European research

A Genie Club Presentation
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Genealogy 101 Reminder

All dates in Europe will be in day month year format.

15 4 2012  Taxes are due
2  5 2012  Next Genie Club meeting
23 09 1949  My birthday
First things first:

Location,
Location,
Location,
Location
Provinces of Germany today
Germany? But where is it?

Two of Germany's most famous writers, Goethe and Schiller, identified the central aspect of most of Germany's history with their poetic lament, "Germany? But where is it? I cannot find that country."
No Germany?

Until 1871, there was no "Germany."
Instead, Europe's German-speaking territories were divided into several hundred kingdoms, principalities, duchies, bishoprics, fiefdoms and independent cities and towns.

http://geography.about.com/od/germanymaps/Germany_Maps.htm
Google “historic German states”

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/
   List_of_historic_states_of_Germany

This site lists the sites, but has the historic maps

States of the German Confederation 1815-1866
States of North German Confederation 1866-1871
States of the German Empire 1871-1918
States of Weimar Germany 1919-1933
States of the German Confederation 1815-1866
States of North German Confederation 1866-1871
States of the German Empire 1871-1918
States of Weimar Germany 1919-1933
This site also has information on countries around the world which no longer exist.

List of former sovereign states
The term refers to any extinct form of rule, even if they are parts of a territorial state. This includes recently extinct counties, districts and former provinces.

http://wiki-de.genealogy.net/Historische_deutsche_Staaten
Territories in the Holy Roman Empire (of German Nation)

Here is a (still incomplete) list the following in alphabetical order. A structured list is (still under construction) in the article [Holy Roman Empire of German Nation](#).

- [Duchy of Bavaria](#)
- [Duchy of Berg](#) continued...
– Electorate of Brandenburg
– Electorate of Brunswick Luneburg
– Duchy of Franconia
– Duchy of Cleves
– Electorate of Cologne
– Duchy of Lorraine
– County of Mark
– Prince-Bishopric of Münster until 1802 cont.
– Erbfürstentum Münster from 1802
– Marquisate Neumark and 1571 (after Brandenburg-Prussian province)
– Prince-Bishopric of Osnabrück
– (Duchy of Prussia until 1701 eponymous ancestor of the) Kingdom of Prussia
– Principality of East Frisia
– Electorate of the Palatinate and the Rhine cont.
– Duchy of Saxony
– Duchy of Swabia
– Duchy of Thuringia
– Electorate of Trier

And more are being added!
My recommendation #1

Find and print historic maps of your town.

Use a ruler to indicate where your town is using major coastline feature that do not change.

You will be able to find your area regardless of political boundaries or name changes.
My recommendation #2

Keep a list of historic names of your town or area on your desktop and keep adding names.

Wikipedia is a great place to start finding the history and names. Look up Gdansk and you will see what I mean.
My recommendation #3

Genealogy websites such as Rootsweb have message boards devoted to certain places.

– Lower Saxony brings up 1,296 results.
– Niedersachsen brings up 10,430 results
– Ostfriesland brings up 2,551 results.
– Weener Ostfriesland brings up 42 results.
– Weener Niedersachsen brings up 27 results.
– Weener Lower Saxony brings up 1 result.
My recommendation #4

Look at or join a group based on common interest, e.g. **Ostfriesen Genealogical Society of America** - [www.ogsa.us/](http://www.ogsa.us/)

Go into Worldconnect on Rootsweb.

- Rawboots Dutch Genealogy has 252,757 entries, many with excellent documentation.
- Rogeranita (my 3rd cousin) has 58,044 East Frisian and Dutch entries.
Language,
“Boy, those French! They have a different word for everything.”
—Steve Martin
Duh! We know that.

http://www.ehow.com/how_5761180_search-european-ancestry.html

Use alternate and phonetic spellings of first and last names and places when searching online databases because spelling and transcription errors are common.
...but there’s an extra wrinkle

European languages often have more than 26 letters.

If you search on only on Muller you might miss finding Müller.
http://genealogy.about.com

- http://genealogy.about.com lists 50 top German surnames with meanings, etc.
MULLER - Name Meaning & Origin

Last Name Meaning & Related Resources for the Surname MULLER

Definition: A German occupational surname for miller, from Middle High German "mülnære" or "müller." MILLER is the English version of this surname.

