Dollhopf

600 Years in the Baking

Update on the Dollhopf Name: Fruitcake Redux

The Brothers Grimm

I am constantly on the lookout for clues regarding the name Dollhopf, and recently have come across additional, this time definitive, evidence.

If you recall, in *Blog #3 The Dollhopf Name,* I espoused four theories about the origin of the name:

> *Theory 1:* Dollhopf could mean…a yeast cake, a so-called *gugelhopf*, baked in the shape of the "ring or crown of the raving madman." *Tol* meaning "madman," and *höfer,* a medieval term for a ring or crown. It was said that the fluted swirls of the gugelhopf were fashioned to imitate the turbans – the "rings" or "crowns" – of the raving madmen, the Turks, who were persistent enemies of the Germans.

> *Theory 2:* …a yeast cake characterized by the "bulge of hopping dough." *Tol* (or *Dol*) meaning "bulge," or "bulbous," and *hopfen* meaning the "hopping" of the dough out of the pan, caused by the action of yeast.

> *Theory 3*: …a man hopping on one foot. *Dol* meaning a "club foot," (or literally bulging foot) and <u>*hopfen*</u>, again "hopping."

> *Theory 4*: …head of a bird. *Dohle* meaning a jackdaw, or black bird, and *kopf*, (which migrated to *hopf*), meaning "head."

In that blog I cited a secondary source that referred to a Brothers Grimm story about *hopf* as the "hopping of dough out of a pan." Well, I decided to consult the primary source – the Brothers Grimm *Deutsche Wörterbuch* (DWB), ("The German Dictionary"), which is the largest and most comprehensive dictionary of the German language. Lexicographers claim it is to the German language what the Oxford English Dictionary is to the English language.

It did not occur to me to check this dictionary previously because it does not specifically offer definitions or etymologies of surnames. I was relying on onomastic sources that specifically address surname origins.

In the DWB, *Tollhopf* is listed as a *thing*, not a surname.
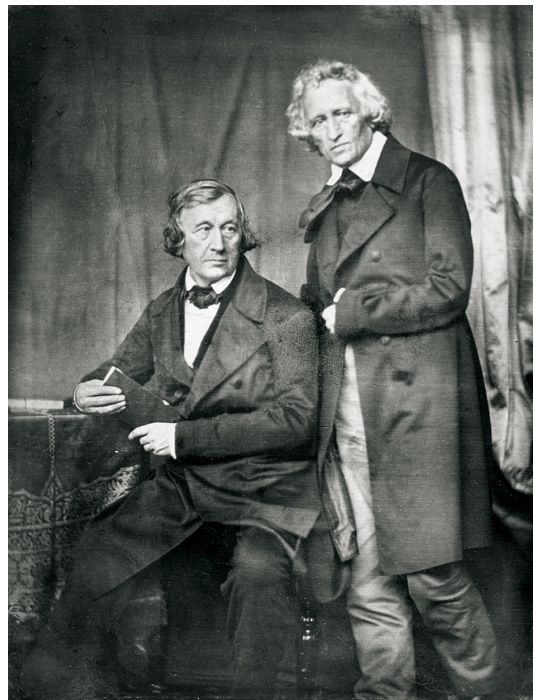
The Brothers Grimm in an 1847 photograph when they were in their 70s – on the left Wilhelm Karl (1786-1859) and on the right Jacob Ludwig Karl (1785-1863).

This DWB includes not only etymologies (word histories), but also, importantly, *attestations* – their definitions are researched and backed by documented evidence, lending extraordinary validity to their findings.

