

Chronicle of Rellinghausen

ca. 860

Rellinghausen (written as Ruodlinghus) is excluded from the tithe donation made by Archbishop Gunthar of Cologne (850-864) to the Quintinskapelle church in Essen. Hence, Rellinghausen must therefore have existed as a separate tithe area with its own small church.

A **tithe** is a one-tenth part of something, paid as a contribution to a religious organization or compulsory tax to government.

943

Archbishop Wigfried of Cologne transfers the tithes of Rellinghausen (together with Vöcklinghausen and part of Bergerhausen) to the Benedictine Monastery in Werden. Hence, Rellinghausen becomes a sub-parish of the Werden Abbey. The reasons for this are unknown.

947

This is once again confirmed in a document by King Otto I.

996/98

The Essen Abbess Mathilde founded a women's Stift in Rellinghausen for the daughters of the lower nobility. The statutes of this women's Stift are now also transferred from Werden to the Essen women's Stift.

A women's Stift is a religious community for women who live in a monastery-like complex without taking vows. The ladies living in such a free secular convent (mostly nobles in the Middle Ages) are referred to as canonesses or convent ladies.

1058

The first documented mention of the church in Rellinghausen is found in the will of the Essen Abbess Theophanu. It refers to the Romanesque collegiate church, which must have existed for some time. The collegiate church was probably built over the foundations of the earlier mentioned church.

1220

Rellinghausen is mentioned in the bailiwick and jurisdiction of Count Friedrich von Isenberg as belonging to his "inherited bailiwick estate".

A bailiwick is a geographical area over which someone has legal or political control.

1225

A dispute over this bailiwick near Gevelsberg leads to an attack on the archbishop and imperial defender Engelbert von Berg, who is stabbed to death. His cousin Count Friedrich von Isenberg is ostracized as his murderer, banished, and caught a year later to be executed in Cologne.

1226

Adolf von der Mark, also a cousin of Isenberg, seizes part of the Isenberg inheritance, including the bailiwick over Rellinghausen (he also seizes what are later known as the "Märkische Gemeinden" of Steeler Berg, Freisenbruch, Horst and Eiberg, which are then granted to him by treaty in 1243).

1230

However, at the command of King Heinrich (VII), Adolf von der Msrk is forced to relinquish the bailiwick of Rellinghausen.

1241

The son of the executed Friedrich von Isenberg, who now calls himself "von Limburg" after his mother, lays claim to his father's bailiwicks and, with the support of his powerful Limburg relatives, has the new "Isenburg" built on Werden territory but directly on the Rellinghausen border to visibly express this claim. Whether he already held the bailiwick rights again at this time cannot be proven beyond doubt.

1241

For the first time, a priest is mentioned in a document in Rellinghausen.

1243

The Isenburg Castle in Essen is conquered by the Archbishop of Cologne, Konrad von Hochstaden. As a vassal of the archbishop, Heinrich von Sayn now inhabits the castle.

A vassal is a person in medieval Europe, who promises to be loyal and fight for a king, lord or powerful land owner when needed, in exchange for land to live .

1246

Following the sudden death of the Cologne vassal, the Abbot of Werden dares to lay claim to the castle on his land. In a settlement, he is allowed to occupy it with his own knights, but must cede the land to the archbishop, who in turn appoints a second castellan.

A castellan was the governor or caretaker entrusted to oversee a castle, maintaining defences and protecting the castle's lands, combined with the legal administration of local lands and workers including the castle's domestic staff.

1247

Heinrich von Vittinghoff appears as the archbishop's new castellan. As Isenburg Castle was already occupied by the abbot of Werden, the archbishop had a farm located directly in front of it but on Rellinghausen territory converted into a moated castle, a so-called "motte".

At the same time, Corvey records document an agreement between the Abbot of Corvey Abbey and Dietrich von Limburg concerning the transportation of wine from the Rhine to Corvey. It was customary to stop at a Vitingshof farm near Freisenbruch, where the ancestors of Henricus Vitinghof may have sat. Heinrich von Vitinghof also appears in Werden and Essen documents. He therefore seems to have been at the service of several lords (and ladies) at the same time.

A moat is a deep, broad ditch, either dry or filled with water, that is dug and surrounds a castle.

1272

According to a document issued in Rellinghausen, his son Heinrich II inherits Vitinghof Castle. His brother is listed as Truchsess at Neu-Isenberg Castle.

A Truchsess was originally the name for the highest supervisor of the court household.

