

Windsheim and South Germany Collection:

An Inventory of the Collection at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Harry Ransom Center

Title: Windsheim and South Germany Collection

Dates: 1500-1749

Extent: 1 document box (.42 linear feet), 2 oversize boxes (osb), 1 oversize folder (osf)

Abstract: Collection of letters and documents relating to the city of Windsheim, Germany, primarily concerning local legal and political affairs.

Call Number: Manuscript Collection MS-2849

Language: German

Access: Open for research

Administrative Information

Acquisition: Gift, 1981 (G 1110)

Processed by: Bob Taylor, 2014

Repository: [Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin](#)

Historical Note

In 1981, the Ransom Center received by gift a small collection of letters and documents produced between about 1500 and 1749 and relating primarily to the German city of Windsheim (now Bad Windsheim, in Bavaria). These materials were largely concerned with local legal and political affairs and in many cases addressed to the town's burgomaster or produced under municipal authority.

Located on the River Aisch in south central Germany, Windsheim was in the early years of the 16th century a small city of fewer than three thousand souls. It was nevertheless designated a *Reichsstadt* and thus enjoyed a measure of independence within the Holy Roman Empire.

The epoch in which the major portion of these papers was created was one of great cultural and intellectual upheaval in Germany, marked not only by the rebirth of humanistic learning and the Protestant Reformation but by periods of great violence and social dislocation. The Peasants' revolt erupted in Germany in 1524 and before its end the following year perhaps a hundred thousand were killed in the swift and decisive aristocratic response.

Less than a century later the division of Europe into Catholic and Protestant lands led to the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), in which more than a third of the population of Germany eventually perished. In the fall of 1631 Windsheim itself was occupied in turn by the forces of the Catholic League and then by the opposing Swedish army of King Gustavus Adolphus.

Scope and Contents

The "Austraginsachen Lenhard Seckelmans" (Folder 1.1) comprises 46 unfoliated parchment leaves of commentary and testimony regarding a matter of civil law involving Lenhard Seckelmann in the law courts of Windsheim during the second decade of the sixteenth century. The date 1513 is found on the title leaf of the volume, which has at a later date been numbered in pencil H189a.

Folders 1.1 and 1.2 are accompanied by a cover sheet reading "Allerhand original Schreiben Tagsatzungen Band anders zu Sachen Seckelmanns" and bearing the shelf number B200 in red crayon. Statements by Johannes Dentzer, Michel Pranz, Johann Freiherr von Schwarzenberg, and Lenhard Seckelmann are found in the text of the Austraginsachen, along with references to Balthasar Dentzer, Georgius Dentzer, _____ Finger/Fingerer, Hanns Kegeth, and Jorg Knopff.

Folders 1.2 and 1.3 contain 29 letters and documents dated between 1511 and 1514 regarding the Seckelmann matter. These bear pencil notations H189ab through H189ap and H189d through H189z. Unrelated but also found in folder 1.3 are two documents and a brief memorandum, all undated and unsigned but of the sixteenth century.

Several of the letters appear under the name of Johann Freiherr von Schwarzenberg acting in his judicial capacity at the court in Bamberg and bear his seal. Other letters present carry the name of Melchior von Seinsheim and generally have the Schwarzenberg seal. Documents H189k and H189l were issued on behalf of the city of Windsheim and each bears the municipal seal.

Folder 1.4 contains four letters addressed to the municipal government of Windsheim along with two documents, both of the latter bifolia. All are of the sixteenth century. Each item has the shelf number B196 in red crayon together with the respective pencil notations H8, H12, H14, H16, H21, and H24.

Letter H8 was issued over the name of Erkinger von Seinsheim zu Hohenkottenheim and carries the Schwarzenberg seal. The other letters (H14, H16, and H24) have unknown or imperfect seals. Document H21 contains many personal names, including those of the burgomaster of Windsheim, Conradt Hayden, and of Martin and Erkinger von Seinsheim.

The oversize file contains two further sixteenth century items, both documents on parchment. One of these documents retains its two wax seals, each of which hangs from the document by a cloth ribbon and is contained within a small cylindrical wooden box called a *skippet*.