We know the Brothers Grimm (German: *die Gebrüder Grimm*) because of their collection of well-known fairytales – their first collection of 86 folktales, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, ("Children- and Fairytales") was published in 1812. At the time, the Grimms were librarians to the court of King of Westphalia in Kassel, Germany. Over the years this collection would grow to more than 200 folktales, the final edition published in 1857.[1]

In 1830, the Grimms – Jacob and Wilhelm – were appointed professors at the University of Göttingen, in Göttingen, Germany.[2] Jacob was also named head librarian. Both taught German Studies. Wilhelm continued to collect and edit additional volumes of *Kinder- und Hausmärchen,* while Jacob published *Deutsche Mytholo*gie ("German Mythology") in 1835, a seminal work of medieval German literature. It was a collection and analysis of pre-Christian superstitions in Germanic poetry, fairytales, and folklore.

They left Göttingen in 1837 and moved to Berlin, where they were appointed professors at the University of Berlin in 1840. It was during this period that they began their work on the massive *Deutsche Wörterbuch* – over 330,000 words that covered High German usage since 1450.[3] The initial volumes of the dictionary were published in 1854; Wilhelm and Jacob never lived to see its completion. Work continued for decades and was not completed until *1961*.

I cite their *bona fides* because they were not mere storytellers. They were among the most important and respected cultural historians of their era.
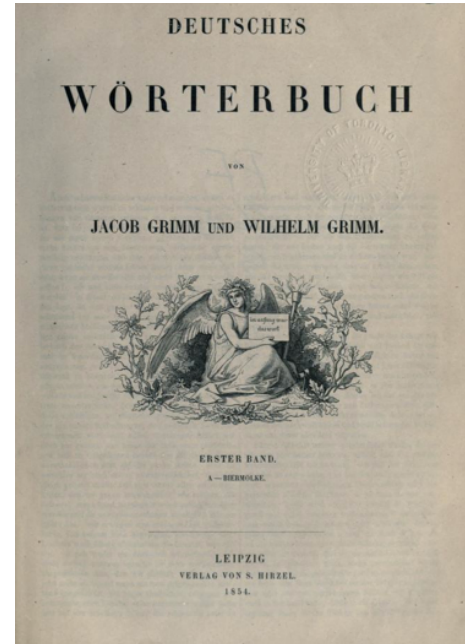
So…I looked up *Tollhopf*. As you may recall, in the Middle Ages Dollhopf was spelled "Tollhopf." The *T* began to change to a *D* with a linguistic shift in Franconia in the late 1400s, but Tollhopf was still used by our Dollhopf ancestors as late as the 1800s – an indication of how slow cultural changes occurred in the more remote rural areas like Mistelbach. Our 4x-great-grandfather Johann Dollhopf (1752-1828), was the last to use this spelling.

Here is the entry in the Grimms' *Deutsche Wörterbuch*:[4]

> **Tollhopf,** n. *was gugelhopf Schm.[2] 1, 501.* (translation: "Tollhopf, a kind of gugelhopf, see *Schm.[2] 1, 501*.")

Ergo, Dollhopf was a kind of cake. Most interesting however, and perhaps the penultimate clue to the origin of the name, is the reference to "Schm.[2] 1, 501."

---

[1] The Grimms suffered financial difficulties throughout most of their lives. Imagine today if they were able to cash in on the royalties *to Sleeping Beauty, Hansel and Gretel, The Three Little Pigs, Rumpelstiltskin, Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood*, or any of their scores of other fairytales. They would *own* Disney!

[2] I was fortunate to spend three years at Göttingen (2016-2019) as senior advisor to the President.

[3] "High German" languages are those that evolved in the mountainous ("high" land) regions of southern Germany, Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, and Luxembourg. Today's standard German evolved from High German. "Low German" refers to those languages that developed in the regions of the lowland North German Plain, along the North and Baltic Seas.

[4] You can find this reference at: http://woerterbuchnetz.de/cgi-bin/WBNetz/wbgui_py?sigle=DWB&mode=Vernetzung&lemid=GT05916#XGT05916

Johann Andreas Schmeller

"Schm." refers to Johann Andreas Schmeller, author of the *Bayerisches Wörterbuch* ("Bavarian Dictionary"). The "2" in "Schm.2" refers to the second edition; the first edition was published in 1827. Schmeller, like the Grimms, was a philologist. He was a professor at the University of Munich from 1828 until his death in 1852. His *Bayerisches Wörterbuch* is the definitive work on Bavarian dialect. This comprehensive work is sometimes referred to as "*Der Schmeller*."

