From Prussia and Bohemia to South Australia – Why, When, How?
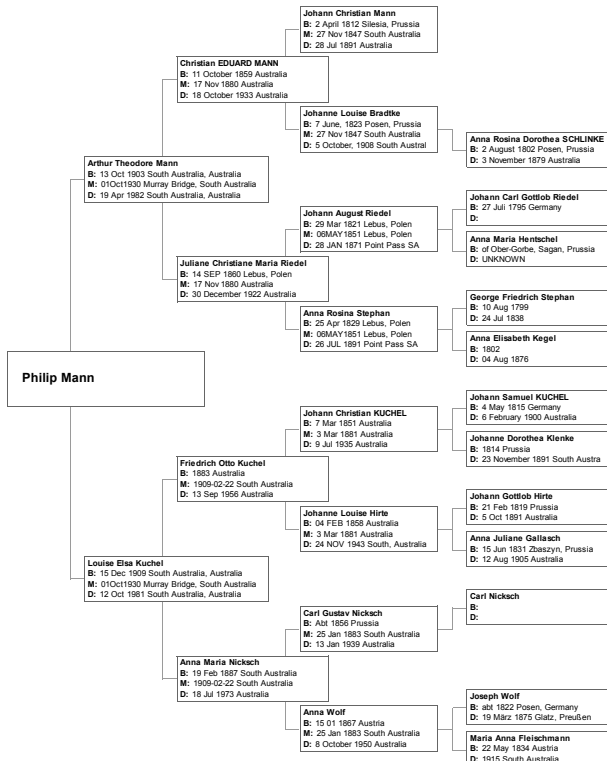
BY PHILIP MANN

I grew up with an awareness of my Germanic and Lutheran heritage. In 1961[1] when I was 10, the *population of the* Municipality of Murray Bridge and the District Council of Mobilong combined,[2] had 17.2% Lutherans of which I knew I was related to about half.

On 22 November 1970, when I was 19, I attended a Kuchel family reunion at Hahndorf and Mum gave me a copy of the book. I read it keenly and underlined the surnames. I still have that book 50 years later, much the worse for wear. Over the years, there have been Gallasch

and Bradtke family reunions and I have purchased the relevant books. In the early 1990s, I drew up a pedigree for my children. As I neared retirement, I became more interested, joining *Ancestry.com* and having my DNA analysed.

My research has confirmed that my ancestors came from what were then Prussia and Austria-Hungary, but today are Poland and Czechia. They spoke German and most were Lutheran, *although* some were Catholic.

Below is my family tree as I currently know it.

Philip Mann

Arthur Theodore Mann
B: 13 Oct 1903 South Australia, Australia
M: 01Oct1930 Murray Bridge, South Australia
D: 19 Apr 1982 South Australia, Australia

Christian EDUARD MANN
B: 11 October 1859 Australia
M: 17 Nov 1880 Australia
D: 18 October 1933 Australia

Johann Christian Mann
B: 2 April 1812 Silesia, Prussia
M: 27 Nov 1847 South Australia
D: 28 Jul 1891 Australia

Johanne Louise Bradtke
B: 7 June, 1823 Posen, Prussia
M: 27 Nov 1847 South Australia
D: 5 October, 1908 South Austral

Anna Rosina Dorothea SCHLINKE
B: 2 August 1802 Posen, Prussia
D: 3 November 1879 Australia

Juliane Christiane Maria Riedel
B: 14 SEP 1860 Lebus, Polen
M: 17 Nov 1880 Australia
D: 30 December 1922 Australia

Johann August Riedel
B: 29 Mar 1821 Lebus, Polen
M: 06MAY1851 Lebus, Polen
D: 28 JAN 1871 Point Pass SA

Johann Carl Gottlob Riedel
B: 27 Juli 1795 Germany
D:

Anna Maria Hentschel
B: of Ober-Gorbe, Sagan, Prussia
D: UNKNOWN

Anna Rosina Stephan
B: 25 Apr 1829 Lebus, Polen
M: 06MAY1851 Lebus, Polen
D: 26 JUL 1891 Point Pass SA

