

THE WENNAGEL STORY

The fate of the Wennagel Families of Master Builders
From the Black Forest, Germany the Templer Settlements in the Holy Land
and onto Australia from 1699 – 2007

by Irene Blaich
in conjunction with Horst Blaich

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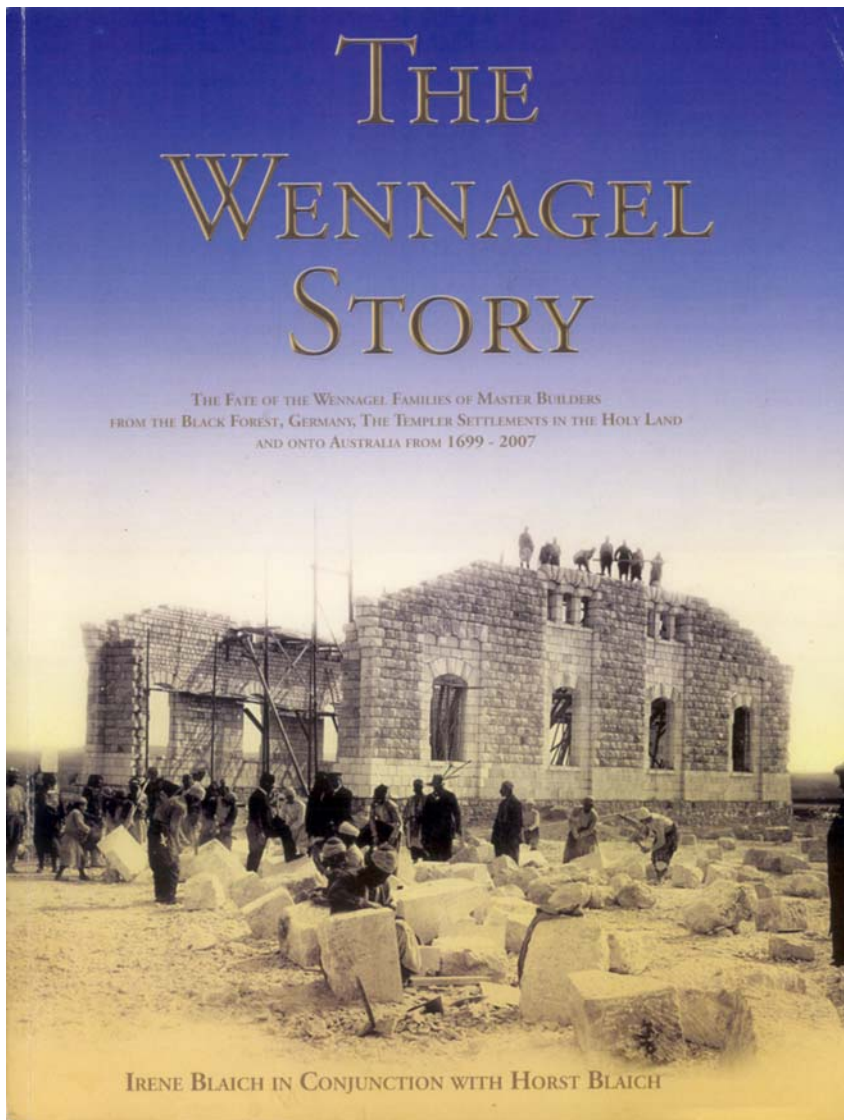
About the book

This book is not only a family history, it also deals with the beginning of the Temple society and how the '*Jesusalemsfreunde*' left the Black Forest to establish a new Kingdom of God in Palestine the Holy Land.

The Wennagel master builders built the first houses in Sarona, the German Settlement including the '*Gemeindehaus*' in the 1870's. in other words, they were the building pioneers in the southern part of the country, whereas the Beilharz family, which also migrated from Dornstetten in the Black Forest, were building in the northern part of the country around Haifa, under the direction of Christoph Hoffmann 1815-1885 and Georg David Hardegg 1812-1879. The Wennagel pioneering family continued their building activities right through the Templer period in Palestine as well as in Australia.