Schmeller not only cataloged Bavarian dialect in current usage, but also made it a point to research and define words that were no longer in common use. He commented:

> This dictionary is… not merely an Idioticon[5] containing expressions occurring in the living dialects, and not only a glossarium[6] of those expressions found in old texts and documents; it is both at the same time. That which is now, finds its most natural explanation in that which once was, and vice versa (Introduction VII).[7]

The second edition of Der Schmeller was published in four volumes from 1872 to 1877. In the first volume, on page 501 is this entry:

> **Der Tollhopf,** *eine art mehlspeise, see: Dogl- or Goglhopf* (translation: "The Tollhopf, a kind of pastry, see Dogl- or Goglhopf")

Here is the interesting history and definition of *mehlspeise,* translated from the German Wikipedia https://de.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mehlspeise:

> **Mehlspeise** is a term used in old Bavarian and Austrian cuisine, which is a generic term for various desserts, pastries, and cakes that can be served as a main course or dessert .
>
> Historically, pastries were filling, meatless, main dishes made from flour, but also other cereal products or other starchy foods. They arose from the rigorous fasting laws of the Catholic Church, since believers were not allowed to eat meat 150 days a year [on religious holidays] and fish was often very expensive [or not available]. This tradition of mostly hearty pastries can be traced back to the 16th century in Austria and southern Germany.
>
> The pastries included pancakes, strudel, lard pastries (fried pastries?), *nockerin* (sugar dumplings), noodles, porridges, puddings, and dumplings; and *bouillie* (a pastry or porridge-like concoction made from fine flour that is baked in a pan with milk or cream, and sugar.)

Was Tollhopf in current usage in the 1800s, or was it one of those words that was not "living dialect?" Schmeller's main sources were the spoken words of his time found in proverbs, sayings, songs, verse, etc. – so it is possible that Tollhopf still referred to a type of pastry as late as the 1800s. I do not know when the use of Tollhopf, specifically as a term for pastry, disappeared from common usage.

Schmeller also directs the reader to "*see Dogl- or Goglhopf.*"

This is perhaps the ultimate clue, and it brings us back to Mistelbach.

---

[5] Idioticon = a dictionary of a specific dialect.
[6] Glossarium = a vocabulary or glossary, notably of obsolete, antiquated or foreign words needing explanation. (Wiktionary).
[7] I think this means a Dollhopf now was a Tollhopf then – a person now was a fruitcake then. (I'm kidding.)

Bavarian Dialect and Local Tradition

Bavarian dialect was remarkably fragmented and localized – spellings and pronunciations can vary not only regionally, but from *village to village.*[8] The same was true for units of weight, measurement, and currency. The Holy Roman Empire was a patchwork of hundreds, if not thousands, of principalities, each with their own ruler, who set local standards. Mistelbach was one such principality, ruled by a knight, with a land area of only 2.4 square miles!

An acre of land in Mistelbach was not the same as an acre of land in the next village. Standardization *of anything* was nearly impossible because of this fragmentation, and frankly it makes genealogical research difficult and frustrating – to wit trying to find the origin and meaning of Tollhopf.

That said, I came across a local reference in Mistelbach lore to pastries that Schmeller identified as Tollhopfs.

In 1989 the *Hummelgauer Heimat Bote* (a history magazine of the Hummelgauer region that includes Mistelbach) published a story about a medieval custom known as *Der Rockenstube,* or "the spinning room."[9] This was an occasion when young unmarried girls of a village would spend a long winter's evening in a host house "spinning" (as in spinning yarn) – preparing flax, hemp, or other fibers for clothing, ostensibly to be used for their dowries. But it was mostly an excuse for socializing, and at some point, the boys of the village would crash the party (how could they not….).