"Beforchung der Brütter und Gesell. S. Johannis Alttars" (Folder 1.5) is 18 leaves in length and is paginated [1-2], 35 [i.e. 34] p. The text proper ends on page 26, with the final leaves bearing only page enumeration. Pages 33 and 34 are misnumbered 34 and 35; the penultimate leaf (pages 31-32) has been removed. Following prefatory remarks on pages 1-2 relating to the support of the church in Dannstadt by various members of the Heidelberg academic community the manuscript presents information on arable land, pasturage, ground rents in kind (that is, in grain) and in currency. Dannstadt is now Dannstadt-Schauernheim, in the state of Rhineland-Palatinate in southwest Germany.

The document is enclosed in a wrapper formed by a parchment bifolium from a missal, probably German in origin and dating from between 1350 and 1450. The present text of the missal includes portions for Pentecost and Holy Trinity; at the top of the recto of the first leaf the caption title "Danstatter Beforchung anno 1601" has been added.

Folders 1.6 through 1.9 (together with the oversize file) house an interrelated group of archival materials documenting the efforts of Windsheim citizens to seek redress from the Imperial court in regard to various abuses of power by the *Magistrat* of the city of Windsheim.

Index Terms

People

Dentzer, Balthasar.

Dentzer, Georgius.

Dentzer, Johannes.

Harpprecht, Johann Friederich von.

Heiden, Conradt.

Kegeth, Hanns.

Knopff, Jorg.

Pranz, Michel.

Schwarzenberg, Johann, Freiherr von, 1463-1528.

Seckelmann, Lenhard.

Seinsheim, Erkingen von.

Seinsheim, Martin von.

Seinsheim, Melchoir von, d. 1520.

Organizations

St. Johann (Church : Dannstadt, Germany).

Subjects

Bavaria (Germany)--History--1180-1777--Sources.

Germany--History--1273-1517--Sources.

Germany--History--1517-1871--Sources.

Places

Bad Windsheim (Germany).

Dannstadt (Germany).

Document and Format Types

Judicial records.

Legal documents.

Missals.

Parchment (animal material).

Seals (artifacts).

Skippets.

Series I. Windsheim and South Germany, 1500-1749

In the matter of Lenhard Seckelmann, 1511-1514

Austraginsachen Lenhard Seckelmans von Külsaim, 1513 (H189a) **Container**
1.1

Correspondence

1513-1514 and undated (H189ab-ai, ak-al, ao-ap) **Container** 1.2

1511-1513 and undated (H189d-h, k-l, o, q-s, u-z); three unrelated and undated **Container**
documents 1.3

Other documents of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

Sixteenth century documents and letters, mostly undated **Container** 1.4

Two sixteenth century documents on parchment, one dated 24 September 1513; **Container**
the other undated and bearing two seals with wooden skippets osb 1-2

Beforchungh der Brütter und Gesell. S. Johannis Altars, oder Der Frühmess zu **Container**
Dannstatt, so der Universitet zu Heidelberg ... anno 1601 1.5

Documents on the civil discord in Windsheim, 1739-1749

Tabelle darinnen zu ersetzen, welcher Gestalt, ein hochedler Magistrat zu **Container**
Windsheim in der Freundschaft mit einander steht. Anno 1739 den 10ten Xber osf

[Document empowering Johann Friederich von Harpprecht to act at the Imperial **Container**
court on behalf of the undersigned citizens of Windsheim, 1744] letterpress document bearing the signatures and seals of over 80 citizens of Windsheim; 1.6
accompanied by an English translation

[Entreaty to the Holy Roman Emperor, 1744-1749] leaves 1-13, 17-40, and five **Container**
unfoliated leaves present, signed on leaf 13 by J. F. von Harpprecht 1.7

Humillima informatio in Sachen Windsheim contra Windsheim ..., 1747, and **Container**
Gegen-Information ... über Humillima informatio, [1747?] one copy of the first 1.8
document and three of the second are present; all letterpress

In Sachen zu Windsheim klagende Burgerschaft contra den löblichen Magistrat, **Container**
[1749] two copies, letterpress 1.9

Index of Correspondents

- Bad Windsheim (Germany)--1.3
- Dentzer, Johannes--1.1
- Harpprecht, Johann Friederich von--1.7
- Pranz, Michel--1.1
- Schwarzenberg, Johann, Freiherr von, 1463-1528--1.1, 1.3
- Seckelmann, Lenhard--1.1, 1.3
- Seinsheim, Erkingen von--1.4
- Seinsheim, Melchior von, d. 1520--1.2-3