliberately reinforced by the middle seal of said honorable Mayor and the city council of Bayreuth, and the own-hand signatures of the current District Mayor, the appointed current administrator of the hospital, and the current adjunct, however, under exclusion of any harm and disadvantage to them, their descendants, the city, the hospital and lordship.

³⁰ Two *reichstaler* = two silver coins. *Leihkauf* = the wine drunk in company by the parties after they have struck a bargain.

³¹ I assume swears to God (orally with mouth), and (physically) raises his right hand.

³² *Offenhaffen* is a stove-pot or kettle which is partly enclosed in, or fastened to, the stove.

³³ Here we have a clue that the rent of 11½ *kreuzer* and one hen is only a fraction of the taxes due on the property – that he owed “state taxes (due the margrave), other common dues and military duties, obediently like any other subject has to...”

Done at Bayreuth, April 10 in the year of 1679.

L.S.³⁴

Johann Wolff, current district mayor
Georgius Weyhe
Johann Hüen

After this agreement, Cuntz's wife Barbara lived three more years, Cuntz four. He died on December 30, 1683, at the age of 76 – very old for that era. On January 30, 1684 his estate was distributed among his heirs (according to partible inheritance). He had only two heirs: his son Hans and his granddaughter Magdalena Hacker (Magdalena was the daughter of Cuntz's daughter Anna, who had already died). The estate included six pieces of land, worth 200 guilders, 60 guilders in receivables (owed by his son Hans and grandson Hans as per the above contract), and 20 guilders cash. The cost of his funeral, 8.15 guilders, had to be deducted.

This second document is also from the Bayreuth hospital book. It is testament to the size of a peasant farm in 1684:

Bayreuth, 30 January 1684

Hereby notice is given that the honorable and industrious Cuntz Dolhopff from Mistelbach peacefully passed away on December 28 in the previous year and left behind as his lawful heirs:

1. Hans Dolhopff at the Fichtel Mill, located below Mistelbach, as the only son³⁵; and
2. his granddaughter Magdalena, bodily daughter of Hans Hacker from Gesees, who he had generated with his first wife Anna née Dolhopff, late;³⁶

which of both personally appeared today, on the date stated below, before the hospital here in Bayreuth and voluntarily and honestly indicated that the estate their bodily father and father-in-law has left behind, and in which way they amicably and friendly settled its partition, is as follows:

- 1 field in the size of 1 tagwerk, located in Mistelbach at *uffn Alendt* [the following italics mark the locations of the fields; they were not contiguous];
- 1 field in the size of 1 tagwerk, which had been used as pasture grounds, adjoining the Hackers *Gassen*;
- 1 field in the size of ½ tagwerk, called *Peurathlein*, located at the *Lohranger*;
- 1 meadow in the size of ½ tagwerk, located at in *Mosing*;
- 1 woods in the size of 1 tagwerk, located at am *Mühlanger*; and
- 1 woods in the size of 1 tagwerk, called *Lohr*.

All of these six pieces of land have been given to Hans Dollhopf. As a compensation he promised to pay to his late sister's daughter the amount of 100 guilders and 2 *reichstaler Leihkauf* (the

³⁴ L.S. = *loco sigili*, or in place of the seal.

³⁵ This is his son Hans "the older" Dollhopf. In the previous contract, he sold a portion of his farm to Hans "the younger" Dollhopf, his grandson. Hans "the older" married Dorothea Neukam, the daughter of the owner of the *Fichtelmühle* ("spruce mill"), and so was living there. This mill later became known as the Zeckenmühle.

³⁶ Cuntz had four wives (this was the time of the Thirty Years War, and famine and the pandemic took the lives of many), and four children, only two of whom, Hans "the older" and Anna, survived to adulthood. Anna predeceased Cuntz, and so Anna's daughter Magdalena was the rightful heir. Hans inherited the entire farm, but had to buy Magdalena's share of the inheritance.

wine to celebrate the sale). As a first installment he paid 50 guilders and the *Leihkauf* into Hans Hacker's hand. The remaining 50 guilders are interest-bearing at an annual rate of 7 per cent.

In addition to these six pieces of land the estate includes the following three monetary items in the total value of 80 guilders:

- 1) Hans Dollhopf the older owes 40 guilders to the estate, which is the unpaid part of the purchase price of 110 guilders for fields and meadows in the size of 2 tagwerk that he had purchased from his father Cuntz.
- 2) Hans Dollhopf's son Hans Dollhopf the younger owes 20 guilders to the estate, which is the unpaid part of the purchase price for the small farm that he had purchased from his grandfather Cuntz.
- 3) 20 guilders in cash.