All sorts of frivolity and mischief would follow, activities that were frowned upon by the Church, and in some regions banned altogether. As I described in an earlier blog, the games they played were similar to, but often more risqué, than our adolescent "spin the bottle." In addition, the boys would play many pranks and stunts, not only on the girls, but also on unsuspecting villagers – once the party spilled out of the spinning room. One story has the young men taking apart a farmer's wagon and reassembling it on his roof. Punk'd! [10]

In the Rockenstube narrative there is a brief mention of the treats distributed at Christmas time:

> *An Weihnachten schenkte die Dorfjugend den Bauersleuten, bei denen sie die Rockaschtum halten durften, als Dank Kaffee und Zucker, manchmal auch Petroleum. Dafür wurde diese dann an Silvester mit Kaffee und "Duglhopf" (Hefekuchen) oder einem "Hieferschtolln" (Hefestollen) bewirtet.*

> "At Christmas, the village youth gave coffee and sugar, sometimes even paraffin oil [for lamps], as thanks to the villager who hosted the Rockenstube. In return they were served coffee and "Duglhopf" (yeast cakes) or "Hieferschtolln" (yeast stollen) on New Year's Eve."

This mention of *Duglhopf*, also spelled *Doglhopf*, is cited by Schmeller as Bavarian dialect for *gugelhopf*. It is not hard to see how Dollhopf was a variant.

I think our mystery is solved: a Dollhopf *is* indeed a gugelhopf, a fruit cake, but the fruit was optional.

---

[8] When I was in Mistelbach in 2018, I visited Oberwaiz, a village only four miles from Mistelbach, where our great-grandfather lived as a teenager with his mother and stepfather. Visiting with me, and serving as translator, was Bernd Hammon, our third cousin, who was born, raised, and still lives, in House #19 in Mistelbach. We called on the owners of the house where our great-grandfather lived, but Bernd was unable to understand the owner because of his dialect, yet he only lived four miles away!

[9] Also known as *Der Spinnstube* see https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spinnstube

[10] This custom continued until after WWII. More about this is in a future blog.

Fruitcake Explained

What exactly was a *gugelhopf* back in the day? We jest that it is a fruitcake, and while it might have contained bits of dried fruit, mostly raisins, and nuts, it was not the fruitcake we know and (some) love today.

We return to the Grimms' *Deutsche Wörterbuch* for a definition of *gugelhopf*. The Grimms cite a number of different sources, describing variations of the use of the word gugelhopf. Interestingly they mention that in Bavaria, the form gogelhopf is more common:

German	*English Translation*
Gugelhupf, auch **gogelhopf**, m., bezeichnung eines kuchens. Nieder- und mitteldeutsch entsprechen topf-, napf-, asch- oder formkuchen. Der zweite bestandteil dürfte zum verb. Hüpfen gehören und bezieht sich auf die infolge der hefe sich wie eine gugel hebende obere fläche des kuchens.	**Gugelhupf**, also **gogelhopf**, m., designation of a cake. Low and Central German corresponding to pot, bowl, or ash shaped cake. The second part [*hopf*] corresponds to the verb "jumping," and refers to the upper surface of the cake that rises like a *gugel* as a result of the yeast.
Das wort ist vornehmlich oberdeutsch und reicht nur wenig in mitteldeutsche gebiete hinein, vgl. Follmann lothr. 318; Vilmar Kurhessen 139; Reinwald henneb. 2, 156; Martin-Lienhart elsäss. 1, 362; Fischer schwäb. 3, 735; Staub-Tobler 2, 1492; Schmeller-Fr. 1, 880; Loritza id. Vienn. 56. im schwäb.	The word is primarily from Upper [southern] Germany and only slightly extends into central German areas, cf. Follmann Lothr. 318; Vilmar Kurhessen 139; Reinwald henneb. 2, 156; Martin-Lienhart Alsace. 1.362; Fischer Schwäb. 3, 735; Staub-Tobler 2, 1492; Schmeller-Fri. 1,880; Loritza id. Vienn. 56. in swab.
Und bair. herrscht die form gogelhopf	And bair. [Bavaria] the form gogelhopf prevails….
vor….[Bd. 9, Sp. 1051]	[Vol. 9, col. 1051]