1288

The balance of power in the Rhenish-Westphalian region is shaken up once again by the Battle of Worringen. In a coalition of Cologne citizens, Margravian and Berg troops and Berg peasants, Cologne Archbishop Siegfried of Westerburg is crushingly defeated and falls captive to the Count of Berg (cousin of Dietrich of Limburg!).

This event is extremely momentous for Rellinghausen:

- Märkische troops destroy the Isenburg castle in Essen as a symbol of Cologne's power.
- Dietrich von Limburg is awarded the bailiwick of Rellinghausen in the subsequent negotiations. The bailiwicks of the Essen and Rellinghausen abbeys are no longer in the same hands, which favors Rellinghausen's efforts to gain independence.
- Heinrich III von Vitinghof places himself under the protection of the new bailiff and lord of the court. He is able to keep his castle Vitinghof in Rellinghausen. His descendants will continue to play a role in the history of Rellinghausen.

1378

A document about border difficulties between Steele and the Rellinghausen Stift states that the border of the Stift extends up the Ruhr River to Horst Eiberg. Residents of Steele need special permission in order to access to Ruhr and the Ruhr meadows. This repeatedly led to border disputes. The Steeler Grendplatz is still a reminder of the old boundary.

1401

Rellinghausen coins come into circulation for the first time. They bear the portrait of Dietrich VI von Limburg-Broich, then bailiff of the Stift.

1410

Knight Pilgrim von der Leithen, who lived in the castle on the hill at the time, leases the abbey mill to a Hannes Molner and his wife. Pilgrim von der Leithen had been granted the mill right by the monastery. This right was returned to the women's Stift in 1503 by the new owner Vittinghoff-Schell.

1418

Abbess Margarethe von der Marck (1418-1425) has the "Spillenborgmühl" mill built on the Ruhr on Rellinghausen Stift land. This leads to disputes with Rellinghausen Stift, which sees its sovereign rights violated and partakes in legal action for them.

1452

Johann "von den Vitinhave gen. Schele" buys from his childless brother-in-law Pilgrim van der Leithen the "hus, geheten de berg", today's Schellenberg Castle,

at that time still a simple moated castle, which is extended and expanded over the course of generations to become today's castle complex.

1487

Cord von Vittinghoff-Schell and his wife Bate von Stael-Holstein donate a hospital (= inn) for poor and infirm people, wandering scholars and pilgrims, which continues to operate today as a restaurant under the name "Alte Dorfschenke".

1516

On St. Anne's Day, a shepherd passing through the Rellinghausen mill valley finds a host burse with consecrated hosts in a thorn bush, which had been stolen from the collegiate church the day before during the church consecration festival. The "miraculous event" stirred people's emotions, soon became the stuff of legend and attracted pilgrims to the site. A chapel was later built over the thorn bush. To this day - five hundred years now - the event is commemorated on St. Anne's Day with a solemn procession from the chapel to the collegiate church.

1567

Sophie von Stael-Holstein, the deanesses at the time, dies of the plague.

The deanesses represented the Abbess.

1567

The Rellinghausen court tower is first mentioned in a document. It was built by the then bailiff Wilhelm von Eyll of Haus Baldeney. Through the marriage of Ludgard von Limburg, the bailiwick had already passed to the lords of Haus Baldeney in 1444.

1570

Emperor Ferdinand I places the Rellinghausen Stift under imperial protection and confirms the privileges of the Rellinghausen canonesses at their request.

A canoness is a member of a religious community of women living a simple life.

1577

A long-simmering dispute over jurisdiction in Rellinghausen between the canonesses and their bailiff Wilhelm von Eyll ends with a settlement.

1579

The witch trials begin in Rellinghausen, which last until the Imperial Chamber Court trial against the Rellinghausen monastery in 1591 and cost 41 people their lives.

1619

A grinding mill opens for the first time in the upper Mühlental valley. Many well-known Essen gun manufacturers subsequently became its leaseholder up until 1823. After that, it continued to be operated as a corn mill for some time. The Bohrmühlental street is still a reminder of this.

1621

Riders of the Imperial Majesty of Spain take up quarters in Rellinghausen.

1622

Spaniards appear again in the Stift area and "have made the most evil". In other words, they raped, plundered and pillaged.

1622

Due to the turmoil of war, the monastery is forced to give up the distant possessions of Froitzheim and Kirchherten on the left bank of the Rhine.

1624

At the behest of the abbess of Essen, around 300 peasants and Steele marksmen invade Rellinghausen. They free prisoners from the tower. There are three dead and several wounded. A number of Stift residents are taken away and put in the Steeler Diebesloch (jail).