These 80 guilders have to be deducted by the costs of the funeral in the amount of 8.15 guilders, which results in 71.45 guilders. Each heir is entitled to one half of this amount, thus 35.52 ½ guilders. Margaretha receives the remaining cash (11.45 guilders), 4.07 ½ guilders from Hans Dollhopf the elder, and 20 guilders from Hans Dollhopf the younger, in total 35.52 ½ guilders. Her father Hans Hacker shall administer her inheritance until she marries. As a compensation he may use the interests thereof for himself.

Thus we see that Cuntz owned about five acres of land, only one acre of which was arable, the rest meadows and woods. It is clear that he earned little, if anything, from farming. He mostly survived on his tailor's earnings.

This was a very poor starting point for succeeding generations of Dollhopf farmers, who must have struggled mightily to eke out an existence with such small farms.

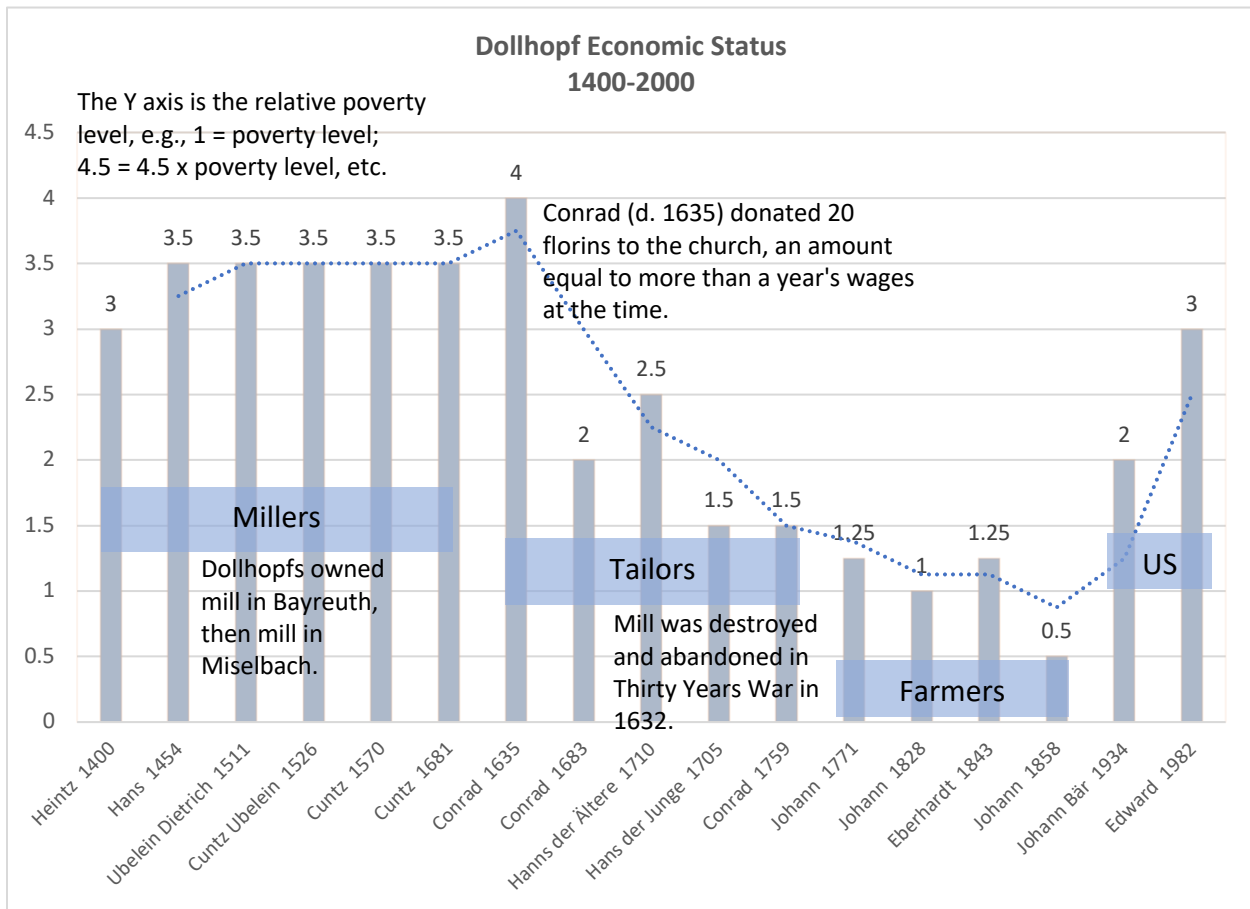
Epilogue

In the 1400s our Dollhopf ancestors were doing well. As mill owners they enjoyed relative prosperity that lasted until 1632, the year the mill was destroyed. After that devastating event, their economic status gradually declined, reaching its nadir in the generation of our great-grandfather Johann, who was born in 1852.

Johann's circumstances improved after he immigrated to America, but arguably our line of Dollhopfs didn't achieve the modern notion of middle-class status until the generation of Edward Dollhopf in the 1920s and 30s.