This definition does not define gugelhopf in terms of the mold – the fluted ceramic or tin shape that we know as a Bundt cake mold. Rather, a gugelhopf is defined by the upper surface of the dough as it rises (or "hops") <u>out</u> of the mold. The mold could be, as the Grimms defined it, any sort of "pot, bowl, or ash shaped cake." The yeasty dough would rise from the mold and drape over the side, looking like a *gugel*. A gugel, pictured at right, was a type of medieval hood, with a tail that trailed down the back, often worn by monks.

A medieval gugel, a hood that today is an ornament of some academic gowns.

The also-mentioned "ash cake" was a lump of dough, placed beside, or directly on, the hot ashes of a spent fire. In a similar fashion, the dough would rise giving the appearance of a bulbous gugel. In the Middle Ages, before houses had stoves or ovens, bread was often baked in this fashion, directly on ashes.[11]

So, aren't you curious? Are there medieval recipes for gugelhopf, or, as we now know, in Bavarian dialect, a tollhopf? Well, yes, there are, but there would have been as many recipes for gugelhopfs as there were villages throughout southern Europe. There were precious few recipe books, and none, of course, that enjoyed wide circulation – before the mid 1400s printing presses did not exist,

---

[11] Stoves were not invented until the 1700s. Before then, villages such as Mistelbach had communal ovens.

and most peasants couldn't read anyway. The fact that these cakes or pastries went by many different names and spelling variations – tollhopf, dollhopf, gugelhupf, gugelhopf, gogelhopf, guglhupf, duglhopf, doglhopf, kouglof, kougelhof, kougelhopf, et al. – is evidence that they evolved far and wide in disparate territories.

Whether they were baked in molds, in pots, in bowls, or directly in or on ashes, they had one thing in common, different from other pastries of the era – yeast. Yeast is what caused the dough to "hop." Yeast, a byproduct of beer brewing, was introduced to baking in Franconia – the territory that includes Mistelbach – in the mid 1300s (coincidentally the same time when surnames came into common usage in Franconia).

An "ash cake" or pastry, made directly on the ashes of a fire. Note the bulging appearance caused by the yeast, and the various sizes.

I searched the 20 following pre-1600 medieval cookbooks for cakes that incorporated yeast in the recipe:[12]

Year	Title and Author (if known)	Translation
~1350	Das Buch von guter Speise	The Book of good Food
1354	Ein Buch von guter spise	A Book of good food
~1400	Ein alemannisches Büchlein von gutter Speise	An Alemannic[13] booklet of good Food
~1400	Kochbuch	Cookbook
~1450	Das Kochbuch des Meisters Eberhard	The Cookbook of the Master Eberhard
1490	Küchenmeisterei (R. Ehnert and J. Petri)	Kitchen Mastery
1400s	Die Kochrezepte in der Basler Handschrift	The Recipes in the Basel (Swiss) Handwriting
1400s	Ein Kochbuch aus dem Archiv des Deutschen Ordens	A Cookbook from the Archive of the Teutonic Order
1400s	Ein mittelniederdeutsches Kochbuch	A Middle Low German Cookbook
1400s	Grazer Hausbuch (Hans Zotter)	Graz House Book
~1500	Alte Kochrezepte aus dem bayrischen	Old Recipes from Bavaria
1516	Küchenmeisterei (R. Ehnert and J. Petri)	Kitchen Mastery
1529	Kuchenmaysterey (J. Gutknecht)	Cake Mastery
1530	Von allen Speisen und Gerichten	Of all Dishes and Meals
1553	Das Kuchbuch der Sabina Welserin	The Cookbook of Sabina Welserin
1554	Das Kuchbuch der Maria Stenglerin (M. Stenglerin)	The Cookbook of Maria Stenglerin
1566	Koch vnd Kellermeisterey	Cook and Cellar mastery
1569	Kochbuch	Cookbook
1581	Ein new Kochbuch (Marx Rumpolt)	A new Cookbook
1598	Ein Köstlich new Kochbuch (A. Wecker)	A Delicious new Cookbook

