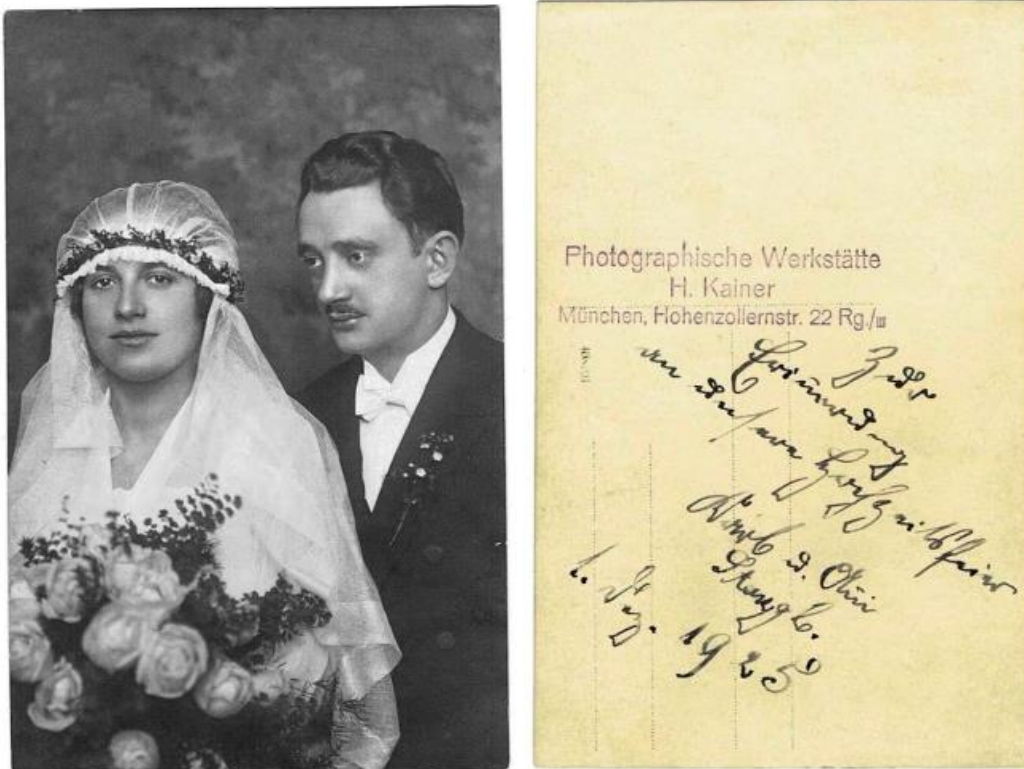


The Brick Walls, 2: Stangle, Schmidt, Perard, Marx

In this blog post I will share with you more photos which, despite bearing the name of the sitter, I have not been able to identify. For a genealogy detective like myself, that can be frustrating. We call it the brick wall. As much as I'd like to find out more about them and share my findings with you, some names have indeed been forgotten by history. Nevertheless, let's honour their memory by naming them and letting their faces convey their emotions in that particular moment in their hopefully long lives.



"A keepsake of our wedding day, **Karl & Anni Stangle**, December 1st, 1925" The photo was printed in Munich, Germany.

Because of the data protection laws in effect in Germany, not all marriage records from the 1920s are publicly available. So even though I could find several "suitable" Karl Stangle's from Bavaria (incl. Munich), I cannot make sure which one would be the groom in this photograph. For that I would need to locate the marriage record of Karl and Anni from December 1925. I don't know in which district of Munich they were wed. And honestly, the service of applying for a copy from the archives in Germany is too expensive and due to the data protection laws too complicated if one is not related. I will leave this photo here for now and hope that one day I will find Karl and Anni or their living descendants.

