



The 'Haunting' side of Germany

Presented by Shelley Arnold

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Germans Do Not Need Halloween

- ▶ They have Grimm, castles, dark forests and enough ghosts, imps, gnomes, trolls, fairies, goblins and evil spirits to scare your socks off!
- ▶ Next to 'Pretzels & Beer', one of the great German combinations is castles and ghost stories.
- ▶ Halloween is rooted in ancient rites from the British Isles....the holiday as we know it is definitely ours, but like other aspects of our life, it is creeping into Germany. Why not, they have given us so much, Christmas trees, Easter eggs, we just giving a little back. Not all Germans embrace the new German holiday!
- ▶ Since we are getting ready for Halloween, why not learn some of their best spooky stories.



The Pied Piper of
Hamelin or
Rattenfänger von
Hameln (The Rat
Catcher of
Hameln)





Rattenfänger von Hameln (The Rat Catcher of Hameln). The Pied Piper of Hameln.

Versions of the Pied Piper can be found in many medieval sources, since the tale plays on medieval and early modern European fears about emigration and sickness. The Brothers Grimm, those famous German folklorists, set the tale down in one of their collections in the early 19th century, and the famous Goethe wrote a poem about the tale as well.

For those unfamiliar with the tale, it is set in 1284 in the town of Hameln, Lower Saxony, Germany. This town was facing a rat infestation, and a piper, dressed in a coat of many bright colors appeared. This piper promised to get rid of the rats in return for a payment, to which the townspeople agreed too.

The Stained Glass Window

The earliest known record of this story is from the town of Hameln itself depicted in a stained glass window created for the church of Hamelin, which dates to around 1300 AD. Although the window was destroyed in 1660, several written accounts have survived, the oldest from approximately 1440, which stated: “In the year of 1284, on the day of Saints John and Paul on June 26, by a piper, clothed in many kinds of colors, 130 children born in Hamelin were seduced, and lost at the place of execution.” This is also the inscription that was on the ‘stained glass’ window.



Today the spot visited by the pied piper is called Bungelosenstrasse (street without drums). It is very quiet. There is no music or dancing allowed there.

This is a true story. 130 children were lost. It appears that the ‘rats’ were added to the story in the 16th century. Even the stained glass window doesn’t depict any rats.



So where did the story about the rats originate? If the children's disappearance was not an act of revenge, then what was its cause? There have been numerous theories trying to explain what happened to the children of Hamelin.

The theories:

One suggests that the children died of some natural causes, and that the Pied Piper was the personification of Death. By associating the rats with the Black Death, it has been suggested that the children were victims of this plague. Yet, the Black Death was most severe in Europe between 1348 and 1350, more than half a century after the event in Hamelin.

Another theory suggests that the children were actually sent away by their parents, due to the extreme poverty that they were living in.

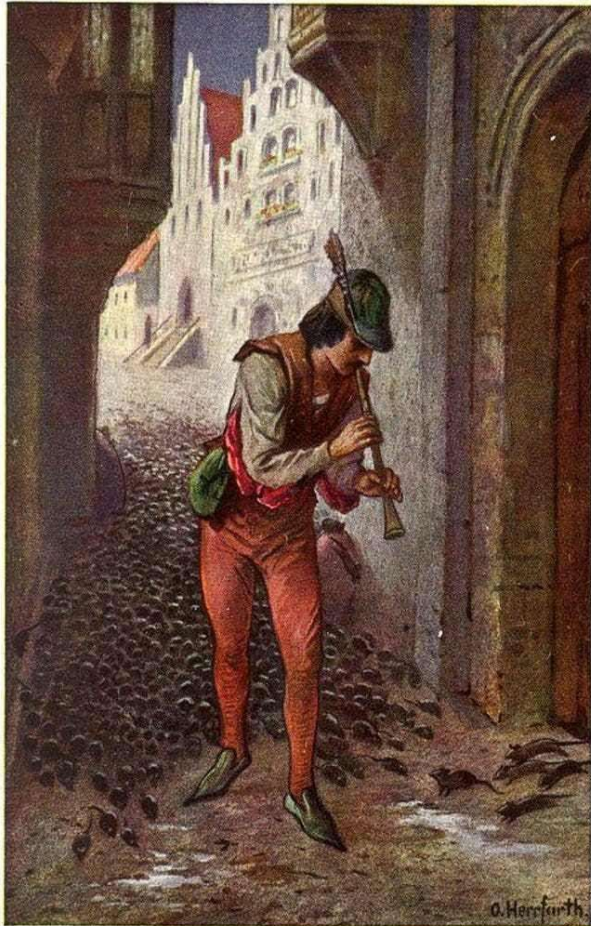
Yet another theory speculates that the children were participants of a doomed 'Children's Crusade', and might have ended up in modern day Romania, or that the departure of Hamelin's children is tied to the Ostsiedlung, in which a number of Germans left their homes to colonize Eastern Europe.

One of the darker theories even proposes that the Pied Piper was actually a pedophile who crept into the town of Hamelin to abduct children during their sleep.ies:



Painting made 1592 by Augustin von Moersperg - piper, children, cave, are those rats in the river?





Brüder Grimm. Der Rattenfänger von Hameln. O. Herrfurth pinx.

- ▶ Historical records suggest that the story of the Pied Piper of Hamelin was a real event that took place. Nevertheless, the transmission of this story undoubtedly evolved and changed over the centuries, although to what extent is unknown, and the mystery of what really happened to those children has never been solved.

The story also raises the question, if the Pied Piper of Hamelin was based on reality, how much truth is there in other fairy tales that we were told as children?