Israeli scholars are now beginning to appreciate the Templers' contribution to the modernisation of Israel, as an agent of change who transformed the country from a forsaken Ottoman province into what Israel is today. The Wennagels were part of that transformation, and this book does historical justice in documenting it. No doubt this book will become a source for scholars who engage in Land of Israel studies.

The Wennagel story is told in an interesting style, from the year 1699 to today (2007). The families are illustrated with many different genealogical charts and over 1,000 historical photographs from '*The Albert Blaich Family Archive-Australia*'. The Wennagel families and relatives, as well as people interested in the history of the Templer movement in the Holy Land will find Irene's book fascinating and enlightening.



Testimonials

I read *'The Wennagel Story'* book with great interest, as a thorough documentation of this extraordinary family. Of special interest for me were the sections about Josef and Hugo. These are not only chapters in the history of the Wennagel family, but also import chapters in the history of modern Israel, in which the Wennagel have an active part, Israel scholars are now beginning to appreciate the Templers' contribution to the modernization of Israel, as agents of change who transformed the country from a forsaken Ottoman province into what Israel is today. The Wennagel were part of that transformation, and this book does historical justice in documenting it, No doubt the book will become a source for study by Land of Israel Studies scholars.

It also unveils the tip of the iceberg of the *'Albert Blaich Family Archive-Australia'*, a monumental collection that was laboriously compiled by the author's eternal partner, Horst Blaich, himself from prominent Templer family, The Archive has already proven itself to be irreplaceable source for understanding the Templers' culture and heritage.

The book also illustrates for the general public for the first time the Hugo Treasure' affair – in which I was privileged to be involved, a fascinating and human story with a happy ending. Kudos to the Blaichs for their literary achievement.

-Dr Danny Goldman, Architect and University Lecturer, Tel Aviv, Israel

After five decades of dedicated and painstaking research Irene Blaich has written a comprehensive and fascinating history of the extended Wennagel family. This wonderful, easily readable book is not only of interest to members and descendants of the Wennagel family but to a much wider audience. It reflects the history and world events, especially in the 19th and 20th centuries, that affected and shaped the destiny of the family and the wider community

in which they lived.

The text is supported by hundreds of photographs, historical documents, maps and genealogical charts, thus giving the reader not only a visual insight to the many individuals referred to, but also to the places and surrounds where they lived. Future generations will be indebted to Irene for this magnificent publication. The book is an everlasting tribute to the achievements of her forefathers.

-Helmut Glenk, Author, Public Servant (retired), Melbourne, Australia

I was deeply moved by the story of indomitable spirit and resilience in the face of human misfortune and suffering. I like the format of the events in the history of the family being repeated as the same events affects different branches of the family. It emphasizes both unity and the delivery of the family experience.

*- Martin Higgins, MA (Slavonic Studies) BA First Class Russian, RAF officer (retired)
Language Teacher, Translator and Genealogist; UK.*

Reviews

DER SCHWARZWALDBOTE

Aus unserer Region

Nummer 97 Freitag, 27. April 2007

Australier forschen nach Vorfahren aus Aach und Glatten

Vortrag über Templer bei der 50. Sitzung des Arbeitskreises »Familiengeschichte heute« in Dornstetten

Kreis Freudenstadt/Dornstetten (rw). Zur 50. Sitzung des Arbeitskreises »Familiengeschichte heute« in 25 Jahren kamen über 30 Familienforscher im Heimatmuseum in Dornstetten unter der Leitung von Dr. Gerhard Wein zusammen. Dabei gedachte Dr. Wein des verstorbenen einstigen Teilnehmers Gerhard Hertel aus Freudenstadt.

Willi Schaupp aus Eutingen sprach im Namen der Teilnehmer und im Auftrag der Kreisvolkshochschule eine Ehrung für Gerhard Wein und seine Frau Dr. Ruth Wein aus. Er betonte, dass in den Anfängen des Arbeitskreises niemand gedacht hätte, dass die Familienforscher sich über 25 Jahre zweimal pro Jahr bis zur 50. Tagung so zahlreich treffen. Dank der Bemühungen der Eheleute Wein würden spannende Themen zur Geschichte

unserer Vorfahren behandelt. Willi Schaupp überreichte Gerhard Wein als Geschenk der Kreisvolkshochschule zwei Bände der Ausstellung »Der Schwabenspiegel«. Willi Schaupp wies auch darauf hin, dass die in den vergangenen 25 Jahren verfassten Zeitungsberichte von ihm gesammelt worden seien.