George Friedrich Stephan
B: 10 Aug 1799
D: 24 Jul 1838

Anna Elisabeth Kegel
B: 1802
D: 04 Aug 1876

Louise Elsa Kuchel
B: 15 Dec 1909 South Australia, Australia
M: 01Oct1930 Murray Bridge, South Australia
D: 12 Oct 1981 South Australia, Australia

Friedrich Otto Kuchel
B: 1883 Australia
M: 1909-02-22 Australia
D: 13 Sep 1956 Australia

Johann Christian KUCHEL
B: 7 Mar 1851 Australia
M: 3 Mar 1881 Australia
D: 9 Jul 1935 Australia

Johann Samuel KUCHEL
B: 4 May 1815 Germany
D: 6 February 1900 Australia

Johanne Dorothea Klenke
B: 1814 Prussia
D: 23 November 1891 South Austra

Johanne Louise Hirte
B: 04 FEB 1858 Australia
M: 3 Mar 1881 Australia
D: 24 NOV 1943 South, Australia

Johann Gottlob Hirte
B: 21 Feb 1819 Prussia
D: 5 Oct 1891 Australia

Anna Juliane Gallasch
B: 15 Jun 1831 Zbaszyn, Prussia
D: 12 Aug 1905 Australia

Anna Maria Nicksch
B: 19 Feb 1887 South Australia
M: 1909-02-22 South Australia
D: 18 Jul 1973 Australia

Carl Gustav Nicksch
B: Abt 1856 Prussia
M: 25 Jan 1883 South Australia
D: 13 Jan 1939 Australia

Carl Nicksch
B:
D:

Anna Wolf
B: 15 01 1867 Austria
M: 25 Jan 1883 South Australia
D: 8 October 1950 Australia

Joseph Wolf
B: abt 1822 Posen, Germany
D: 19 März 1875 Glatz, Preußen

Maria Anna Fleischmann
B: 22 May 1834 Austria
D: 1915 South Australia

They *sailed* to South Australia between 1838 and 1877, although Gustav Nicksch came via Rockhampton in Queensland. Passenger lists indicate they travelled in steerage; however, it is not known how Johann Christian Mann arrived. The table shows my understanding of the last ancestor of mine in each family thread to arrive in Australia. When you look at a map, these places are mostly near the intersection of the borders of Silesia, Brandenburg, Posen and Bohemia (then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, now Czechia).

The red areas on the map on the next page show the various locations where my ancestors came from on a modern map of Poland/Czechia. There is approximately 450 kms from Niwiska/Niebusch to the areas in Brandenburg/Posen where the earliest ancestral migrants ('old Lutherans') came from.

My DNA test from Ancestry.com currently estimates *that* my ethnicity is 65% Eastern Europe and Russia (Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Lithuania), 29% Germanic Europe (Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg),

Relation to me	Birthname	From	Date of Birth	Ship	Year of Arrival
2xg grandfather	*Johann Samuel Kuchel*	*Langmeil, Brandenburg*	*4 May 1815*	*Prince George*	*1838*
2xg grandmother	*Johanne Dorothea Klenke*	*Kay, Kreis Züllichau-Schwiebus, Brandenburg*	*1817*	*Zebra*	*1839*
2xg grandmother	*Anna Julianna Gallasch*	*Zbaszyn, Posen*	*6 June 1831*	*Catharina*	*1839*
great grandmother	*Johanne Louise Bradtke*	*Cichagora, Posen*	*7 June 1823*	*Heerjeebhoy Rustomjee Patel*	*1845*
great grandfather	*Johann Christian Mann*	*Hirschfeldau, Silesia*	*2 April 1812*	*Not known*	*Before 1847, possibly 1846*
2xg grandfather	*Johann Gottlob Hirte*	*Klein Dammer, Kreis Züllichau-Schwiebus, Brandenburg*	*21 February 1819*	*Gellert*	*1847*
Grandmother	*Juliane Christiane Maria Riedel*	*Niebusch, Silesia*	*14 September 1860*	*San Francisco*	*1862*
great grandmother	*Anna Wolf*	*Morchenstern, Bohemia, Austria*	*15 January 1867*	Cesar Godeffroy	1877
great grandfather	*Gustav Carl Nicksch*	*Küttel bei Crossen, Brandenburg*	*1853*	*Fritz Reuter*	*1877*

3% Norway (Iceland, Norway) and 3% Baltics (Latvia, Lithuania). Having a statistical background and some understanding of estimation errors, for practical purposes I ignore the two 3%s.