Browning's poem

<https://poets.org/poem/pied-piper-hamelin>

Maria
Renate
Saenger
von
Mossau



Maria Renata Singer or Saenger von Mossau (1680 – June 1749).

She was a Bavarian nun executed for heresy, witchcraft, and satanism, one of the last people executed for these charges in Germany and Europe. Maria was inducted in the convent of Unterzell in Bavaria in 1699, where she made herself known for her great piety. She was appointed Sub Prioress in 1740.





In 1746, one of the nuns, Cecilia, became afflicted with convulsions and claimed to be possessed by demons and poltergeists. The attacks spread through the convent and soon several nuns suffered from hysteric attacks.

One of them died, after which Renata was pointed out as a satanist and a magician. The church then conducted an exorcism at the convent, during which the nuns rolled on the ground and "howled and snapped like mad cats." During a search in Renata's room, poisons, ointments, and strange robes were found



Renata confessed to a Benedictine confessor that she was a satanist and a witch; that in 1687, at the age of seven, she had sworn herself to Satan; at twelve, had become a prostitute and learned magic and to mix poisons; in 1694, Maria was baptized at a black mass; and in 1699, had entered the nunnery entirely to make strife amongst the "brides of Christ."

She claimed to be a skilled chemist and preferred the poison Aqua Tofana developed by Giulia Tofana in Naples. She said she was remorseful, but the church still judged her guilty of sorcery, heresy, witchcraft, apostasy, and satanism, then turned her over to the secular authorities to be executed. She was beheaded and then burned on June 21, 1749 at Marienberg Fortress, Würzburg.





The 'White Lady' Anna Sydow

► The Prince of Brandenburg, Joachim, II took a mistress named Anna Sydow when his second wife (Hedwig of Poland) suffered a severe injury. The injury strained his marriage. The prince became very close to Anna. He even put her up in the Jagdschloss Grunewald (a castle in Berlin).

► Joachim grew so fond of Anna that he was even seen in public with her, which angered the public. They had several children together and Joachim even bestowed the title of Countess von Arneberg on his daughter, Magdalene. The years passed and one day, Joachim made his son, Johann Georg, swear an oath to protect Anna after his death. He made his son swear the oath again a year later and, a year before his death, arranged for Magdalene to be placed in the care of Johann.

The White Lady of Hohenzollern



Johann was a bad son and did not honor his promise. He imprisoned Anna in Spandau Citadel immediately after his father's death. Anna died in the prison four years later. He was not a good Prince and imposed taxes on the poor and exiled the Jews. He thought he had seen the end of Anna Sydow, but he was wrong. Just eight days before his death, Anna appeared as a ghostly apparition later called, 'the White Lady'.



THE FAMOUS WHITE LADY
OF THE HOHENZOLLERN



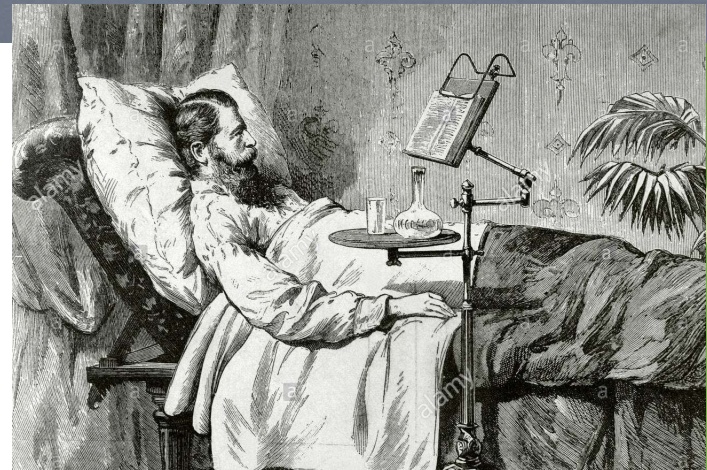
The 'White Lady of
Hohenzollern'

To this day, sightings of the White Woman continue.

One of the most well-known stories is when she appeared before the death of one of the Hohenzollern Kings of Prussia. In the mid-1800s, King Frederick William IV of Prussia, stopped by Pillnitz Castle to visit his cousins, the King and Queen of Saxony.

That night, everything was still. The air was cold and crisp, and it was silent as a strange fog descended on the castle. Reports by on-duty sentries from that night tell of five ghastly spectral figures walking through the castle walls and towards the King's chambers. One figure, a White Woman, led the other four, headless men carrying a casket. Inside the casket, another man lay, a crown where his head was supposed to be.

The next day, King Frederick William began to suffer from terrible symptoms, which would continue for three months. He suffered a *hemorrhagic Stroke* which would leave him incapacitated. He remained this way for three years, until he finally died.



Walpurgisnacht



Not really Halloween, but certainly scary and worth a look, is Walpurgisnacht. It is the night of April 30th to May 1 and is when witches are reputed to hold a large celebration on the **Brocken** and await the arrival of spring. Here they hold meetings with the devil...



BROCKEN
1142 m





April 30 in Germany is the eve of the feast day of St. Walpurga (8th century 710-777). St. Walpurga was hailed by the Christians of Germany for battling rabies and whooping cough as well as witchcraft. Christians often prayed to God through the intercession of St. Walpurga to protect them from witchcraft. St. Walpurgis was also responsible through her evangelism in Germany, of converting many to the Christian faith. There are some places where Christian people continue to light bonfires on Saint Walpurgis Eve to ward off the evil spirits and witches. Some also make pilgrimages to Saint Walpurga's tomb in Eichstätt on the eve of the Feast of St. Walpurga.