1629

Rellinghausen is invaded by Hessian troops.

1631

Bailiff Wennemar von Neuhoff decrees that all men under his leadership must unite and arm themselves in order to defend themselves against stray bands of warriors.

1634

The Stift's church "St. Jakob" is renamed "St. Lambertus". This is said to have been triggered by the devastating invasions by Spanish troops during the Thirty Years' War.

1661

The Rellinghausen Stift officially rejoins the Essen Stift and loses its independence. Although the Essen Stift had officially never recognized the Rellinghausen Stift, in the coat of arms of the Essen Stift, the Rellinghausen Stift had its own field, which reflects that the Rellinghausen Stift must have had a certain status.

1663

The Protestant community was able to consecrate its first own place of worship, a small half-timbered church. This was preceded by years of wrangling over the shared use of the Stift's church for Protestant services.

1678

The cantor Franz von Vittinghoff-Schell donates 600 Reichstaler, the interest from which is used to hire a teacher and who also has to play the organ in the church. This ensured education for all children in the Stift's district, thus establishing one of the earliest "public elementary schools." The first school building with a teacher's residence was the half-timbered house directly next to the church. However, regular school attendance was not compulsory until the last abbess of Essen, Maria Kunigunde, issued the "Fürstlich Essendische Schulverordnung" in 1787.

1723

Baron von Vittinghoff-Schell opens the first glassworks in Rellinghausen in close proximity to his castle.

1775

The construction of the new Protestant church is completed. It has a remarkable interior in Bergisch rococo style.

1802

Prussian troops appear in Essen and dissolve all the monasteries, convents and Stifts, including the Rellinghausen Stift. The Prussian state declares itself the new owner. One year later, the dissolution is confirmed as legal by the Reichsdeputationshauptschluss (Imperial Decree of Deputation). However, the women's Stift was to be re-established as a "care institution for the daughters of noblemen and civil servants without means and without distinction of confession". It was first dissolved in 1812.

1806

French troops reach the areas on the right bank of the Rhine. Rellinghausen is incorporated into the Grand Duchy of Berg, which belongs to the Confederation of the Rhine under French protectorate.

1811

Following a territorial and administrative reform decreed by the French occupation, the formerly independent Rellinghausen is incorporated into the town of Steele. The mayor until 1822 was Baron Max von Vittinghoff-Schell, who probably safeguarded Rellinghausen's interests.

1815

The former Stifts of Essen, Werden and Rellinghausen once again fall to the Prussian state in accordance with the provisions of the Congress of Vienna. However, the administrative reform introduced during the French period is retained.

1824

Church services can no longer be held in the Stift's church due to its dilapidation. The Prussian state, the now new owner of the church, is obliged to bear part of the new building costs. That is why they also want to have a say in the design. A submitted design does not meet with the approval of the Prussian building deputation. The new design essentially bears the signature of the later director of this institution, Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Apart from the Romanesque tower, which the people of Rellinghausen managed to preserve, a new church was built in the neo-classical style of the time.

1827

The new church is consecrated. A few buildings from the Stift period - such as the cloister - had to be sacrificed for the new building. By that time, the sense for this special feature of monastic architecture was no longer relevant.

1833

The shaft of the Ludwig coal mine was sunk on what is known as today as Rellinghauser Street. Iron ore was also mined here for a time.

Shaft mining or shaft sinking is the action of excavating a mine shaft from the top down, where there is initially no access to the bottom.

1845

I. A. Hermann, the castle's rentmaster at the time, initiates the founding of the "Verein vom hl. Karl Borromäus" (now the "Öffentliche katholische Bücherei"). This was the beginning of the founding of numerous associations under the umbrella of the church in Rellinghausen, whose members came together for a variety of interests: politics, music, theater, and preservation of tradition.

1857

The Neu-Essen III and IV iron ore mine begins mining iron ore in the area of today's Stadtwaldplatz. As production volumes fall, operations are suspended between 1884 and 1891 and the mine is finally closed in 1899.

1868

Cholera breaks out in Rellinghausen. Three nuns from the Dernbach Sisters take up their nursing duties in the same year.

1873

The Bergisch-Märkisch Bahn negotiates a railroad line from Essen to Werden passing through Rellinghausen territory. The extension of the line begins in the same year.

1876

After years of unsuccessful efforts, the municipality of Rellinghausen becomes an independent mayor's office on January 1; probably as a result of the rapid increase in population. The first mayor is Josef Sartorius from Kempen.