Surname Origin: German

NOTE THE UMLAUT ABOVE THE U!!!!!!!!!!
Alternate Surname Spellings: MUELLER, MOLLER, MUILLER, MUELER, MULER, MILLER, MOELLER

Missing from that list is a name which would be indexed in a German database: "Müller."

Without that crucial umlaut in place, you might miss a number of entries in your family, whether you are searching a German database or just googling the name.
My Recommendation #1

Start a small file on your desktop with your language idiosyncrasies.
  Extra characters
  Pronunciation helps
  Historic changes in the language

Copy and paste your language’s extra characters in a file on your desktop
Norwegian alphabet (norsk alfabet)

Additional characters in Norwegian

- Æ æ
- Ø ø
- Å å

http://www.omniglot.com/writing/norwegian.htm
Scandinavian Pronunciation

Pronounce Scandinavian Names using the following rules of thumb.

– "y" is always used and pronounced as a vowel.
– "AA" and "aa" are pronounced as in "awe." ("Å" and "å" are used in Sweden.)
– "Æ" and "æ" are pronounced as in "heir." (These are "Ä" and "ä" in Sweden; "AE" and "ae" in plain text.)
– "Ø" and "ø" are pronounced as in "earl." (These are "Ö" and "ö" in Sweden; "OE" and "oe" in plain text.)
– "j" is pronounced as the consonant "y" sound in English.
German alphabet

Additional characters in German language

German has an extended Latin alphabet. The extra letters are

- Ä sounds similar to the e in melon
- Ö sounds similar to the i in girl
- Ü no equivalent nor approximate sound in English
- ß double s sound
Dutch alphabet

The current Dutch alphabet has only the 26 letter alphabet but if looking at historical documents you may come across o with a slash through it or an umlaut over an o.

– Löning Looning Loning Leuning
Dutch pronunciation

http://www.ielanguages.com/dutch.html

Ch guttural sound, made at back of mouth
sch s followed by guttural ch sound
G same as ch, guttural sound at back of mouth
W like v before r, otherwise like w but with bottom lip against top teeth
V like v, but sometimes closer to f
J y as in yes AND MANY MORE!!!
Why is this important?

If you are looking for a Friedenborg in a Dutch database you might find him under Vredenberg or Fredenberg

Frei in Germany might be Vrij just across the Dutch border and Frey in this country.
My recommendation #2

Start learning your language today
http://www.transparent.com/wotd/

They will send you a word a day in Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Dutch, Esperanto, French, German, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, and more. They also have blogs in additional languages.
This is a great site to learn 60 languages:

www.digitaldialects.com/

Free to use and fun online games to learn phrases, greetings, vocabulary, numbers, spelling and grammar.
Look & Learn,
Look & Learn,
Look & Learn,
Look & Learn
genealogy.about.com/od/europe/

Research your European ancestors with these free genealogy databases, records, and resources for tracing your family tree in Europe. Browse by country or ...

Excellent site. I’ll be back to view this again.
Do your ancestors come from Eastern Europe? Do you have records that you cannot read? Are you aware of the vast collection of genealogical records from ... 

An essential site for eastern European research.
genealogylinks.net/europe/index.html

over 1200 genealogy links for Europe, including ships passenger lists, censuses, ... instantly search 12 million newspaper pages of birth, marriage, death and ...

Most links lead to $$$ but worth looking at anyway to see what’s out there.
www.academic-genealogy.com/topsearchenginesdirectories.htm

Jump to Regional & European Search Engines:
REGIONAL and EUROPEAN SEARCH ENGINES:
* EUROPE: - 80 Plus European Search Engines

I’ve never seen this before but it might be worth checking out in more depth.
Jump to Western European:

Surprisingly good “where to start” tips. #1 place to start is www.familysearch.org, then it brings you to more specific sites in this country, and lastly to a few European sites.
www.cyberpursuits.com/gen/eur-list.asp

Categorized links to **genealogy** sources for continental **European** family lines. ... Online Research Books · Commercial Sources ... Western **Europe Genealogy** ..;

This is a site I’ve never seen before. Tell it to translate into English and search the image files for historic photos and documents.
German woman with kohlrabi
I almost zapped this site because it is a “for hire” website. Then I scanned the essays on the home page and came across this:

– State-sponsored genealogy
– Sunday, August 21st, 2011 at 2:43 pm
State-sponsored genealogy