Marx Rumpolt

Unless I missed it, none of the above cookbooks included a recipe for a cake or pastry with yeast, except for one – Ein new Kochbuch by Marx Rumpolt, published in 1581. Medievalists credit Rumpolt for the oldest known gugelhopf recipe, even though he himself never identifies a specific cake or pastry as a *gugelhopf*.

At the time, Rumpolt was the head chef for Daniel Brendel, the Elector of Mainz. The Elector, a powerful position in the Holy Roman Empire, was both Archbishop of Mainz, and ruling prince of the territory surrounding the city of Mainz, on the Rhine River in southwestern Germany. The Elector was *primas Germaniae* (literally, the "first of Germany") – the stand-in for the Pope in territories north of the Alps.

Rumpolt worked for a number of nobles throughout southern Germany, Bohemia (now the Czech Republic), and Hungary, so he was familiar with a variety of regional cuisines. *Ein new Kochuch* contains over 2,000 recipes and instructions for wine making, and 150 woodcut illustrations by artist Jost Amman. This book is thought to be the first textbook written for "professional" chefs.

Rumpolt listed over 76 recipes for *Gebackens* ("baked goods") of which a Tollhopf *could* be one. As I mentioned above, he never mentions the term gugelhopf (or Tollhopf) to describe any of his pastries, although he clearly states that a combination of flour, eggs, and beer yeast is the basis for many pastries. From his book:[14]

> Ein Teig angemacht mit weissem Meel/ mit Eyern/ vn~ mit Bierhefen/ von einem solchen Teig kan man viellerley Gebackens machen.

---

[12] http://medievalcookery.com/etexts.html?Germany

[13] The Alemanni was an ancient Germanic tribe of Upper Germany.

[14] Transliteration and translation by Sharon Palmer aka Ranvaig Weaver, copyright 2013.

"A dough mixed with white flour/ with eggs/ and with beer yeast/ from such a dough one can make many pastries."

He describes the use of earthen, or clay, molds (and that they need to be broken when serving the cake!):

Alles solches Gebackens im Ofen gebacken/ müssen aber Jrdene Mödel seyn/ vnd wann man es wil auff den Tisch geben/ so muß man die Mödel zubrechen/ so kan das Gebackens herauß/ alsdann muß man es warm in ein Silber anrichten/ vnnd zulassen Meyen Butter daruber giessen/ auch Zucker vnd Zimmet darüber strewen.

"All such pastry baked in the oven/ however must be in an earthen mold/ and when one wants to serve it on the table/ then one must break the mold/ then the pastry can come out/ then one must dress it warm in a silver (dish)/ and pour melted May butter over it/ also sprinkle it with sugar and cinnamon."

Mmmm. One could presume that these clay molds could take many shapes. He does not name or describe them, but we do know that some of the earliest gugelhopf forms were made of clay, not tin or metal as they are today. This, however, misses the point. The gugelhopf was named for the dough rising out of the mold, not the mold that shaped it.

A 16th century woodcut illustration of a cook by artist Jost Amman. This woodcut is one of 150 from the book Ein new Kochbuch *by Marx Rumpolt, 1581. This could be Rumpolt himself. Note the many various sizes and shapes of cookware, and the common use of the spit, one way to make pastry.*

Following are several of his recipes, mostly variations on a similar theme – a combination of flour, eggs, sometimes milk, sometimes butter, and, of course yeast. He numbered all of his recipes.