Were the Dollhopf mill owners "middle class?" Well, no. They were still peasants; they didn't own the mills, they were merely granted fiefs to operate them. It would be difficult to label any class of people in the Middle Ages as middle class, with the possible exception of members of the trade guilds in the largest cities.

As stated earlier, 90% of the population were peasants "tied to the land." But the mill owners certainly earned higher wages and enjoyed the favor of the nobility (and were therefore often the objects of scorn by other peasants). Class jealousy.



The above chart illustrates the relative economic status of seventeen Dollhopf generations – relative to the poverty level of their time. The X axis is the line of our direct ancestors – their given name and date of death. The Y axis is the relative poverty level where 1 = the poverty level, and 2 = two times the poverty level, etc. There is a considerable amount of guesstimating here, the graph is intended to indicate relative poverty levels.

The Thirty Years War, 1618 to 1648, was a critical turning point in Dollhopf history. Not only was the mill destroyed in 1632, but only one Dollhopf family survived the plundering and ensuing plague. The mill was abandoned, the Dollhopf property vacated, for almost twenty years. The family never did recover as economic conditions worsened over the next 200 years.

Without enough land to produce beyond what was needed for survival, and without the ability to accumulate capital because of meager wages, our ancestors were locked into the agrarian underclass.

The nadir of our economic decline was the death of our 2nd great-grandfather Johann Dollhopf in 1858 at the age of 28. From the inventory of his “estate” we know that he had remarkably few possessions. There was not enough food in the barn for his family, nor wood in the yard for cooking and heating. His widow Margarethe was under tremendous pressure to find another husband as soon as possible to provide for her three young children – and to save the farm.

In 1858 Mistelbach was still in the throes of feudalism, causing *more than a third* of the village to leave for America in the 1840's and 50s. Johann's son, our great-grandfather, left for America following a number of his friends who escaped to the "wilds of America" – the "wilds" as they were, of Pittsburgh.

There were other Dollhopf ancestors, male and female, who left Mistelbach prior to 1871. Some left for other parts of Germany, some indeed made it to America. Perhaps they found their fortunes elsewhere.

Compared to other emigrants, Johann Dollhopf left Germany fairly late. The peak of German immigration to the US was in the 1850s. In the year he left, 1871, Otto von Bismarck unified Germany, and in so doing created an economic juggernaut out of the hundreds of feudal kingdoms. 1871 was the beginning of the German Industrial Revolution, and the economy burgeoned into the largest and most powerful in Europe, until it was shattered by World War I.

Had he waited another decade or two, Johann's economic fortunes might have been different.

As the oldest son, he certainly would have had the opportunity to acquire his father's house #19 and farm. As it turned out, his younger brother Johann Konrad did, and his son Adam in turn built it into one of the largest farms in Mistelbach in the 1900s.

In the 1900s, other than the abject poverty and military casualties³⁷ caused by the World Wars, Mistelbach and the Dollhopf farm survived intact – they were never bombed or shelled, although Bayreuth was. A US fighter plane crashed not far from the Mistelbach parsonage, several blocks away from the Dollhopf house, on April 9, 1945; a few houses were damaged. Five days later, on April 14, Patton's Third Army rolled through Mistelbach on their way to Berlin via Bayreuth, but there was no fighting. The war ended three weeks later.

Economic decline is never the result of a single factor. War, famine, climate, inflation, and disease played roles in cultivating intense poverty in Mistelbach. But the unlimited power to tax, accumulative over hundreds of years, destroyed the lives of millions of German peasants.

We are fortunate that our great-grandfather escaped.

Mark Dollhopf
New Haven, Connecticut
June 28, 2020
In anno corona virum.

³⁷ 93 Mistelbachers died fighting in WWII. Only one Dollhopf did, Johann Erhard Dollhopf, son of Adam Dollhopf.