1877

The administration of the young municipality moved into the new town hall.

1877

The railroad line is opened. The Rellinghausen stop was originally called "Haltestelle am Isenberg tunnel", then "Station Rellinghausen", and today it is the "Stadtwald" station.

1878

A freight line is built between Steele and Mülheim via Rüttenscheid, which soon begins passenger services after intensive negotiations. The stop in Rellinghausen is commemorated by Eisenbahnstraße. Today there is an Aldi supermarket there.

1882

Rellinghausen opens its own credit union.

1884

The municipality sees a significant increase in area and population. The incorporation of Rüttenscheid almost doubles the number of inhabitants to 7,356.

1891

On July 3, a European windstorm with heavy hail causes extensive damage. The entire slope below the castle is deforested. Falling trees destroy several houses, including the old vicarage - today's "Kockshusen" restaurant.

1899

The sinking and opening of the Schnabel mine begins in Mühlental (now Annental). The operation is later taken over by the Bredeney-based company Langenbrahm.

1900

Rüttenscheid leaves the association with Rellinghausen and becomes independent for a whole five years before being incorporated into Essen.

1900

The St. Lambertus Hospital on Glockenberg opens its doors.

1901

The St. Lambertus kindergarten is opened.

1905

On the 100th anniversary of Friedrich Schiller's death, the Schiller Fountain is inaugurated in the woods. The famous sculptor Fritz Behn was commissioned to create a bronze relief. However, at the beginning of the WWI, this work is melted down for armaments purposes and replaced by a concrete cast.

1906

A third large-scale mine is built in the middle of the Kordenbusch near Schellenberg Castle by the Gottfried Wilhelm Waldhausen trade union. Baron Vittinghoff-Schell, the owner of the forest, tries to prevent the construction of the shaft. A bitterly fought lawsuit ensues, which goes all the way to the last instance in Leipzig. Although he is unable to prevent the mine from operating, he manages to have the processing plant (coal washing plant) moved 1.5 kilometers to the lower Frankenstrasse, where the coal has to be transported by cable car. Noisy steam operation is also prohibited. Gottfried Wilhelm is the first fully electric coal mine on the Ruhr.

1908

Construction begins on the Gottfried-Wilhelm-Kolonie colliery housing estate between Frankenstrasse, the Ruhr and Schellenberg Forest according to plans by architect Oskar Schwer. At the city exhibition in Düsseldorf, the building concept receives the award for an "exemplary workers' colony". Unfortunately, when the houses were sold to individual interested parties in 1979, the estate as a whole was not listed as a historical monument. As a result, only a few houses have been preserved in their original design. One exception is the listed former school building, which has been home to the cultural initiative "Kunsthaus" since 1986.

1909

The brief period of the independent mayor's office of Rellinghausen comes to an end. Economic difficulties made it easier to sign the incorporation agreement with the city of Essen.

1909

The von Vittinghoff-Schell family, angered by the outcome of the legal dispute with the operators of the Gottfried-Wilhelm colliery, gives up their residence in

Rellinghausen after more than 650 years and moves to the family-owned Kalbeck Castle near Goch on the Lower Rhine.

1935

The Protestant congregation on Oberstrasse is able to inaugurate its new church. As a result of industrialization, the number of parishioners had risen from around 800 to 8000 within a few years. This made a new building necessary. For a year, it stood next to the previous church, whose valuable interior was placed under a preservation order and given a worthy place in the chapel extension of the new church. But the new church also deserves the label "worthy of preservation". Its construction is considered a typical representative of the "new architecture" of the time, which incorporated elements of classical building forms such as Bauhaus ideas.

1944

On March 26, during one of the few bombing raids on Rellinghausen, the Stift's church was badly hit along with several residential buildings. The historically significant old bells fell from the burning belfry to the ground, where they shattered. The flawless classicist interior design of the church with three altars designed by Schinkel is completely destroyed by the fire.

1946

The Jungmann small-scale mine begins operations around today's Wuppertaler Straße, roughly below Schellenberg Castle. The fuel shortage in the post-war years made it possible for a few such small-scale mining operations to flourish once again. However, this colliery is also the first of the Rellinghausen collieries to be closed again after the Second World War.

1959

The closure of the Jungmann small colliery in Rellinghausen heralds the end of mining.

1966

The Ludwig and Langenbrahm collieries cease operations.

1972

The Gottfried-Wilhelm colliery, along with the Karl Funke colliery in Heisingen, are closed ending an era of mining in Rellinghausen and surrounding areas.