Walpurgisnacht- Hexennacht-Witches Night

- ▶ It is the night of a witches meeting. This is the night the witches meet on the Brocken (the highest peak) in the Harz Mountain. Here they hold revels with their gods and wait for the arrival of spring.
- ▶ The Harz mountains are located in central Germany between the rivers Elbe and Weser.
- ▶ The holiday is celebrated throughout Europe. Some celebrate with big bonfires that are meant to prevent the witches from going to the Brocken and also to keep away malevolent spirits. The day is also associated with May Day and is a way to welcome Spring!
- ▶ Local variants of Walpurgis Night are observed throughout Northern and Central Europe in the Netherlands, Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Lithuania, Finland, and Estonia. In Denmark and Norway, the tradition with bonfires to ward off the witches is observed as Saint John's Eve.



Germany

The last day of April was a druidic feast marking the beginning of summer and revels of witches. The evening of St. Walburga's feast day is known as Walpurgisnacht (Walpurgis Night). Though the saint had no connection with this festival, her name became associated with witchcraft and country superstitions because of the date.



Scotland

Sweden



St. Walburga died in 777.



Poland (Kaszuby, Mazowsze, Slask)



Czech Republic

Brocken Spectre

Walpurgisnacht Night (in German folklore) the night of 30 April (May Day's eve), when witches meet on the Brocken mountain and hold revels with the Devil...

Brocken is the highest of the Harz Mountains of north central Germany. It is noted for the phenomenon of the Brocken spectre and for witches' revels which reputedly took place there on Walpurgis night.

The Brocken Spectre is an enormous magnified shadow of an observer, cast upon clouds, The figure's head is surrounded by halo-like rainbow bands, thrown onto a bank of clouds in high mountain areas when the sun is low. The phenomenon was first reported on the Brocken.

The phenomenon can appear on any misty mountainside or cloud bank, but was first seen in the Harz Mountains, on the Brochen, which is how the legend was named.



Hexentanzplatz in Thale

- ▶ The Hexentanzplatz ('Witches' Dance Floor') is in a place called Thale (Tala), high up in the Harz mountains. In pre-Christian times, this was where many pagan ceremonies were held. It is a big tourist attraction now. You can get a gondola up to the Hexentanzplatz, which gives you incredible views of the mountains and valleys below.
- ▶ One of the walking trails here is called the 'Harzer Hexenstieg ('Harz Witches' Trail)', which runs through the Harz mountains, and over their highest peak, known as the Brocken. This trail is 100km long.

A rock formation in the Harz mountains near the Hexentanzplatz, the Teufelsmauer ('Devil's Wall') is known for its unusual formation. The legend behind this wall is that God and the Devil were fighting for ownership of the Earth. The Devil was given a limited amount of time to build a wall that would separate the Earth into two pieces, one for him and one for God, but he ran out of time, so in his anger he smashed up what part of the wall he had made. This left the unusual formation that is the Teufelsmauer, and is the legend of how the Teufelsmauer came to be.

Hexentanzplatz and the Teufelsmauer



Walpurgisnacht & Literature

Walpurgisnacht has played a pivotal part in many of Germany's famous literary works. Goethe's Faust Part One is called 'Walpurgisnacht' and his Faust Part Two is called 'Classical Walpurgisnacht'. The last chapter of Mann's 'The Magic Mountain' is also called Walpurgisnacht.

The Harz mountains and the stories attached to them have inspired aspects of modern German culture, too. For instance, the popular, modern-day childrens' cartoon called Bibi Blocksberg, tells the stories of a young German witch. Bibi's surname was inspired by the mountain range Blocksberg, more commonly known as Brocken – the highest peak of the Harz mountains, where all of the above takes place!

Video: <https://youtu.be/BjUV-byB8ls>





Walpurgisnacht



Common Walpurgis and Mayday rituals and superstitions!

- ▶ **Walpurgis like many other such seasonal tides is steeped in superstition and rituals pertaining to this day. Some examples of such are:**
 - **Washing one's face in the morning dew on the first of May assured beauty.**
 - **It was believed that if one wished to make contact with any sort of mystical spirit or being (like elves, trolls, ghosts, or even witches.) Walpurgis was one of those times to do it. One such very practical method involved putting one's clothes on inside out, walking to a crossroads backwards on midnight of Walpurgisnacht.**
 - **As this was a time that was believed that spirits and spectres would be most active it was common custom to light bonfires on hill tops and various prominent points on the land to protect the area.**
 - **In rural parts of southern Germany, it is part of popular youth culture to play pranks such as tampering with neighbors' gardens, hiding possessions, or spraying graffiti on private property.**

Walpurgisnacht...the beat goes on

<https://youtu.be/BjUV-byB8ls>





Krampus

St. Nicholas & Krampus

Well, if we are going to talk about Walpurgisnacht, held in April/May and not a Halloween event, we cannot NOT talk about Krampus, one of Germany and Austria's scariest creatures and a Christmas event.





St. Nicholas Day- December 6th

Every year children in Germany, Austria and other European countries, get ready for St. Nicholas Day. St. Nicholas day is celebrated on December 6th. On this day the children that have been good are rewarded by St. Nicholas. In many countries, including the US, children put their shoes out for St. Nicholas to fill with fruit and sweets. If they are naughty, they will receive sticks or a lump of coal.

Krampus and St. Nicholas arrive on December 5th or Krampusnacht. The next day the children awaken to find gifts left by St. Nicholas. If the children have been bad, Krampus beats them with branches and sticks. He is known to put them in his sack and take them to his cave. In some cases, he has been known to eat them or take them to hell.

Krampus and Krampus runs have become popular throughout the world including the US. There is an annual Krampus run in Hampden right here in Baltimore City.