Appendix A: Mistelbach Rulers and the Dollhopfs Who Paid Them Taxes

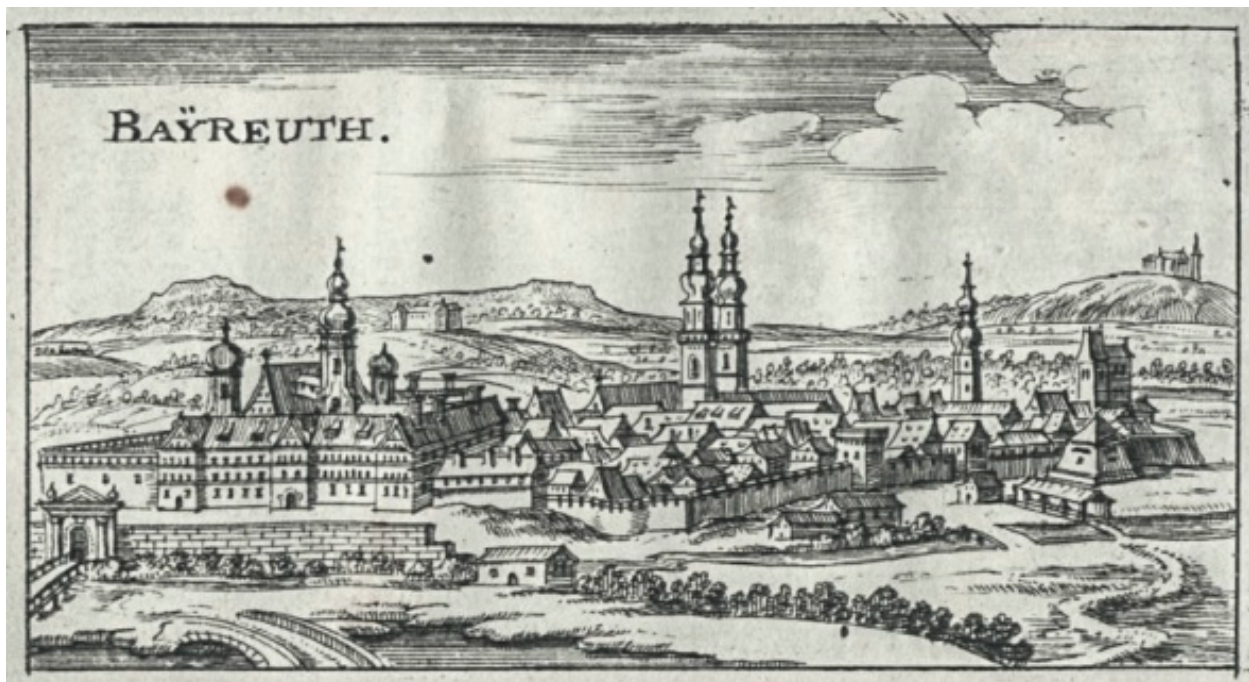
| Year | Ruler | Dollhopf Ancestor |
|-----------|---|-------------------|
| 1125-1136 | <p>Bishop Otto I of Bamberg, who was from Mistelbach, built a castle there in 1125. May 4, 1125 is the first historical mention by Otto of a place called Mistelbach. The castle was a base for his bishopric, and a defense against the Meranians (a warring kingdom near Croatia). That same year Otto appointed his brother, Friedrich I von Mistelbach, as Lord of Mistelbach. Friederich died in 1136.</p> <p>In 1135 the much larger Plassenburg Castle was built in nearby Kulmbach by the Dukes of Andechs-Meranien, enemies of the above Bishop Otto. This castle would later become home to the rulers of Bayreuth and Mistelbach in 1340, and remain the seat of the rulers until 1604, 264 years.</p> | Not known. |
| 1136-? | Eberhard von Mistelbach , son of Friedrich I. The date of Eberhard's death is not known. | Not known. |
| ?-1218 | <p>Friederich II von Mistelbach, son of Eberhard, Friederich II dies in 1218.</p> <p>The Mistelbach Castle was destroyed sometime after 1218, the precise date is unknown. It is not clear who controlled Mistelbach in these intervening years before 1226. In the meantime, the Counts of the House Andechs-Meranians were acquiring territory including Bayreuth. They probably acquired Mistelbach around the same time.</p> | Not known. |
| | Counts of the House of Andechs ³⁸ | |
| 1226-1248 | Duke Otto III von Andechs-Merania (c. 1226-1248) Founded Bayreuth in 1231, although there are other documents that first mention Bayreuth in 1199. | Not known. |
| 1248-1260 | The kingdom is fought over by Otto III's three sisters. Eventually it went to his sister Elizabeth as a result of the Langenstädter Treaty of 1260. Elizabeth's husband was Friederich III von Zollern. Friedrich III then assumed the throne. | Not known. |
| | House of the Hohenzollerns , Burgraves in Nürnberg. | |
| 1260-1262 | Elizabeth von Andech-Merania , Otto's sister and wife of Friedrich III von Zollern, Burgrave in Nuremberg. They establish Bayreuth as a legitimate city with market square, city wall, city hall, and a variety of craftsmen. | Not known. |
| 1262-1297 | Friederich III (c. 1220-1297), son of Conrad I and husband of above Elizabeth, | Not known. |
| 1297-1300 | Johann I (c. 1279-1300), son of Friederich III | Not known. |
| 1300-1332 | Friederich IV (1287-1332), brother of Johann I | Not known. |

³⁸ "House" means dynastic family.

