

Glossary of Old German Words¹

A

Aigenveldt

see **Eigenfeld**

Allmande

see **Allmende**

Allmende

commons, common land of a community, also called Losacker (HW)

Allod(ium)

small hereditary proprietorship (HW)

Anwand

place where the farmer turned around when plowing; gradually it developed into a strip of land between two fields, which was often leased separately or turned over to a concern such as a school (HW)

Arrha

symbolic counterpayment to the consideration in a contract, which made the contract legally binding; used mainly with marriage contracts and property transfers, also called **Weinkauf** (wine

purchase), **Bierkauf** (beer purchase), **Imbiß** (snack) etc., when it took the form of food or drink consumed communally by the contracting parties and witnesses after the signing (HW)

Ausbürger

see **Pfahlbürger**

Ausgedinger(in)

see **Leibzüchter(in)**

B

Bärker, Berker

tanner (FW)

Bauerschaft

cluster of farms, agricultural village (HW)

befreundet

akin, related (H)

Beisasse

see **Schutzverwandter**

Beisitzer

see **Schutzverwandter**

besetzt

¹ My colleague Ann Sherwin was kind enough to allow me to post her glossary here even though she's taken her website offline. Please see her note on sources at the end of the document. -EYG

(personal description in a passport) stocky, heavyset (= *untersetzt*) (source: letter to client from German researcher)

Bierkauf

see **Arrha**

Blutzehnt

tithe of or on livestock (H)

Brinksitzer

isolated settler on the outskirts of a farm village near the undeveloped surrounding area, called the brink. Originally the brink was a woods, but later the term came to refer to any undeveloped land. The Brinksitzer eventually acquired land and rights. (HW)

Bürger

burgher; [click here](#) for fuller explanation (M)

Butheler

nailsmith (FW)

Butteler

cellarer (FW)

C

Cubiterin

new mother, woman in childbed

D

Dimissoriale

(in marriage record) affidavit by which a pastor grants consent for one of his parishioners to be married by another pastor (HW)

Drubbel

central part of a farm community, where houses were clustered

E

Eichelmast

right to drive pigs or other livestock into the forest (oak) to feed (see **Mast**) (HW, inferred)

Eigenfeld

field farmed by the owner himself, with the help of day laborers, rather than by a tenant farmer; privately owned land as opposed to land owned by the crown (inferred from entries in HW for *Eigenbau*, *Eigengut*, etc.)

Einwohner

resident of a community with fewer rights than a *Bürger*, also called **Schutzverwandter**

Erbrecht

form of landholding whereby the holder can turn the land over to another (who can, in turn, bequeath it to his heirs) in return for an annual rent, without the holder's having direct ownership himself; he only

owns the right to use the land (HW)

Excapitulant

military enlistee

F

Feldschütz

field guard (H)

Fronden, Fronen

socage, manual labor rendered by a tenant to his landlord under the feudal system (HW)

G

Genoßsame

community of vassals belonging to a feudal estate (HW)

Geschwei

sister-in-law, mother-in-law (FW)

Glevenbürger

see **Pfahlbürger** (HW) and link at **Bürger**

Grometh

newmown hay or grass

grundbar

subject to land rent

Grundbeere

potato

H

Handlohn

honorarium paid to the landlord for his consent when a lease changes hands; also called *Laudemium* (HW)

Häusler

see **Heuerling**

Heuerling

contract farm worker who receives a house and small plot of land on the farm in return for labor and an annual fee (HW)

Hofbeständer

see **Genoßsame** (HW)

Hüsselte

see **Heuerling**

I

Imbiß

see **Arrha**

ingehend

first [of a month]

Inmann, Inwohner

see **Schutzverwandter**

K

Kan(d)elgießer

see **Kannengießer**

Kandler

see **Kannengießer**

Kannenbäcker

potter (see **Krugbäcker**;
inferred, since
both *Kanne* and *Krug* mean
"tankard, jug, or pot")

Kannengießer

pewterer (H)

Ke(e)srecht

right to let livestock feed in
the forest; see **Mast**(H/W)

Krugbäcker

potter (T)

L

Laudemium

see **Handlohn**

Lei(h)kauf

see **Weinkauf** (HW)