Gerhard Wein gab einen Rückblick auf die in 25 Jahren behandelten Themen. Er dankte Bürgermeister Flik, dass der Arbeitskreis seit 1996 im Heimatmuseum in Dornstetten tagen kann.

Referenten der Tagung waren Irene und Horst Blaich aus Australien. Das Ehepaar erkundet zurzeit die Heimat ihrer schwäbischen Vorfahren Blaich und Wennagel, die in Aach, Dornstetten, Glatten, aber auch in Neuweiler und Zwerenberg im Kreis Calw leb-

ten. Ihre Vorfahren schlossen sich in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts der religiösen Vereinigung der sogenannten »Templer« oder »Jerusalemfreunde« an.

Diese Vereinigung hatte sich von der evangelischen Landeskirche abgespalten. Viele ihrer Mitglieder wanderten nach Palästina aus, darunter auch die Vorfahren des Ehepaars. Sie siedelten im damaligen Wüstengebiet, um in der Nähe des Tempels von Jerusalem zu le-

ben. In Palästina entstanden damals die schwäbischen Siedlungen Jaffa, Saron, Haifa, Wilhelma und Waldheim. Blaichs zeigten eindrucksvolle Bilder und erzählten die Geschichte der Palästina-Deutschen anschaulich.

Diese waren bis 1948 deutsche Staatsangehörige, mussten aber schon im Zweiten Weltkrieg und danach ihre deutschen Siedlungen aufgeben. Sie wurden von der englischen Mandats Herrschaft in

Palästina nach Australien geschickt. Dort wagten sie nach Jahren der Internierung in Lagern einen Neuanfang.

Drei Bücher haben Irene und Horst Blaich zur Geschichte der Palästina-Deutschen verfasst. Irene Blaich stellte das von ihr selbst geschriebene Buch »Die Wennagel-Story«, vor. In diesem Buch wird die Familie Wennagel ab 1634 in Dornstetten und Aach beschrieben. Es werden der Fortgang aus der Heimat nach Palästina und schließlich das Leben heute in Australien behandelt. Das Ehepaar Blaich übergab Gerhard Wein das Buch für das Archiv.

Eine lebhaftige Aussprache – auch über die Weiterführung des Arbeitskreises und die Verwertung des gesammelten Schriftguts – schloss sich an. Die nächste Sitzung ist am 13. Oktober in Dornstetten.



Merianbild von 1645 Landeshilfswerte Württemberg

Vom Satteldach im Heiligen Land

Irene und Horst Blaich stellen die Geschichte der Templer-Familie Wennagel vor

FREUDENTAL

Johann Martin Wennagel wanderte 1870 vom Schwarzwald nach Palästina aus, wo seine Nachfahren die Tempelergemeinde Sarona mit aufbauten. Urenkelin Irene Blaich schrieb über die Familiengeschichte ein Buch, das jetzt im PKC vorgestellt wurde.

VON BEATE VOLMARI

Irene Blaich geborene Eppinger, die 1948 als Palästinadeutsche aus dem neu gegründeten Staat Israel ausgewiesen wurde und nach einem Zwischenaufenthalt in Zypern nach Australien kam, hat die Geschichte der Familie Wennagel von 1699 bis 2007 zurückverfolgt und in dem Buch „The Wennagel Story“ verewigt. Für die reiche Bebilderung mit 1135 Fotos sorgte ihr Mann Horst Blaich, der auch am Dienstagabend im PKC mit einem Diavortrag einen interessanten Abriss der Familien- und Tempelergeschichte darbot.

Rund 70 Zuschauer – darunter auch vier Wennagels, die das aus Australien angereiste Autorenehepaar noch nicht kannte – verfolgten interessiert das Leben der Schwarzwälder Familie in Palästina.

Im Jahr 1870 wanderten die Ururgroßväter des Ehepaars Blaich – Johann Martin Wennagel und Sebastian Blaich – mit anderen Tempelfamilien von Dorsetten und Aach ins Heilige Land aus, dem Traum der Jerusalemliebhaber. Dort ließen sie sich zunächst in Jaffa und Haifa nieder.