| | | |
|-----------|--|--|
| | [1321-1563] The von Mistelbachs , a lower rank of nobility of free imperial knights, occupied the castle in Mistelbach for 242 years, although for many years the castle was owned by the Hohenzollerns. It is not clear which Dollhopf ancestors paid taxes to the knights, and which paid the margraves. The knights owned about a third of the land in Mistelbach, the margraves the other two thirds. The last male member of family was Christoph von Mistelbach who died in 1563, at which time their lands transferred to the margraves. His daughter then sold it to Wolf Dietrich von Wiesenthau (a village south of Mistelbach near Forcheim). It changed hands numerous times until it was destroyed in the Thirty Years War in 1632. It remained in ruins until 1763. | Not known. |
| 1332–1357 | Johann II (c. 1309–1357), son of Friederich IV. 1340 the Nürnberg burgraves acquire Kulmbach and the Plassenburg Castle. Kulmbach becomes the seat of the rulers. | Not known. |
| 1357–1397 | Friederich V (before 1333–1398), son of Johann II. On his death on January 21, 1398 his lands were partitioned between Johan III Margrave of Brandenburg-Kulmbach, and Frederick VI, Margrave of Brandenburg-Ansbach | Not known. |
| | Margraves of Brandenburg-Kulmbach-Bayreuth (1398-1604) | |
| 1398-1420 | Johann III of Nürnberg (c. 1369–1420), son of Friederich V. 1403 the margrave moved the seat of government to the Plassenburg Castle. It would remain the seat until 1603. | Heintz Tollhopff (c.1370-1450) |
| 1420-1440 | Friederich I/VI ³⁹ , (Elector of Brandenburg), brother of Johann III. 1430 Kulmbach, Bayreuth, and surrounding villages were destroyed by Hussites in the Hussite War. | Hans Tolhopff (c.1400-1454) |
| 1440–1457 | Johann IV the Alchemist (1406–1464), son of Friederich VI | “ |
| 1457–1486 | Albrecht I/III Achilles (also Margrave of Brandenburg-Ansbach and Elector of Brandenburg) brother of Johann the Alchemist | Ubelein Tolhopff (c.1445-1511) |
| 1486–1495 | Siegmund (1468–1495), son of Albrecht I/III Achilles | “ |
| 1495-1515 | Friederich III the Elder (brother of Siegmund, who never married). | “ |
| 1515–1527 | Casimir (1481–1527), son of Friederich III (after Friederich depleted the treasury because of lavish lifestyle, Casimir took over and locked his father up in Plassenburg Castle for 12 years beginning in 1515.) | Cuntz Ubellein Dollhopf (c.1465-1526) |
| 1527–1553 | Albrecht II Alcibiades (1522–1557), son of Casimir. Albrecht assumed reign when he was 5 under the guardianship of his uncle George the Pious (see following), assumed crown in 1541 when he was 19. He plundered many villages, which led to Second Margrave War. Mistelbach plundered by Nürnberg troops and castle destroyed. Because of his cruelty, he was excommunicated and fled to France. His son Friederich therefore did not inherit title. | Cuntz Dollhopf (c.1498-1570) |

³⁹ Where there are two Roman numerals, that ruler ended sovereignty in one dynasty and began another dynastic line.

- (1527–1541) **George the Pious** (1484–1543), Margrave of the sister kingdom of Brandenburg-Ansbach was the son of Frederick III (the Elder) and the uncle of Albrecht II Alcibiades above. Because Albrecht became Margrave when he was only 5, George the Pious was assigned as his guardian and became the *de facto* Margrave until Albrecht reached the majority age of 19 in 1541. George was responsible for converting the Margraviates of Brandenburg - Ansbach and Brandenburg-Kulmbach-Bayreuth to Protestantism in 1528 after personally meeting with Martin Luther. Cuntz Dollhopf (c.1498-1570)
- 1553–1603 **George Friederich I** (also Margrave of Brandenburg-Ansbach, Duke of Brandenburg-Jägerndorf and Regent of Prussia") During his reign between 1557 and 1603 in the Franconian territories of the Hohenzollern (Brandenburg-Ansbach and Brandenburg-Kulmbach) he kept peace, rebuilt cities and castles, and he founded several schools and a university. He was cousin of Albrecht II, grandson of Casimir. He died childless bringing to extinction the original line of Margraves of Brandenburg-Ansbach-Kulmbach. Cuntz Dollhopf (c.1540-1581)



A view of Bayreuth in 1689 by Georg Christoph Eimmart: *Vollständige Charta von Frankenland*; Nuremberg 1689 www.historisches-lexikon-bayerns.de. **Ubelein Dietrich Tolhopff** (14x-great-grandfather) sold his house located behind the city hall – presumably the steeples to the left. **Heintz Tollhopff** (possibly 16x-great-grandfather) owned a mill at the upper city gate on the Red Main River. There is a river gate in the lower left-hand corner, but I do not know if this was the “upper” gate. This etching of 1689 is 200 years after the mention of the mill.