Belsnickle



Knecht Ruprecht



Buttnmandl



Krampus' Associates

In Austria and Bavaria, there is a slight twist to the sticks or lumps of coal. Here the children would love to receive a lump of coal instead of facing Krampus. Krampus is the scary part of St. Nicholas Day. In the other parts of Europe, St. Nicholas travels with other scary counterparts like Belsnickle and Knecht Ruprecht, who are the bad children punishers. The pairings are meant to represent or balance 'good vs. evil'.

So, who or what is Krampus?

He is half demon and half goat. December 5th in Austria and Bavaria are known as Krampusnacht. Most cities in these areas also have a Krampuslauf (Krampus run), not necessarily on the 5th, but within those first two weeks of December.

The name 'Krampus' is from the German word Krampen which means 'claw'. According to legend, he is the son of Hel, the Norse god of the underworld. With the spread of Christianity, Krampus became associated with Christmas—despite efforts by the Catholic church to ban him.



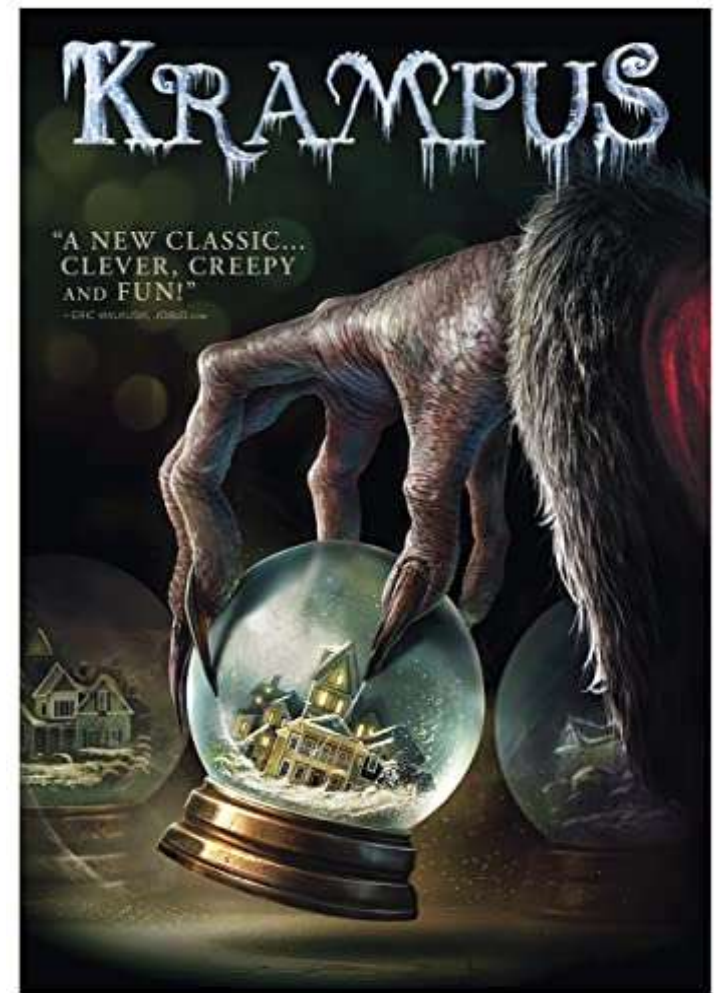


There have been at least eight movies made about Krampus and if you ever watched the television series 'Grimm', they devoted one episode to Krampus.

<https://youtu.be/mojrfw7SJ14>

<https://youtu.be/CiKclsiqXMw>

<https://youtu.be/dh4zcFEf6No>



Krampuslauf

<https://youtu.be/fcApbFt9z0E>



Haunted Castles



Berg vs. Burg vs. Schloß



Burg Eltz

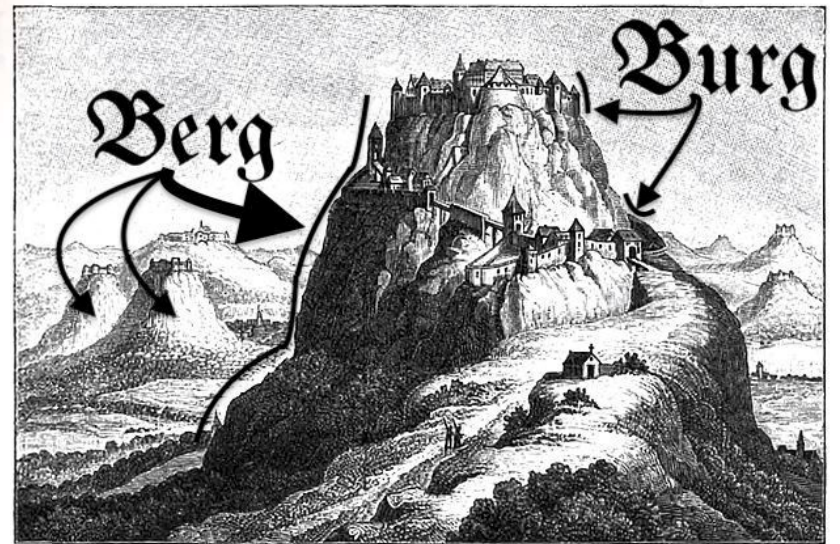
HeidelBERG Castle



LudwigsBURG
Schloss



WartBURG



Before we move on to our haunted castles, it is good to know the difference between the words commonly used with the castles in Germany.

Berg: It is pronounced BEARgh. It is a large mountain or hill. Many of the Burg's were built on a mountain so they take their name because of the natural defense they provided. There are many Boorghs on top of BEARghs in Germany.