Eukalyptus gegen Malaria

„Die Süddeutsche Warte, die Zeitung der Tempeler, beschreibt die Bedingungen für eine Auswanderung als sehr streng“, erzählte Horst Blaich. „Der Glaube musste stimmen, man musste körperlich und finanziell stark



Irene und Horst Blaich haben den Weg ihrer Familien aus dem Südwesten nach Palästina nachgezeichnet. Die Ergebnisse stellten sie jetzt im PKV vor. Bild: Alfred Drossel

und außerdem ein Baumeister oder Handwerker sein.“ Die den Schwarzwald-Bewohnern bis dahin unbekannt Malaria forderte in den ersten Jahren zahlreiche Opfer, bis die Tempeler das Pflanzen von Eukalyptusbäumen als probates Mittel gegen die Krankheit erkannten.

Glaube, persönliche Aufopferung und der sprichwörtliche schwäbische Fleiß sorgten dafür, dass die Tempelfamilien im Nahen Osten viel zur Modernisierung beitrugen.

Unübersehbar ist der Einfluss auf die Bauweise im heutigen Israel: Bauten die Schwaben anfangs ihre Häuser noch nach arabischem Vorbild mit Flachdächern, so führten sie schon bald die von daheim gewohnten, mit roten Ziegeln gedeckten Satteldächer ein – ein Baustil, den später die Israelis übernehmen

sollten. Auch das Schreinerhandwerk brachten die Tempeler nach Palästina.

Weil es in Jaffa nicht genügend Land gab, entstand in der Nachbarschaft die Kolonie Sarona, die von der Baumeisterfamilie Wennagel maßgeblich mit aufgebaut wurde.

Die Erfindung der Jaffa-Orange

Dort wurden auch im großen Stil Jaffa-Orangen angebaut – die Einführung der deutschen, motorenbetriebenen Wasserpumpen sorgte für reichen Ertrag und entsprechenden Export. „Für den Transport baute der deutsche Wagner Eppinger Wagen wie im Schwarzwald und dann auch Kutschen für den Transport der Schiffspassagiere“, erzählte Horst Blaich.

Fast alle Häuser der alten Tempelergemeinde Sarona, die

heute mitten in Tel Aviv liegt, stehen unter Denkmalschutz. Die kürzlich von Israelis entdeckte Schwarzwälder Uhr im alten Gemeindehaus begeisterte die Finder ebenso wie der von Hugo Wennagel versteckte Schatz aus Goldstücken, der dem 99-jährigen Besitzer mittlerweile nach Australien übersandt wurde.

Die Ausweisung der Deutschpalästinenser nach Australien erlebte die damals 15-jährige Irene als „großes Abenteuer“. Mit ihrem Mann wohnt sie inzwischen in einem Vorort von Melbourne, heute das Hauptzentrum der Tempeler.

Info: Das Buch „The Wennagel Story“ kann übers Internet bestellt werden unter <http://www.trafford.com/robots/04-1334.html>

Die Tempeler

Die Tempelgesellschaft verdankt ihre Entstehung dem evangelischen Theologen Christoph Hoffmann, der seine Jugend in der von seinem Vater gegründeten, pietistischen Brüdergemeinde Korntal verbrachte. Er gründete 1854 in Ludwigsburg die Gesellschaft für Sammlung des Volkes Gottes in Jerusalem, die Jerusalem als Ort der Verheißung ansah.

Zunächst ließen sich die Tempeler jedoch im Weiler Kirschenhardthof (Burgstetten) nieder, um das Gemeindeleben auszubauen. 1858 erkundete eine dreiköpfige Kommission die Siedlungsmöglichkeiten in Palästina. Als es 1859 zum Bruch mit der Landeskirche kam, wurde der „Deutsche Tempel“ als eigenständige religiöse Bewegung gegründet. Die ersten Familien wanderten 1868 aus und gründeten in Haifa eine Tempelkolonie.