Margraves of Brandenburg-Bayreuth (1604-1791)

| | | |
|-----------|--|--|
| 1603–1655 | Christian I (1581–1655), son of Johann George, Elector of Brandenburg. He formed an alliance with Sweden in the Thirty Years War, invoking the wrath of the Catholic neighbors of Mistelbach. <u>In 1603 He moved the seat of the government from the Plassenburg Castle to Bayreuth.</u> | Cuntz Dollhopf (c.1581-1635) Cuntz Dollhopf (c.1607-1683) |
|-----------|--|--|

From court records we can deduce that the Bayreuth City Council exercised considerable power and influence in lieu of the margrave.

| | | |
|-----------|--|---|
| 1655–1712 | Christian II Ernst (1644–1712), son of Erdmann August, grandson of Christian I | Hanss (d. Ältere) Dollhopf (c.1629-1710) Hans (d. Junge) Dollhopf (c. 1656-1705) |
| 1712–1726 | George I William (1678–1726), son of Christian II Ernst | Conrad Dollhopf (c. 1693-1759) |
| 1726–1735 | George Friederich II/II (previously Margrave of Kulmbach) | “ |
| 1735–1763 | Friederich IV (1711–1763), son of George Friederich II/II | “ |
| 1763–1769 | Friederich V Christian (1708–1769), son of Christian Heinrich. He dies without male heir. | Johann Dollhopf (1718-1771) |

| | | |
|-----------|---|--------------------------------|
| 1769–1791 | Christian Friederich Carl Alexander (1736-1806) (also Margrave of Brandenburg-Ansbach) Carl Alexander sold peasants from the Mistelbach area to the British to be used as mercenaries in the American Revolution. | Johann Dollhopf (1752-1828) |
|-----------|---|--------------------------------|

On December 2, 1791, Carl Alexander sold his principalities to King Friederich William II of Prussia to pay off his debts and use the proceeds to “retire.”

Prussia

| | | |
|-----------|--|--|
| 1791–1806 | Friederich William II King of Prussia. Mistelbach is Prussian for 15 years. | |
|-----------|--|--|

France

| | | |
|-----------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1806-1810 | Napoleon (He defeated Prussia, Bayreuth became province of France and forced to pay high war retributions). For four years our Dollhopfs are French! Napoleon sells the region to the Kingdom of Bavaria in 1810. | Eberhardt Dollhopf (1789-1843) |
|-----------|--|-----------------------------------|

House of Wittelsbach, Kingdom of Bavaria

| | | |
|-----------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1810-1825 | Maximilian I Joseph | “ |
| 1825-1848 | Ludwig I | “ |
| 1848-1864 | Maximilian II | Johann Dollhopf (1830-1858) |

1864-1886 **Ludwig II the Swan King or *der Märchenkönig*** ("the Fairy Tale King"). He built the Disney-like Neuschwanstein Castle by levying heavy taxes. Johann (John) Dollhopf (1852-1934)

Johann Bär Dollhopf immigrates to America in October, 1871, and the Dollhopfs begin paying taxes to the heads of state of America, with the important difference that the American heads of state did not pocket the money!

United States Presidents

| | | |
|-----------|------------------------------|---|
| 1869-1877 | Ulysses Grant | |
| 1877-1881 | Rutherford B. Hayes | " |
| 1881-1881 | James A. Garfield | " |
| 1881-1885 | Chester A. Arthur | " |
| 1885-1889 | Grover Cleveland | " |
| 1889-1893 | Benjamin Harrison | " |
| 1893-1897 | Grover Cleveland | " |
| 1897-1901 | William McKinley | " |
| 1901-1909 | Theodore Roosevelt | " |
| 1909-1913 | William Howard Taft | " |
| 1913-1921 | Woodrow Wilson | " |
| 1921-1923 | Warren G. Harding | " |
| 1923-1929 | Calvin Coolidge | " |
| 1929-1933 | Herbert Hoover | " |
| 1933-1945 | Franklin D. Roosevelt | " |

John Dollhopf dies on March 28, 1934, bringing an end to our "House of Dollhopf" in Germany.