Burg: It's pronounced BOORgh. If a castle was built prior to the 16th century it is called a Burg. A burg was used as a stronghold and built to defend those who lived or took refuge there. A Fortress. Burgs may be identified by their strong, stone walls, few windows facing out, towers (for lookouts) and holes in the all used for firing against the enemy.

Schloss: It's pronounced as shlös . Most built after the battles of the middle ages when battles were moved to battlefields. So after the 16th century they were built to house nobility. Sort of a palace. Look for beauty, not strength; elaborate gardens and often built in a city, not on a mountain.

Burg's were often made into a Schloss.



Upstairs, Downstairs Schloss Ludwigsburg, Baden-Württemberg

Considering the magnificence and opulence of the baroque palace built by the Dukes of Württemberg in the 18th century, you'd be forgiven for thinking that the place might be haunted by some of the personalities who lived there, such as Duke Carl-Eugen. This larger-than-life figure had big tastes, guzzling food and working his way through the ladies of the court.

However, if you believe the legends, and the reports of 'ghost hunters', it's the hired help, not the heirs that haunt this place. Departed servants, hard done by, or just missing the place have been blamed for poltergeist activity, strange noises and one rather spectacular incident in the 19th century, when a guard post of the King of Württemberg was supposedly assaulted by an unseen force, causing patrols to be doubled ever since.

Protecting the palace or taking revenge on the place they loathed being in life - you decide!





Burg Eltz

Burg Eltz is a picturesque medieval castle, tucked away in the hills in the west of Germany, between Koblenz and Trier. It is one of Germany's more famous castles and has never been destroyed or taken in battle. Since its construction, and even to this day, the castle has been owned by the Eltz family, for more than 850 years.



The castle is also said to be haunted by the forlorn ghost of Agnes, daughter of a fifteenth-century earl from the noble Eltz family. Agnes' hand in marriage was promised to the squire of Braunsburg when they were both just children. Years passed and as the two passed into adulthood, their engagement day drew close. Their families arranged for them to finally meet for the first time, just days before the engagement took place.

Upon meeting the young squire, Agnes was shocked at how rude and callous he was. Agnes begged her father to call off the engagement, but he refused - the marriage had been sealed years ago and had to be honored. Negotiations concerning dowry and heritage began between the two families. In the final meeting, when everything had been agreed, the squire turned to kiss his soon-to-be bride. Agnes refused to kiss her betrothed and he responded angrily, swearing vehemently at her.





Tensions rose and the squire's family were expelled from the castle. The Braunsberg squire raised his forces and laid siege. The Eltzer guards were tricked into leaving the castle and chasing an expeditionary force, allowing the squire to sneak in with his heavily armored bodyguard one night. They began massacring the Eltzer residents, servants and the few guards that were left behind.

Agnes awoke to the sound of murder and upon seeing the slaughter from the window of her tower, rushed to the castle armoury. She took her brother's ornate breastplate and sword and rushed into battle, ferociously hacking back the attackers. Her courage inspired the few remaining defenders to slowly turn the tide of the battle. The attackers seemed all but beaten until an arrow struck and pierced Agnes' armour, fatally wounding her.

Upon seeing her fall, the Eltzer defenders rushed the squire, hacking him down and driving off the attackers. The castle was saved but Agnes succumbed to her wounds, her spirit forever cursed to haunt the very castle she fought to defend, especially in the bedroom where a perforated 15th century breastplate hangs.



An aerial photograph of the ruins of Burg Werdenfels, a medieval castle, situated on a hilltop. The ruins consist of several stone structures, including a large rectangular building on the right and a smaller structure with two arched openings on the left. The hill is covered in dense green forest, and the surrounding landscape is also heavily wooded. The text "Burg Werdenfels-Bavaria" is overlaid in white on the lower part of the image.