Leibzüchter(in)

life-annuitant (H); person
living on a *Leibzucht* or life
estate[-*in* ending is
feminine]

Losacker

see **Allmende**

ludeigen

free and unencumbered
[land] (HW)

M

Mast(recht)

(before stall feeding was
introduced) the right to
drive livestock, especially
pigs, into the forest for
fattening on acorns,
beechnuts, etc.
(HW); *Mast*(English *mast*)
also refers to fattening or
the feed itself (H)

Merino

minor official [Spain] (HW)

Metze

an old unit of measure that
varied in size, used
especially for grain (D)

O

Observanda

midwife

P

Pfahlbürger

person living outside a city
who enjoyed burgher rights
in return for military service
to the city (HW); also see
link at **Bürger**

Pfleg(e)amt

district of of a Bavarian
provincial court,
administered by a *Pfleger* or
provincial judge (HW)

Pfründe

benefice, living; prebend
(H)

Podestat

see **Merino**

R

Rauchgeld

hearth tax (HW)

Ruggericht

peasants' court

S

Säckelmeister

cashier, treasurer (H) (do not confuse with *Säcklermeister*, master purse-maker)

Säckler

pursemaker (FW)

Scharwerk(e)

see **Fronden** (HW)

Scharwerk-Geld

socage fee, paid in lieu of manual labor

Schober

a box- or barrel-shaped pile of hay, straw, or grain kept outdoors and covered (D)

Schock

60, threescore (H)

Schutzverwandter

person entitled under state law to live in a community but who could not own land and had limited rights (M, HW); also called *Beisasse*, *Beisitzer*, *Einwohner*, *Inmann*, *Inwohner*, etc.

(HW); for more information, see link at **Bürger**

Seckelmeister

see **Säckelmeister**

Siebner

one of seven village officials appointed to watch field boundaries and arbitrate in boundary disputes (HW)

Simri

old grain measure = 22.15 liter (A)

T

Tag(e)werk

old land measure, approximately equivalent to a **Morgen** (D), which varied from 0.6 to 0.9 acres (C1968). Some dictionaries translate **Morgen** as "acre."

Terminen

cramps, especially epilepsy (FW)

Tie, Thie, Thye

assembly place in a farm village, or the assembly itself and its proceedings (HW)

Tripfhäusl, Tropfhäusl

small house to which belongs only the ground directly beneath the roof and eaves

U

Untergänger

judges in border disputes

W

Weinkauf

see **Arrha**

Weißbeck, Weißbäcker

fancy baker, baker of
wheaten bread (H); baker
and confectioner (C1968)

Werkhschuh

foot

Key to Sources

(A) "Alte Münzen, Masse und Gewichte" in: *Geschichte von Münster a.N.* by Ludwig Vogelmann, Heimatausschuß Stuttgart-Münster, 1965.

(C) *Cassel's New German and English Dictionary*, Funk & Wagnalls Company, New York and London, 1906 (C1968 refers to the 1968 edition of the same work)

(D) Duden, *Das große Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*, Dudenverlag, Bibliographisches Institut Mannheim, Wien, Zürich, 1979

(FW) *Familienkundliches Wörterbuch*, by Fritz Verdenhalven, Verlag Degener & Co., Neustadt an der Aisch, 1969

(H) *Heath's New German Dictionary*, by Elizabeth Weir; D.C. Heath & Co., Publishers, Boston, New York, and Chicago, 1888

(HW) *Hilfswörterbuch für Historiker* by Eugen Haberkern and Joseph Friedrich Wallach, Francke Verlag, Tübingen, 6th edition, 1980 (definitions greatly abridged; for detailed explanations, I highly recommend this work if you read German)

(M) *Meyers Großes Konversationslexikon*, Leipzig and Vienna 1903, Vol. 3, pp. 620--621 (see link at **Bürger**)

(T) *Taschenbuch für Familiengeschichtsforschung*, by Wolfgang Ribbe and Eckart Henning, Verlag Degener & Co., Neustadt an der Aisch, 1980

If no source is given, I may have inferred the meaning from context, found it explained in an unidentified German source (e.g. photocopy from client), or simply neglected to record the source.