Gebackens #20. Nimm warme Milch/ vnd schlag Eier darvnter/ mach ein Teig an mit schönem weissen Mehl/ nimb ein wenig Bierhefen vnd Butter darzu/ laß jn ein weil stehn hinder dem Ofen/ daß er vber sich steiget/ mach jn wider zuhauf/ vnd Saltz jn ein wenig/ walg jn darnach fein sauber auß/ wirf schwartze Rosein darüber. Nimm ein Walger/ der fein warm/ vnd mit Butter geschmiert ist/ vnd leg jn auff den Teig/ schlag den Teig darüber/ vnd bindt jn mit einem Zwirnsfaden zusammen/ daß er nicht herab fellt/ legs zum Feuwer/ vnd wendts fein langsam umb/ so wirt es sich sauber braten. Vnd wenns braun wirt/ so nimb ein Pensel/ vnd steck jn in heisse Butter/ vnd bestreich den   damit/ so wirt er schön bräunlicht. Vnd wenn er gebraten/ so thu jn von dem Walgerspieß/ vnd steck beide Löcher zu mit saubern Tüchern/ daß die Hitz darbei bleibt/ laß also bleiben/ biß kül wirt/ so gibs kalt auff ein Tisch/ so wirt es fein mürb vnd gut. Vnd man nennet es Spießkuchen.

"Baked goods #20. Take warm milk and beat eggs with it/ mix a dough with fair white flour/ take a little beer yeast and butter to it/ let it stand a while behind the oven/ that it rises/ make it again into a ball/ and salt it a little/ then roll it out cleanly/ throw black raisins over it. Take a Walger (a type of roller or spit)/ that is warm/ and rubbed with butter/ and lay it on the dough/ wrap the dough over/ and tie it together with a twine/ so it does not fall off/ lay it to the fire and turn slowly/ like this will it roast cleanly. And when it becomes brown then take a brush/ and put it into hot butter/ and coat the cake with it/ like this it will be a beautiful brown. And when it is roasted/ take it off the roller spit/ and put into both holes with a clean cloth/ that the heat remains/ let it remain like this/ until it is cool so give cold on a table/ so it becomes tender and good. And one calls it spit cake (cake baked on a spit, the so-called Walger, over the fire)."

Gebackens #20: *Spießkuchen or "Spit Cake." The yeast dough is wrapped around a roller or "spit," and baked over a fire.*

Gebackens #41. Mach ein Teig an mit Milch/ Eiern/ vnd schönem weissen Mehl/ thu ein wenig Bierhefen darein/ vnd mach ein guten Teig/ der nicht gar steiff ist/ vnd verSaltz jn nicht/ setz jn zu der wärm/ daß er fein aufgehet/ stürtz jhn auff ein saubers Bret/ vnd thu kleine schwartze Rosein darvnter/ mach Strützel darauß/ wirf sie in heisse Butter/ vnd backs/ so wirt es fein auflaufen/ gibs kalt oder warm auff ein Tisch/ besträw es mit Zucker/ so ist es ein gut Gebackens.

> **"Baked goods #41**. Make a dough with milk/ eggs/ and fair white flour/ put a little beer yeast in it/ and make a good dough/ that is not completely stiff/ and do not over salt it/ set it to the warm/ that it nicely risen/ punch it down on a clean board/ and do little black raisins around it/ make *strutzel* from it/ throw it in hot butter/ and fry/ like this it will nicely puff up/ serve cold or warm on a table/ sprinkle it with sugar/ like this it is a good pastry."

Frustrating for modern readers is the fact that Rumpolt never specifies the volume or weight of the necessary ingredients (as was typical with all medieval recipes). He assumes that one can judge by sight and feel the proper amounts needed.

In his various cake recipes he describes a number of ways of baking the cake dough – in a clay mold, a bowl, a pan, on a rolling pin, or extruded through the hole in the bottom of bowl in strands and dropped into hot lard – what we know as funnel cakes.

In recipe #41 his instructions include *mach Strützel darauß*, or "make *Strützel* from it." *Strutzel,* also known today as Stollen (and by a host of other names), is a cake, dusted with powdered sugar, containing nuts, raisins, currants, and candied orange and lemon peels. This is what today we call a fruitcake. It is a festive concoction, commonly baked at Christmas time.