Burg Werdenfels-Bavaria

Witches

Burg Werdenfels- Bavaria

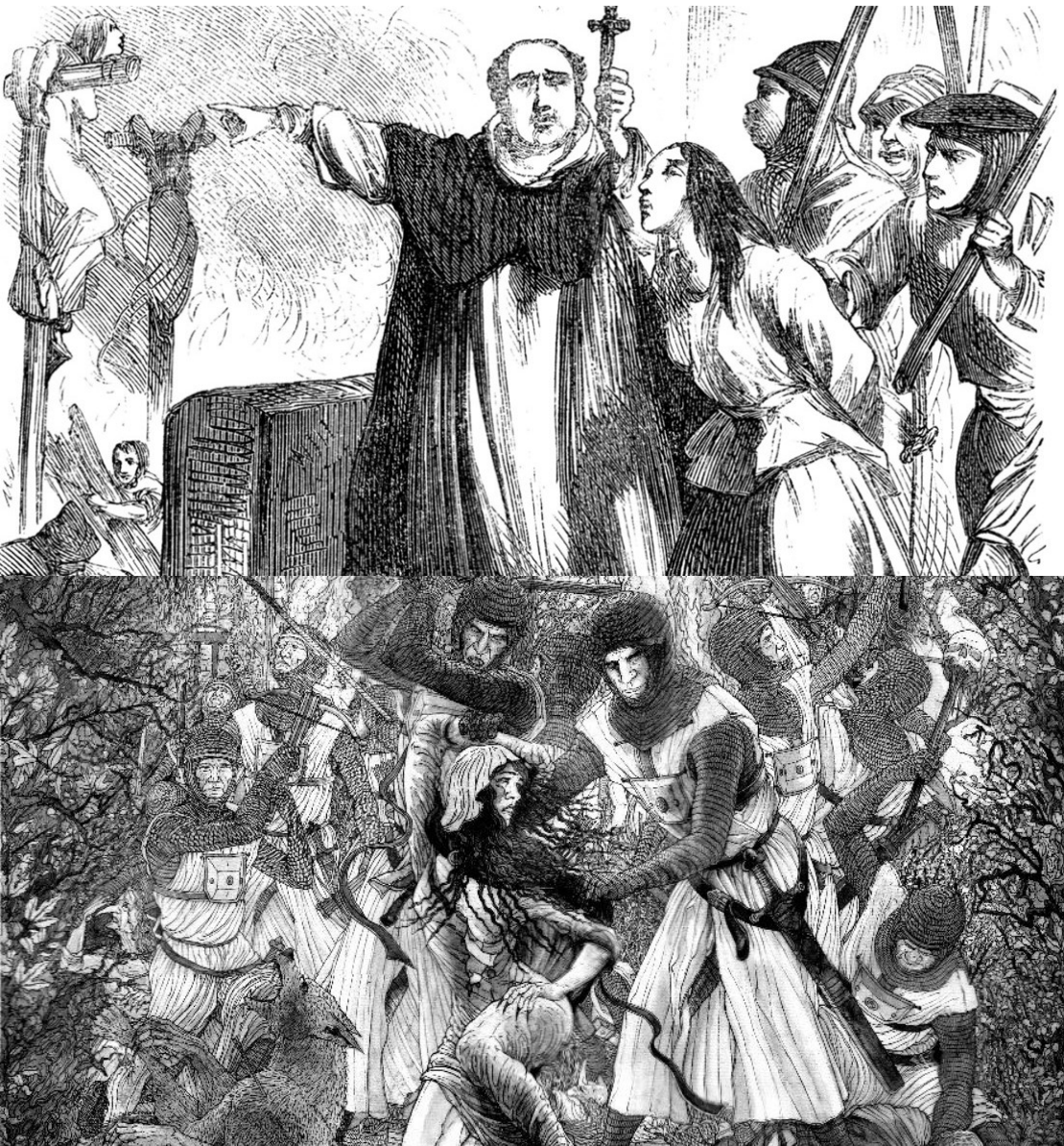
The scenic ruins of Burg Werdenfels, towering over the town of Garmisch-Partenkirchen actually boasts a number of ghost stories, including the ghostly singing of an imprisoned noblewoman. We will, instead, focus on a later, more harrowing event. In the late 16th century, the region was seized by witch hunts, sparked by poor harvests and abrupt changes in climate.





Suspected witches, many of them older men and women, were taken to the castle and imprisoned in appalling conditions, only emerging to be tortured as part of the judicial process.

Some local folktales suggest that the castle was the scene of executions, including burning at the stake, but records are sketchy on this detail. Since then, it is said, Werdenfels became a place with a terrifying reputation, with reports of tormented ghosts roaming the site.



Things got so bad that the site was apparently exorcised, and stones were taken to build a church. Today it's a rather beautiful, if sad, spot that's popular with hikers, but I wouldn't lurk after dusk.

Schloss Schwerin, Mecklenburg- Western Pomerania



Peter The Great - Schloss Schwerin, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania

You can't make any list of Germany's spookiest castles without mentioning Petermännchen, undisputedly the country's most high-profile castle ghost.

This pint-sized poltergeist, depicted as a little person in cavalier costume, has defended the cellars of the ancient castle at Schwerin for centuries - indeed, he's depicted in art in the castle from as early as the 17th century, when legends say he terrorized military commanders who commandeered the fortress during the Thirty Years War.

Throwing objects, making noises and, some stories hard to believe, Petermännchen is said to have ensured that nobody who does not have the best interests of the castle in mind could stay there.



Frankenstein Castle- Hesse Darmstadt





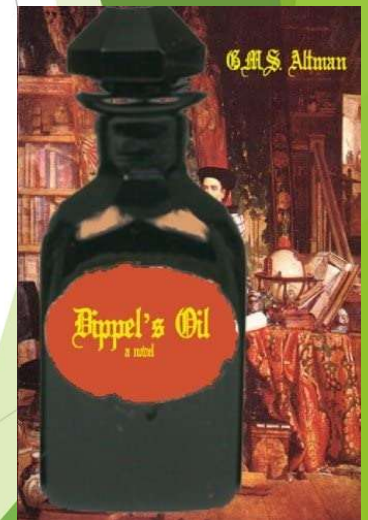
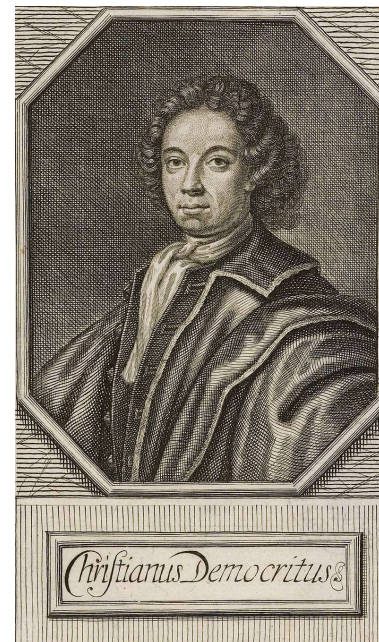
Built in 1250, the castle is located in Odenwald and overlooks the city of Darmstadt in Southern Hesse.

Frankenstein is a German name consisting of two words: The Franks are a Germanic tribe and "stein" is the German word for "stone". Accordingly, the meaning of Frankenstein is "Stone of the Franks". The word "stein" is common in names of landscapes, places and castles in Germany. Consequently, the term "Frankenstein" is a rather ordinary name for a castle in this region.