Weitere Tempelergemeinden entstanden in Jaffa, Sarona und Jerusalem. Alle erlangten Ansehen und Wohlstand. Die überwiegend aus Bauern und Handwerkern bestehenden Tempeler trugen wesentlich zur Erschließung Palästinas bei. Sie errichteten die ersten modernen landwirtschaftlichen Siedlungen, bauten die Infrastruktur aus und förderten den Tourismus. Auch die ersten Industriebetriebe sind den deutschen Kolonisten zu verdanken. Nach einer ersten Internierungswelle 1941 wurden die noch im Land verweilenden Palästinadeutschen 1948 nach der Gründung des Staates Israels ausgewiesen. Viele ließen sich in Australien nieder, wo heute rund 1300 von insgesamt 2000 Tempelern leben. (vol)

The German Press reported favorably on the launching of “The Wennagel Story” book by Irene Blaich in the ‘Heimatmuseum’ in Dornstetten, Black Forest; and in the ‘Paedagogisch-Kulturelles Centrum Ehemalige Synagoge Freudental’, Germany early this year. (Newspaper clippings above.)

About the Authors



Irene Blaich nee Eppinger was born 5 March 1933 in Jaffa as the eldest daughter of Richard Otto Eppinger and his wife Hilda nee Wennagel. She grew up in the German Templer Settlement of Wilhelma in Palestine. She left there in 1948 and came to Australia in 1949 via Cyprus. She gained extensive experience in office work after which she trained as mothercraft nurse. In 1955 she married Horst Blaich and settled in Bayswater, a suburb of Melbourne. When the first two of her five children were at university she decided to study at Melbourne University. She qualified as a primary teacher, specialising in German, early childhood and music. She won a scholarship from the Goethe Institute and was in Germany for three months in 1988.

After her retirement from primary teaching Irene volunteered at the Templer Home for the Aged and the Tabulam Nursing Home, then worked directly with the Occupational Therapist while studying aged care and qualified in Dementia Care. During 1989 to 1995 she organised many activities for the residents in the Homes, like music, singing and most of all listening to stories about the times in Palestine. While looking after the residents she spent a great deal of time gleaning much of the information contained in 'The Wennagel Story' book.

Irene and her husband went on a two-year mission to Sydney for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, where both of them worked in the head quarter of the family history centre of the Church. During this time they traveled around Australia for nine months in a station wagon visiting the 110 family history centres of the Church and teaching the staff.

On returning to Melbourne Irene continued volunteering at the Tabulam and Templer Homes. She reads, reminisces and plays the piano for the residents. With her husband Horst she is heavily involved with the Templer Heritage Group and does genealogical research and computer work. Horst and Irene have both been to Germany several times, often with members of their immediate family. They have found and keep in contact with extended family members in Germany and Switzerland. Irene and Horst have five children and twelve grandchildren and enjoy collecting photographs, documenting family histories and writing and publishing family books.



Horst Blaich was born 1. November 1932 in Haifa, Palestine. His parents Albert and Herta nee Katz were both born

in the Templer settlements in Palestine. During WWII Horst, his mother and brother were interned in Waldheim Camp and exchanged to Germany in November 1942. After the war Horst completed an apprenticeship as a colour-photo-lithographer (Graphic Arts) then emigrated with his family to Australia and settled in Bayswater a suburb of Melbourne, Victoria.

In the early 1950 he was very active in the '*Templer Jugendgruppe*' (Younger Set of the Temple Society, Australia) publishing the early JG newsletters and organising the annual Sommerfests.

Horst furthered his education and skills by completing an Advanced Printing Technology Course and then proceeded to study management and Industrial Engineering. As a member of the Institute of Industrial Engineering he served several years in their committee.

For years he was the production manager of P.C.Grosser & Co. a large Printing and Packaging Company with over 300 employees. During this time he spend several months in Chicago USA studying with the Lithographic Technical Foundation.

He trained apprentices and developed an in-company training course with exceptional good results.

Horst was interested in productivity improvement and quality control, especially in the concept of Quality Circles, a group problem solving method through employee participation. In 1978 he undertook a study tour of Japan to learn of this country's phenomenal productivity boom. In 1982 Horst successfully installed Quality Circles at W. D. & H.O.Wills (Australia) a major company of the AMATIL Group in Melbourne.