According to Maksymowicz (2010)[3], 6 million Germans emigrated between the end of the 18th century and the first quarter of the 20th century with over 89% to the USA, but also to other continents. Approximately 1.5% chose Australia, but in some regions accounted for up to 10% of the population, second in European population only to the English.

Causes for emigration included:

• 19th century wars fought in many countries;

• frequent natural disasters involving the threat of famine, floods, droughts, potato blights etc;

• Prussian reforms (agricultural, reorganisation of the state structures, including the army), aimed at improving the situation following the weakening of the state as a result of the wars with Napoleon, actually made conditions even worse, particularly for the peasants;

• overseas migration gave people hope for easier access to land;

• the desire to avoid lengthy conscription in Prussia;

• political refugees leaving the country either voluntarily or compulsorily after the 1848 revolution[4];

• Lutheran refugees from the Prussian provinces of Brandenburg, Silesia and Posen, seeking religious freedom.

Once they reached South Australia, my ancestors' moves were generally made as they sought land to farm. Below is a graphical generalisation of the moves over time.

Although my ancestors came from a small community within a small part of Europe, GEDmatch indicates my parents were not related to each other.

My research method has been to start from what is known and expand to the unknown. The first step was to examine my common DNA matches on *Ancestry.com* and work out where they all fitted. Those family trees with indices were excellent. Where a match intrigued me, I would send the match a message. Sometimes I got a reply, sometimes not. I have not yet worked out how I connect with matches, with whom I share over 20cM, whose family went to North America from Europe.

I frequented the Genealogical Society examining family tree histories for names among my matches. I attended webinars, seminars and conferences of interest. I

Silesia, Brandenburg, Posen and Austria → South Australia

South Australia → Barossa Valley, Hahndorf

Barossa Valley → Point Pass

Hahndorf → Murray Bridge

Point Pass → Sherlock

Murray Bridge → Sherlock
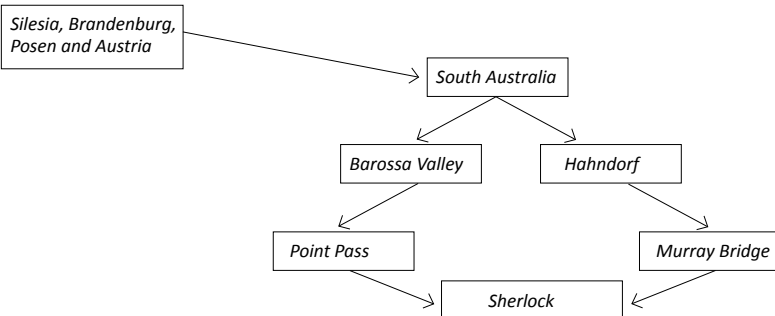
uploaded my DNA and bare family tree on free sites; GEDmatch, *MyHeritage* and *FamilyTreeDNA*. I have joined relevant Facebook regional history and genealogy groups and actively participate on relevant matters. Slowly and steadily I am getting more clues.

For example, take my great grandfather, Johann Christian Mann. According to his Naturalization Certificate[5], he was born on 2 April 1812 in Hirschfeldau, Silesia, East Prussia. Hirschfeldau was a parish village in the Duchy of Sagan, 11km northeast of Sagan and 28km south of Grunberg. Hirschfeldau is now known as Jelenin and is in Poland.