In 1673, Johann Konrad Dippel was born in the castle, where he was later engaged as a professional alchemist.

Dippel created an animal oil known as Dippel's Oil which was supposed to be equivalent to the "elixir of life". Dippel attempted to purchase Castle Frankenstein in exchange for his elixir formula, which he claimed he had recently discovered; the offer was turned down. There are also rumours that during his stay at Frankenstein Castle, Dippel practiced not only alchemy but also anatomy and may have performed experiments on dead bodies that he exhumed. There are rumors that he dug up bodies and performed medical experiments on them at the castle and that a local cleric would have warned his parish that Dippel had created a monster that was brought to life by a bolt of lightning. (The use of lightning to bring Frankenstein's monster to life comes from the 1931 film and isn't in the novel.)

It is thought that Dippel influenced Mary Shelley's bestselling Frankenstein novel.



Lord George & the Dragon





Lord George & the Dragon


One of the most famous legends is about Lord George and a dragon, by August Nodnagel (1803-1853). It is said that long ago a dangerous dragon lived in the garden near the well at the castle of Burg Frankenstein. The peasants of a neighboring village (Nieder-Beerbach) lived in fear of the mighty dragon. It is said the dragon would creep in at night and eat the villagers and their children in their sleep. One day a knight by the name of Lord George rode into town. The townsfolk were desperate; seeing a brave knight gave them hope, and they poured out their troubles and sorrows as he promised to help them.

The next day, he put on his armor and rode up to the castle, into the garden and straight to the well where the dragon was taking a rest in the sun. Lord George got off his horse and attacked the dragon. The dragon fought for his life, puffed and spewed out fire and steam. Hours passed as the two continued to battle. Finally, just as the knight was about to drop from exhaustion, and just as the dragon was going to drop from exhaustion, the knight plunged his sword into the underbelly of the beast and was victorious. But as the dragon struggled in agony, it coiled its tail with the poisonous spine around the knight's belly and stung. Lord George and the dragon both fell. The villagers were so happy and relieved that the dragon was finally slain they wanted to give the knight a proper, honorable burial. They brought him to the Church of Nieder Beerbach, in the valley on the east side of the castle, and gave him a marvelous tomb. To this day, you can still visit and pay your respects to Lord George, the Knight who slew the Dragon in the 1200s.





Reichenstein Castle

An aerial photograph of a medieval castle ruin situated on a steep, green hillside. The castle features several stone towers and walls, some of which are partially ruined. The surrounding landscape is lush with greenery, and a small town is visible in the distance. The sky is blue with some light clouds.

This castle made its first appearance in 1213 when Philipp III von Bolanden was appointed 'governor' by the Abbey at Aachen. It was captured in 1253 by King Rudolph I of Hapsburg, who was crowned in [Aachen Cathedral](#) on 24 October 1273. The castle destroyed in 1282. At that time the castle was in the hands of unruly robber barons led by Dietrich von Hohenfels. King Rudolph forbade the rebuilding of the castle.

The legend is that Dietrich had nine sons and there are three stories of their demise. Story one Rudolph, the Holy Roman Emperor in the 16th century ordering the lord of the castle, Dietrich and his nine sons hanged. It was then that Dietrich made an unlikely deal: He would allow the executioner to lop his head off with a sword first, but if his headless body managed to walk past each of his sons before falling down, they would live. Stories say that the headless lord managed to save his sons.

Story two is that Rudolph had Dietrich and his sons beheaded near Saint Clement's Chapel.

Story three is that Dietrich was not decapitated, but actually escaped. His companions were hung on trees in the valley by order of Rudolph. The castle was burnt down in 1290.

Regardless of which story you believe, the castle is known as a hotbed of ghostly activity with numerous sightings over the years. It was home to a long line of bloodthirsty tyrants. A headless apparition is said to wander throughout Reichenstein Castle. There have been many sightings in the area of the chapel.



Even though forbidden by Rudolph, the castle was rebuilt and has changed hands many times and restoration began with Franz Wilhelm von Barfuss in 1834 and completed by the family Kirsch when they purchased the castle in 1899. A direct descendent of the Kirsch family owns the castle today.

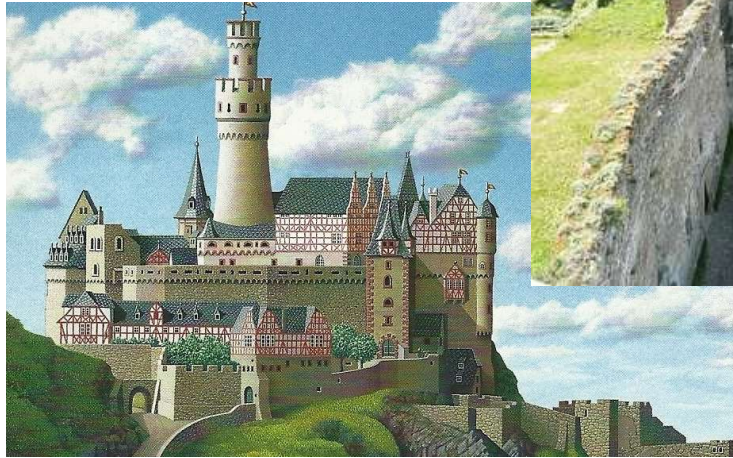
Burg Rheinfels-Bavaria





Burg Rheinfels- Bavaria

- ▶ Rheinfels Castle (Burg Rheinfels) is a castle ruin located above the left bank of the Rhine in Sankt Goar, Germany. It was started in 1245 by Count Diether V (1225 to 1276). After expansions, it was the largest fortress in the Middle Rhine Valley between Koblenz and Mainz. It was slighted by French Revolutionary Army troops in 1797. Slighting is the deliberate damage of high-status buildings to reduce their value as military, administrative or social structures. It is the largest castle overlooking the Rhine, and historically covered five times its current area.