...” From April 1933, all citizens in Germany were required to research and document their family tree, at least back to the level of their grandparents, and to obtain as evidence the corresponding certified copies of entries in birth and marriage registers (while SS officers had to zealously research their pedigree back to 1750 and other high level Nazi Party functionaries had to go back to 1800).
“...” In 1934 the Reichsstelle für Sippenforschung embarked upon an ambitious project to microfilm parish registers, both to preserve the originals and to make the material more readily available to the state. Accordingly, registers were called in from the churches to a central micro-reprographics studio in Berlin. A copy was returned to the incumbent of the church, and the master held in the Reichsstelle für Sippenforschung archives.
“The Reichsstelle für Sippenforschung also created a massive central card index system for ease of reference. This comprised abstracted births and baptisms, with particular attention paid to the baptisms of converted Jews, from which it constructed its own handy Jüdische Personenstandsregister. This Register comprised the so-called Judenkartei, the index cards relating to Jewish converts.
“In fact there were two copies of these particular index cards. The original Judenkarte remained in the Reichsstelle’s archives, while a copy was gifted to the Evangelical Lutheran Church – the latter is now housed at the Evangelische Zentralarchiv in Berlin.”
So... I clicked on the red link and got this:

http://www.ezab.de/
German Evangelical Church archives in Berlin
Kirche deutschland evangelisch
internet-genealogy.com/austriahungary25.htm

This website is dedicated to genealogy research in Hungary and it aims at ... which enables you to search for towns in Central and Eastern Europe, using exact ...

Outstanding not just for Hungary but all of eastern Europe. Lisa A. Alzo is the author. I find anything she has written is excellent.
Naming Practices
Patronymics

A few hundred years ago in northern Europe, our patronymic served as our last name. That’s a fancy way of saying our father’s first name was our last name.
Exceptions:
If you were landed gentry, you may have had a standard last name.

If you were Roman Catholic, you may have been named after a saint if you were born on or near a saint’s day.
The Rules:

In the Netherlands, the last name was father’s name plus “s”.

In Germany, the last name was father’s name plus “son/sen”.

In Scandinavia, the last name was father’s name plus “son/sen” or “datter/dottir.”
More rules...

The first legitimate son was named after the paternal grandfather and the second son was named after the maternal grandfather.

The same holds true for daughters in the Netherlands. In Norway the first daughter seemed to be named after the maternal grandmother.

If you have found a family and this is not the case, keep looking! You may have missed a first illegitimate child, or a first family of one parent.
Additional factors

If first son was illegitimate he would be named after the maternal grandfather.

If first son died before next son was born, second son would be given the same name.

If first son died at age 10 (after second son was born) a following son would be named after the paternal grandfather.
I’ll bet she liked that...

In Norway, if a wife died, the first daughter of the second wife would be named after the first wife.
Fine Points

If the father was named Willem and both grandfathers were named Jan, the first son might be Jan Robert Willems and the second son might be named Jan Geert Willems.

After grandparents and parents were named, uncles and aunts or great grandparents might be the next children.
Napoleon changed all that.

In 1811 in the Netherlands, the Bonapartes implemented new naming conventions which the Dutch continued to use even after Napoleon’s defeat at Waterloo.

Each family now had a last name which would continue on through the generations.
Around 1850, the Germans started using middle names and other countries started to follow suit.

As a result, some of my Dutch have names like Anna Antje Josefina Gertruide Sophia.
Between 1905 and 1919 in Norway, by law the Norwegians had to choose a permanent last name. In general, the landowner would keep the farm name and his tenants would have to choose other names.
In northern European cultures, a grandfather is honored by having several grandchildren named after him.

In some other cultures, it would be an insult to name a child after a living person; a way of saying “Shove off, old man!”
Children’s names may be alphabetical by birth order.

In some Asian cultures, siblings commonly share a middle name.

In some cultures, the name may include the place of residence.
Google “genealogy naming conventions”.

Among other sites, a YouTube site will appear.

"Naming Conventions in Genealogy", a playlist created by GenealogyGems.
4 German Naming Customs

You can watch a video of someone explaining the four naming customs in German research. (The four basic ways are by

– patronymic (johns-son),
– occupation (Baecker = baker),
– geographical (Bayer = someone from Bavaria or Bayern)
– descriptive (Klein = small).
An in depth essay on German naming customs included this gem:

– “Patronymic surnames are found primarily in the Northwestern areas of Germany, although they may be encountered in other areas of Germany. (Niklas Albrecht - Niklas son of Albrecht).”