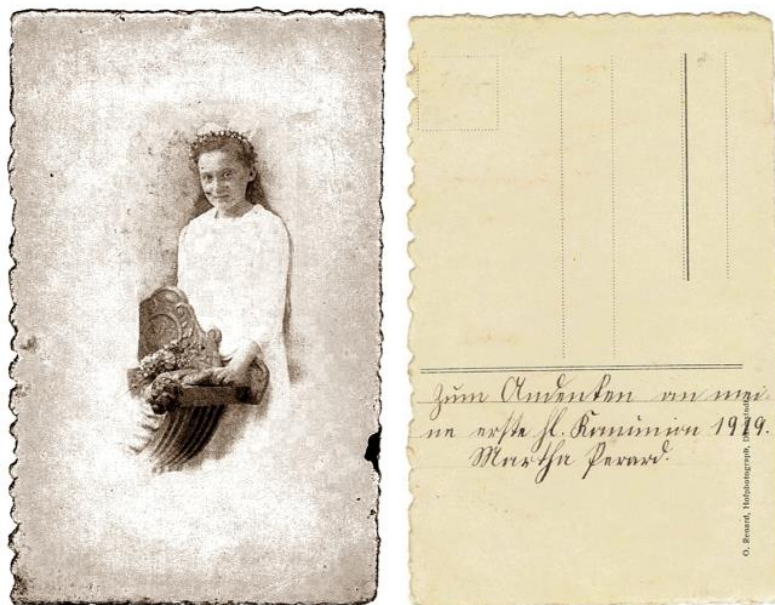




“Luisl Schmidt. Coburg, autumn 1916”

It was the very first photograph I shared on my Instagram account @photoswithoutfamilies in January 2019. I was so fascinated by her embroidered traditional dress and her thick long braids. The innocence of youth!

Coburg is a town in the Upper Franconia region of Bavaria. It joined Bavaria only in 1920; at the time this photo was taken it belonged to the state of Thuringia (Thüringen). I have not been able to find records on Luisl's birth. I'm thinking Luisl (a calling name for Luise/Louise or Luisa) is about 14-16 years old in this photograph. So in that case she was probably born at the turn of the century (around 1900-1902). What the occasion was for her to wear this beautiful regional costume or for whom she posed in 1916 in the turmoil of WWI, will remain a mystery.



“A keepsake of my First Holy Communion in 1919, Martha Perard”

The original of the above photo is extremely faded, I've tried my best to digitally save what's possible. When I saw this photo, I was actually more fascinated by the beautiful hand-writing on the back of it. The text is written in perfect German cursive or kurrent, an old German hand-writing taught at schools up until the 1940s. If you want to understand kurrent, you first need to learn the kurrent alphabet. If you don't familiarise yourself with the alphabet, you will very likely understand very little. Most Germans cannot read this hand-writing these days. Although it is not taught at school anymore, you can take a course to learn it in your free time, either online or in study groups. I can tell you, honestly, it felt like learning to read and write for the first time – it is so different from what my brain has learnt as letters before! Luckily there are also Facebook groups you can join where members help each other decipher the old handwriting if one gets stuck.

But not everyone wrote in such clean flawless cursive like young Martha did. I bet she loved schoolwork and writing in general. I have not been able to find anything on Martha herself. If she had her First Holy Communion in 1919, she would be around 10-12 years of age in this photo, so she was most probably born some time between 1909 and 1911. Perhaps she was also born in Darmstadt. I did find a Jules Emile René Perard, a French-born cook who married a certain Anna Margaretha Petry in Darmstadt in 1902. Perhaps they were Martha's parents? But there is no record on Martha's birth available on the genealogy platforms I use.



I first read the gentleman's name to be Julius Masse. But then someone on Instagram pointed out that it could be **Julius Marx** instead. Either way, I don't have anything solid on this gentleman. It is usually more difficult for me to date photos of gentlemen. The ladies' fashion and styling changed more rapidly over the decades which helps dating photos a lot. This gentleman wears a bushy beard which could easily make him look older than he actually was. The photo studio of Hans Luck in Düsseldorf opened in 1898 and was in operation in the same address up until after WWI. This is a bigger format cabinet photo, but even that doesn't help much as large cabinet photos as studio portraits were in fashion up until the 1940s.

If anyone has any comments or clues regarding the persons in the photographs, please contact me. Thanks for stopping by!