As an Industrial Engineer with long standing productivity management experience, Horst continued to demonstrate the benefits of Quality Circles. Horst was one of the 'pioneers' in the Quality Circle concept in Australia. In 1982 he was instrumental in forming the Melbourne Chapter of the IQAC the first such chapter outside the USA. As president of the Chapter he organised the first Quality Circle conferences in Australia. After five years the Chapter became the independent Australian Quality Circle Association with Horst as the inaugural President.

In 1985 Horst formed his own company Horst Blaich Pty Ltd, Total Quality Management Consultants and Publishers. Horst has worked successfully for and with major organizations in Australia including government authorities, defence department, the manufacturing sector and service industries. In conjunction with Donald Dewar, of the USA Horst published a 'Team Leader Manual' on statistical problem solving techniques for employee participative teamwork.

Horst has a keen interest in Family History and has lectured and trained people in the science of Genealogy for over 30 years. He voluntarily served as the Genealogical advisor to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for many years and trained the staff in Family History Centres throughout Australia. Horst served in many leadership positions and as a Bishop in the Church.

Horst has been married to Irene for over fifty years and they have five children and twelve grandchildren.

He is now retired and is deeply involved in family history and maintains his '*Albert Blaich Family Archive-Australia*' with a large Templer family computer database. He supplied valuable information and photographic images of the old Templer buildings and families to the Sarna Restoration Team under the control of the Tel-Aviv municipally Council Offices in Israel. He also supplied many Templer images to Danny Goldman during his doctorate studies and Danny said that without Horst's help and images he would not have succeeded in his task. Horst also donated many large photographs of Templer scenes to the Eretz-Israel Museum which initiated the successful '*Chronicle of a Utopia-The Templers in the Holy Land, 1868-1948*' and the same name book in 2006.

Horst has organised the Temple Society Australia - Heritage Group and is leading the group into the modern archival and historical research area. Horst developed out of the '*Albert Blaich Family Archive-Australia*' a large Templer historical database with over 25,000 images of family albums, an invaluable treasure for researchers and historians. In recent years Horst presented many talks and shows of Templer themes and also organised a Templer Gallery with photographic exhibitions in the German speaking Old Age Home 'Tabulam' in Bayswater, Melbourne, Australia.

Horst is responsible for editing the TSA Heritage Group Pages in the monthly Templer Record and has edited and published the first Templer Record Supplement booklet.

Horst has created the cover and the design of this book plus several others over the years. He wrote many family history books and booklets.

Introduction to the book

The phenomenon of emigration from Württemberg into the wide world was especially marked in the 19th century. Thousands of families from the poor regions of the Swabian Alb and the Black Forest tried their luck in the East (in the direction of the Caucasus) as well as in the West (in America).

A small group called 'The Friends of Jerusalem', later named 'Templers' found their emigration destination in the Holy Land for religious reasons.

The first emigration wave brought about 750 people to the neglected province of Palestine, ruled by the Ottomans. Within four years, four colonies (settlements) were established, in Haifa and Jaffa in 1869, in Sarona near Jaffa in 1871 and in 1873 the colony Rephaim near Jerusalem. The Templers through their pioneering work developed and modernised the country in many areas. Their engagement in town planning, in agriculture as well as at the beginning of industrialisation of the country was of great significance.

During the last decades our knowledge of the Templers has grown considerably, especially through the researches of the Württemberg Templers, which were instigated by the late Prof Dr Dr hc Alex Carmel, who died in 2002.

The book at hand supplements and presents another important family of the Templers who was active in the Holy Land. The Wennagels were of great significance as builders. A lot of information in family history and genealogical connections to other Templer families is very clearly demonstrated through charts and pictures. In addition, all generations are presented especially those who were active in Palestine. This book shows, how a few emigrants from the Northern Black Forest to the Holy Land contributed significantly to the modernisation of the country through faith, much personal sacrifice and a great deal of Swabian diligence.

The depth of the book's text is supported by the hundreds of pictures and images, most of which are published here for the first time.

We the researchers and the interested parties of the Holy Land should be thankful to the author Irene and Horst Blaich for this comprehensive work.

— *Dr Jakob Eisler, University of Ludwigsburg near Stuttgart, Germany, March 2007*

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