This large cellar was arched over in 1587-89 in two visible phases. It is the largest self-supporting vaulted cellar in Europe and has a length of 79 ft, a width and height of approximately 52 ft and can accommodate up to 400 people. The walls are up to 13 ft. thick. The cellar was renovated in 1997 and today is the place of meetings, concerts, etc.

It also boasts one of the highest 'butter churn' towers in Germany at 177ft.

While much of the castle is a ruin, some of the outer buildings are now a luxury hotel, "wellness" centre and restaurant. There is also a museum..

During peacetime, 300-600 people lived in the castle complex. During a siege, that number could swell to 4,500. Remnants of the original 13th-century plaster which was painted white can still be found on some walls.

► The hauntings here occur in the notorious underground prison and tunnel system where there have been many strange encounters over the years.

Sterrenberg
&
Liebenstein
Castles
The 'Hostile
Brothers'



Sterrenberg & Liebenstein

Located above the village of Kamp-Bornhofen, along the Rhine Gorge, the castles lie between the city of Koblenz and Bingen. It is like the others a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The Sterrenberg castle is listed in 1190. The family Bolanden were lords of Sterrenberg. This castle along with the one below it, named Liebenstein castle have been dubbed the ‘Hostile Brothers’ referring to the disputes of the different owners and inspired by the hostile brothers legend that has been around since 1587.



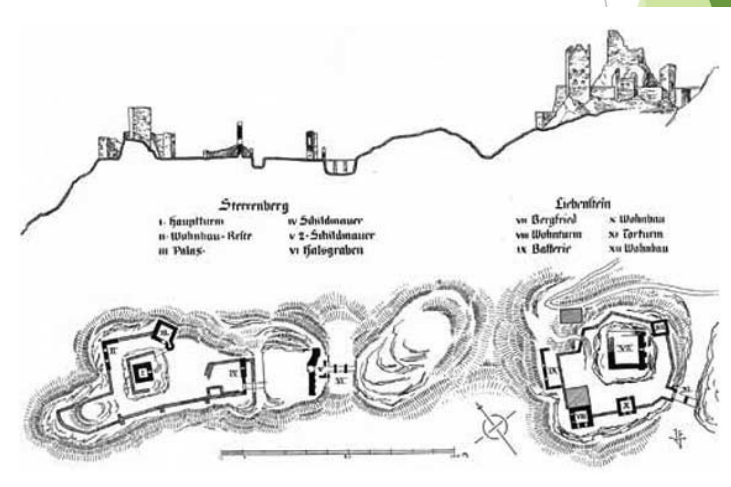
The legend tells of two sons of a count, whose names were von Sterrenberg and von Liebenstein, who cheated their blind sister when they divided up their father's inheritance.

When it came time to apportion the gold pieces a scoop was used. When the sister came to get her scoop, it was upside down and the bottom covered, making the scoop seem full. The blind sister used her share to have the cloister built at the foot of the castles.

The wealth acquired through treachery brought the brothers nothing but trouble. They became such enemies that they had a wall built to separate their castles.

In reality Liebenstein Castle, built in the 13th Century and therefore the younger one, was the forecastle of Sterrenberg Castle. The two shield walls serve as improved defense of Sterrenberg. There is no historic evidence that they were meant against Liebenstein Castle. There is no proof, but it has been taken for granted that there never has been an armed conflict between the castles.

The Legend of the 'Hostile Brothers'





The Tragedy

One day, when the rich inheritance had been wasted, they tried to put their differences behind them. On that occasion, they agreed to meet for a hunting expedition early in the morning. The one who woke first was to waken the other by shooting an arrow at the other's window shutters. It just so happened, however at the very moment when the arrow was shot, the targeted shuttered opened and the bowman watched in horror as the arrow pierced his brother's heart. The unintended killer could find no peace.

I am not sure which brother roam the grounds here...could it be both?

Trendelburg Castel-Hesse Kassel



Trendelburg Castel-Hesse Kassel

The Trendelburg Castle was built in 1300 near the city of Kassel. The castle was built by Conrad III von Schoneberg to secure the road between Kassel and Bremen. It is located along the Fairy Tale Road by Reinhard's Forest.

It is said to be the 'Rapunzel' castle from the Grimm's brothers fairy tales and also the incentive behind the story of Sleeping Beauty. The impressive 125 foot high "Rapunzel" tower was added after the castle burned down in 1456. The Grimm Brothers added Rapunzel (the German word for lamb's lettuce) to their collection of fairy tales, after a woman from this area told them the handed-down medieval tale of Sleeping Beauty in 1810.





It wasn't until 1996 that it was finally purchased by an investment company and restored, making it one of the most romantic castle hotels in Europe.

So Trendelberg has the reputation of the most romantic and one of the most haunted.





The castle played a strategic role in the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) and was destroyed by General Tilly's Croatian soldiers. It is said that it is the spirits of the soldiers that died here during the siege that roam the Reinhardswald or Reinhard's Forest.

Throughout much of Trendelburg Castle's history it has been connected with the Stockhausen family, which today runs the castle as a hotel and restaurant. Martin Luther, whose family was related to the Stockhausens, once stayed here. French and English troops once made it their barracks, as did GIs during World War II.

So even if you live in a temperate climate, close your shutters tight, pretend that winter's coming, imagine you're huddled in a cottage high in the Bavarian Alps or a castle deep in the Black Forest, and sink into the creepiness of Germanic folktales and ghost stories this Halloween season.