Obviously, there is a great deal of improvisation required here. One doesn't just go and "make a stollen" out of a lump of dough! In thousands of central and southern medieval German villages, there developed countless variations on a theme; a Tollhopf was clearly one.

We must remember too that Rumpolt was cooking for one of the most powerful and wealthy men in Europe, and that he would have been cooking in a kitchen equipped like a *Guide Michelin* three-star restaurant. As you can see in the woodcut, he had every sort of cooking vessel and utensil at hand. He even had the luxury of breaking the clay mold every time he baked a cake, and then serving it on a silver platter!

Your lowly peasant's kitchen was not so well equipped. In *Blog 11: Doorway*, I list <u>all</u> of the utensils that our 2x-great-grandparents Johann and Margarethe Dollhopf had in their kitchen at the time of his death in 1858:[15]

1 dish rack	1 sauerkraut vat	1 knife
1 iron pan	1 vat	6 spoons
2 little pots	1 butter crock	baking utensils (these were not
13 pewter plates	1 butter churn	specified, and were stored in
1 earthen crock	1 fruit press	the barn)

That's it. And no stove. They owned a 1/13 share in the village "common baking oven." In the house, Margarethe likely did her cooking and baking on a hearth.

And no gugelhopf molds. If Margarethe was baking any type of cake or pastry, she was probably making it directly in the fire, like an ash cake, or frying it in lard in her vat. With access to the community oven she could have baked in a traditional manner, but the cake dough was likely lumped directly onto the oven surface, or baked in one of her little pots or "baking utensils." The resulting cake would have been shaped like the pot. There is no indication or evidence that she possessed earthen molds shaped like turbans!

Our romantic vision of a sugar-powdery crown of sweet yeast bread, as pictured following, were only possible with the invention of elaborate ceramic and tin molds, most of which peasants could not afford.

---

[15] This list possible because of the estate inventory of everything the couple owned, taken shortly after he died.

Conclusion

Dollhopf – originally *Tollhopf,* mostly until the 1800s – is a surname entirely regional in character. Unlike Schmidt, Bender, Bauer, etc. – names that are found all over Germany – Dollhopf is unique to Franconia, which, although a province of Bavaria for almost 200 years, still retains a culture, language, and customs distinct from Bavaria.

The Grimm and Schmeller dictionaries define *Tollhopf* not as a surname, but rather as an object: a gugelhopf, which was a type of cake or pastry characterized by the rising action of yeast.

But gugelhopf with an important difference: today's gugelhopfs are defined, indeed made famous by, the shape of the fluted mold. In the early Middle Ages, the term gugelhopf referred *not* to the mold, but rather to the shape of the dough that rose, or hopped, *out of the mold.* The shape created by the fermentation of the yeast – the rising or "hopping" of the dough out of the pan – resembled a *gugel*, a medieval hood with a tail; the dough would droop over the side like a tail.

The Tollhopf could be baked in clay molds, pans, bowls, on spits, directly on ashes, or it could be deep fried in lard. The defining characteristic was the addition of yeast to the traditional cake batter of flour, eggs, milk, and butter.

Bits of dried fruit, especially raisins, were likely optional, so a Tollhopf originally was more yeast-cake than fruit-cake.

We learn from Schmeller that regional Bavarian dialects of the word Tollhopf included *gogelhopf*, and *doglhopf*, and in a story about *Der Rockenstube,* published in the Hummelgauer Heimat Bote, we learn that *Doglhopfs* were yeast pastries eaten at Christmas (and probably other festive religious occasions).

So…perhaps we have found the precise etymology of the *name* Dollhopf, but there remains a great mystery:

Why was a *person*, probably, most likely, in the 1300s, named for a cake?

The search continues….

Mark R. Dollhopf
New Haven, Connecticut
August 27, 2020 (*In anno corona virum.*)