Appendix B: The Twelve Articles

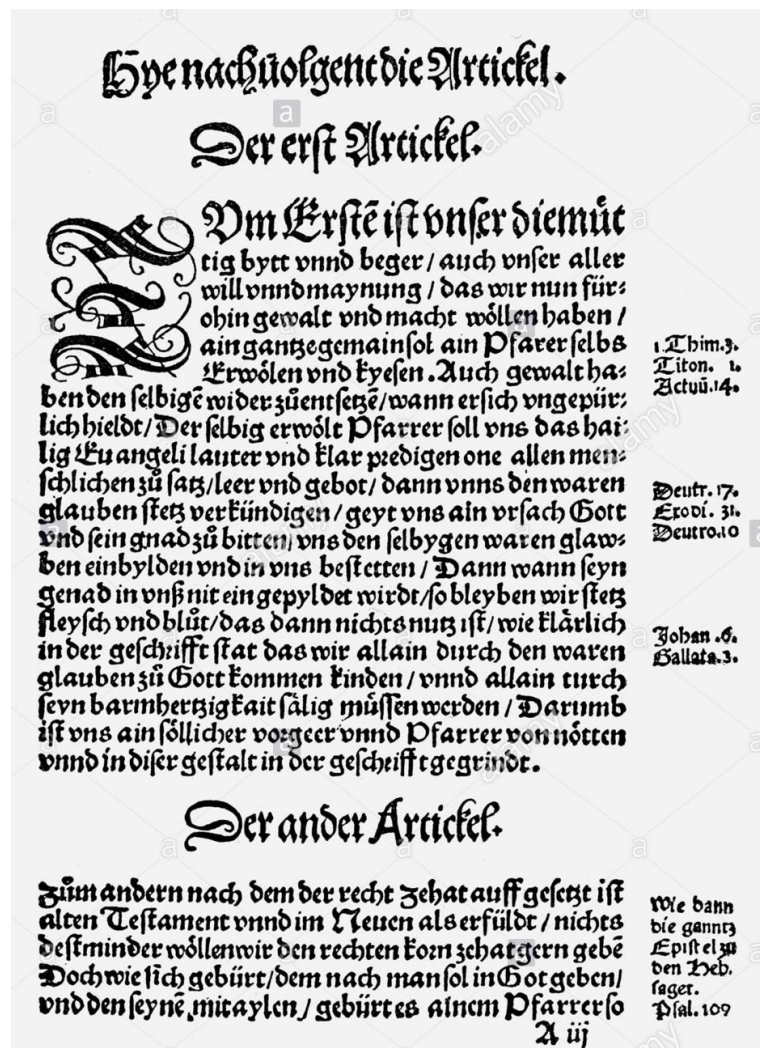
[Source of English translation: James Harvey Robinson, Readings in European History, A collection of extracts from the sources chosen with the purpose of illustrating the progress of culture in Western Europe since the German Invasions, Volume II. Boston, New York, Chicago, London: Ginn & Company, 1904-06, pp. 94-99.]

Peace to the Christian reader and the grace of God through Christ: There are many evil writings put forth of late which take occasion, on account of the assembling of the peasants, to cast scorn upon the gospel, saying "Is this the fruit of the new teaching, that no one should obey but that all should everywhere rise in revolt, and rush together to reform, or perhaps destroy altogether, the authorities, both ecclesiastic and lay?"

The articles below shall answer these godless and criminal fault-finders, and serve, in the first place, to remove the reproach from the word of God and, in the second place, to give a Christian excuse for the disobedience or even the revolt of the entire peasantry. In the first place, the gospel is not the cause of revolt and disorder, since it is the message of Christ, the promised Messiah; the word of life, teaching only love, peace, patience, and concord.

Thus all who believe in Christ should learn to be loving, peaceful, long-suffering, and harmonious. This is the foundation of all the articles of the peasants (as will be seen), who accept the gospel and live according to it. How then can the evil reports declare the gospel to be a cause of revolt and disobedience? That the authors of the evil reports and the enemies of the gospel oppose themselves to these demands is due, not to the gospel, but to the devil, the worst enemy of the gospel, who causes this opposition by raising doubts in the minds of his followers, and thus the word of God, which teaches love, peace, and concord, is overcome.

In the second place, it is clear that the peasants demand that this gospel be taught them as a guide in life, and they ought not to be called disobedient or disorderly. Whether God grants the peasants (earnestly wishing to live according to his word) their requests or no, who shall find fault with the will of the Most High? Who shall meddle in his judgments or oppose his majesty? Did he not hear the children of Israel when they called upon him and save them out of the hands of Pharaoh? Can he not save his own today? Yea, he will save them and that speedily.



This is the first page of the printed tract of the Twelve Articles

Therefore, Christian reader, read the following articles with care and then judge. Here follow the articles:

The First Article. First, it is our humble petition and desire, as also our will and desire, that in the future we should have power and authority so that each community should choose and appoint a pastor, and that we should have the right to depose him should he conduct himself improperly. The pastor thus chosen should teach us the gospel pure and simple, without any addition, doctrine, or ordinance of man.

The Second Article. According as the just tithe is established by the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New, we are ready and willing to pay the fair tithe of grain. The word of God plainly provides that in giving rightly to God and distributing to his people the services of a pastor are required. We will that for the future our church provost, whomsoever the community may appoint, shall gather and receive this tithe. From this he shall give to the pastor, elected by the whole community, a decent and sufficient maintenance for him and his, as shall seem right to the whole community. What remains over shall be given to the poor of the place, as the circumstances and the general opinion demand. Should anything further remain, let it be kept, lest anyone should have to leave the country from poverty. The small tithes, whether ecclesiastical or lay, we will not pay at all, for the Lord God created cattle for the free use of man. We will not, therefore, pay further an unseemly tithe which is of man's invention.