Christian's parents have not been identified at this stage, and his name does not appear on any ship's passenger list. The Bradtke book states that it is believed that he worked his way out to Australia on a ship in 1846. This is supported by his Naturalization Certificate, which, in November 1853 said that he had been in Australia for 7 years. *Ancestry.com ThruLines* suggested potential parents but they are not linked to me by DNA, merely by an individual's Family Tree and this has since disappeared.

Recently, I received a)query in response to my post on the Eudunda Family Heritage Gallery Facebook page, asking whether I was related to Friedrich Wilhelm Julius Mann, one of whose sons ran the Eudunda Hotel. I know that in the early days of South Australia that there were also English and Scottish Manns in Adelaide. A review of passenger lists showed that Friedrich Wilhelm Julius Mann arrived as a single man on the *Wandrahm* in 1854. My contact advised that he was born in Royn, Province of Silesia. The town is now known by the Polish name of Ruja. Jelenin and Ruja are no more than 50 kms apart. So I may be getting closer to an answer.

From one of my *Ancestry.com* DNA matches, I received a message that her father had gone to school with me at Murray Bridge. I did not know he was related (31cM DNA with both him and his daughter) so I sought information from him on his family. He suggested the Schutz and Wittwer family tree books. My great grandmother Anna Rosina Riedel (nee Stephan) came to Port Adelaide on the *San Francisco* in 1862. On that same ship, among the single women was her 18-year-old sister Johanne Julianne

Stephan. She married Johann Gottlieb Schutz and they were my schoolmate's 2xg grandparents, making us 2nd cousins once removed. Reference to those two relevant family history books solved the origins of five of my common matches of the 143 with whom I share 20 cM or more. From another source, I learnt that Church services at Point Pass in 1869 were held in private homes, especially the Schutz and Riedel houses.

I had very little information on my maternal grandmother, Anna Nicksch, and her mother, Maria Anna Wolf, other than that they travelled to South Australia on the *Cesar Godeffroy* in 1877 from Morchenstern with *two Posselt families*. Maria Anna's Naturalisation Certificate showed she was born in Schwartzbrunn. I had no idea of the location of either of these two places.

Recently, I received an email from a man in Sweden noting that I was among the *FamilyTreeDNA* family finder results for his father, suggesting we might be 2nd to 4th cousins. He could see that my family tree contained a number of persons born in Silesia and he asked whether there was a German colony in South Australia. In subsequent correspondence, I have told him of the old Lutherans and my ancestors and he advised me that Schwartzbrunn was in Bohemia, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. My mother had told me that one of my ancestors had come from Austria!

In one piece of correspondence, he provided me *with* a link to the baptismal records of both Anna Wolf and Maria Anna Fleischmann (later Wolf) *thus enabling*

me to go back several more generations. The data is online, in German, from the Digital Archives of the Regional Archives in Opava, http://vademecum.soalitomerice.cz/vademecum/.

More threads remain to be unravelled.

[1] Derived from 1961 Census figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, www.abs.gov.au.

[2] Murray Bridge was then a rural centre surrounded by the District Council of Mobilong in which I lived, while attending school, Church and other services in Murray Bridge.

[3] Anitta Maksymowicz, *Emigration from the Brandenburg- Silesian-Posen borderland to South Australia in the 19th Century*, Zielona Gora, 2010, ISBN 978-83-88426-57-5.

[4] According to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_revolutions_of_1848%E2%80%9349, accessed 29 January 2019, the German revolution was initially part of the Revolutions of 1848 that broke out in many European countries, they were a series of loosely coordinated protests and rebellions in the states of the German Confederation, including the Austrian Empire. The revolutions, which stressed pan-Germanism, demonstrated popular discontent with the traditional, largely autocratic political structure of the thirty-nine independent states of the Confederation that inherited the German territory of the former Holy Roman Empire. The middle-class elements were committed to liberal principles, while the working class sought radical improvements to their working and living conditions. As the middle class and working-class components of the Revolution split, the conservative aristocracy defeated it. Liberals were forced into exile to escape political persecution, where they became known as Forty-Eighters. Many emigrated to the United States, settling from Wisconsin to Texas.

[5] Certificate of Naturalization in South Australia, dated 15 November 1852.