The Third Article. It has been the custom hitherto for men to hold us as their own property, which is pitiable enough, considering that Christ has delivered and redeemed us all, without exception, by the shedding of his precious blood, the lowly as well as the great. Accordingly it is consistent with Scripture that we should be free and should wish to be so. Not that we would wish to be absolutely free and under no authority. God does not teach that we should lead a disorderly life in the lusts of the flesh, but that we should love the Lord our God and our neighbor. We would gladly observe all this as God has commanded us in the celebration of the communion. He has not commanded us not to obey the authorities, but rather that we should be humble, not only towards those in authority, but towards every one. We are thus ready to yield obedience according to God's law to our elected and regular authorities in all proper things becoming to a Christian. We therefore take it for granted that you will release us from serfdom as true Christians, unless it should be shown from the gospel that we are serfs.

The Fourth Article. In the fourth place, it has been the custom heretofore that no poor man should be allowed to touch venison or wild fowl, or fish in flowing water, which seems to us quite unseemly and unbrotherly as well as selfish and not agreeable to the word of God. In some places the authorities preserve the game to our great annoyance and loss, recklessly permitting the unreasoning animals to destroy to no purpose our crops, which God suffers to grow for the use of man; and yet we must submit quietly. This is neither godly nor neighborly; for when God created man he gave him dominion over all the animals, over the birds of the air and the fish in the water. Accordingly it is our desire, if a man holds possession of waters, that he should prove from satisfactory documents that his right has been unwittingly [unwissenlich] acquired by purchase. We do not wish to take it from him by force, but his rights should be exercised in a Christian and brotherly fashion. But whosoever cannot produce such evidence should surrender his claim with good grace.

The Fifth Article. In the fifth place, we are aggrieved in the matter of woodcutting, for the noble folk have appropriated all the woods to themselves alone. If a poor man requires wood, he must pay. [. . .] It is our opinion that in regard to a woods which has fallen into the hands of a lord, whether spiritual or temporal, that unless it was duly purchased it should revert again to the community. It should, moreover, be free to every member of the community to help himself to such firewood as he needs in his home.

The Sixth Article. Our sixth complaint is in regard to the excessive services which are demanded of us and which are increased day to day. We ask that this matter be properly looked into, so that we shall not continue to be oppressed in this way, but that some gracious consideration be given us, since our forefathers were required only to serve according to the word of God.

The Seventh Article. Seventh, we will not hereafter allow ourselves to be further oppressed by our lords, but will let them demand only what is just and proper according to the word of the agreement between the lord and the peasant. The lord should no longer try to force more services or other dues from the peasant without payment, but permit the peasant to enjoy his holding in peace and quiet. The peasant should, however, help the lord when it is necessary, and at proper times, when it will not be disadvantageous to the peasant, and for a suitable payment.

The Eighth Article. In the eighth place, we are greatly burdened by the holdings which cannot support the rent exacted from them. The peasants suffer loss in this way and are ruined; and we ask that the lords may appoint persons of honor to inspect these holdings, and fix a rent in accordance with justice, so that the peasant shall not work for nothing, since the laborer is worthy of his hire.

The Ninth Article. In the ninth place, we are burdened with a great evil in the constant making of new laws. We are not judged according to the offense, but sometimes with great ill-will, and sometimes much too leniently. In our opinion, we should be judged according to the old written law, so that the case shall be decided according to its merits, and not with partiality.

The Tenth Article. In the tenth place, we are aggrieved by the appropriation by individuals of meadows and fields which at one time belonged to a community. These we will take again into our own hands. It may, however, happen that the land was rightfully purchased. When, however, the land has unfortunately been purchased in this way, some brotherly arrangement should be made according to circumstances.

The Eleventh Article. In the eleventh place, we will entirely abolish the due called "heriot," and will no longer endure it, nor allow widows and orphans to be thus shamefully robbed against God's will.

Conclusion. In the twelfth place, it is our conclusion and final resolution that if any one or more of the articles here set forth should not be in agreement with the word of God, as we think they are, such article we will willingly retract if it is proved really to be against the word of God by a clear explanation of the Scripture. Or if articles should now be conceded to us that are hereafter discovered to be unjust, from that hour they shall be dead and null and without force. Likewise, if more complaints should be discovered which are based upon truth and the Scriptures and relate to offenses against God and our neighbor, we have determined to reserve the right to present these also, and to exercise ourselves in all Christian teaching. For this we shall pray to God, since he can grant our demands, and he alone. The peace of Christ abide with us all.