

# Briese Family Emigration to Australia

*David Briese (January 2014)*

How many Briese families are there in Australia? The simple answer to this question is five, but in genealogy, answers are not always simple. The Brieses in Australia owe their origin to German immigrants who came to this country during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Shipping records show that Briese came from Germany to Australia on seven different occasions, either as individuals or family groups. Paper records indicate that these belong to four separate family groups. However, as we shall see later, this may be less and could even be one big family.

## *Chronological Order of Arrival*

The first record of a possible Briese emigrant to Australia was Johann Gotthilf Briese, a 68 year old widower from Meseritz in Posen appears on a list of "Old Lutherans" wishing to emigrate to Australia in 1838, along with his house-keeper. Theresa Schroedel.<sup>1</sup> However, he did not disembark. The original documents state that 41 of the 267 people on that list either renounced their desire to leave or were denied an exit permit by the Prussian authorities. Either way they did not arrive in Australia and their fate remains a mystery.

The first Briese to set foot in Australia was Johann Ludwig Briese, whose family is the focus of these pages. The son of Christoph Briese of Potzymowo, Posen, Prussia, he travelled as a single man on the "Steinwaerder", arriving at Port Adelaide, South Australia, on 19 December 1855. At first he lived in the Barossa Valley, where he married Dorothea Bartsch. In 1868, they and a number of German families travelled by bullock wagon from South Australia to New South Wales, settling in Jindera area north of Albury. They had eight children and the descendants of this family are known as the Jindera Brieses. Some descendants remain in the Jindera area, but others have spread widely – to other parts of New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria.

The next Briese family to reach Australia were the Toowoomba Brieses. Friedrich Wilhelm Briese, from Neugolz, Deutsch Krone, West Prussia, emigrated with his wife and two children aboard the "Humboldt", as assisted immigrants. They arrived at Moreton Bay, Queensland, on 5 November 1870 and travelled inland to settle in the Toowoomba area. Today, most descendants of their three children are in south-east Queensland. Also on board the "Humboldt" were August FW Briese and Emma EH Briese. It is not clear what their relationship was to the others. The father of Friedrich Wilhelm is not known and the father of August is given as Martin Briese. August married Barbara Betzel in Queensland in 1894, with no apparent descendants, while Emma married Gustav Schimming in 1871 and had several children.

On 25 May 1878, the "Eduard" arrived at Port Adelaide, South Australia. On board were two Brieses (possibly related) and their families, also from the Deutsch Krone area in West Prussia. Franz Julius Briese, the son of Wilhelm Gustav Briese<sup>2</sup>, came from the village of Appelwerder and Friedrich August Briese, the son of Fritz Briese<sup>2</sup>, came from the nearby village of Klausdorf.

Franz Julius Briese, his wife and three children moved to the Morgan area on the river Murray in South Australia. Five more children were born and the descendants of this family are known as the Morgan Brieses. They are centred in South Australia.

Friedrich August Briese, who arrived with his wife and six children, spent four years in Adelaide, before travelling to Melbourne, Victoria, in November 1882 aboard the "Victoria" and settled there. While there were seven children in all, including four boys, by the third generation there appear to be no more male descendants with the Briese surname amongst the Melbourne Brieses. One of Friedrich August Briese's sons, Carl

Friedrich, emigrated to South Africa in 1892, with his wife and two sons. However, there are no Brieses in the South African telephone directories today. There are a number of Brieses in the Melbourne area today, but these are a branch of the Jindera Brieses. The Melbourne Briese family is carried on via the female lineages.

The next Briese to arrive in Australia was Adalbert Gottfried Briese from Mogilno, Posen, Prussia. He was the nephew of Johann Ludwig Briese and arrived in Melbourne, Victoria, on the “Potosi” in December 1880. From here, he travelled up to Jindera to join his uncle and family and, in 1884, married his cousin, Emilie Briese. Their descendants are part of the Jindera Brieses.

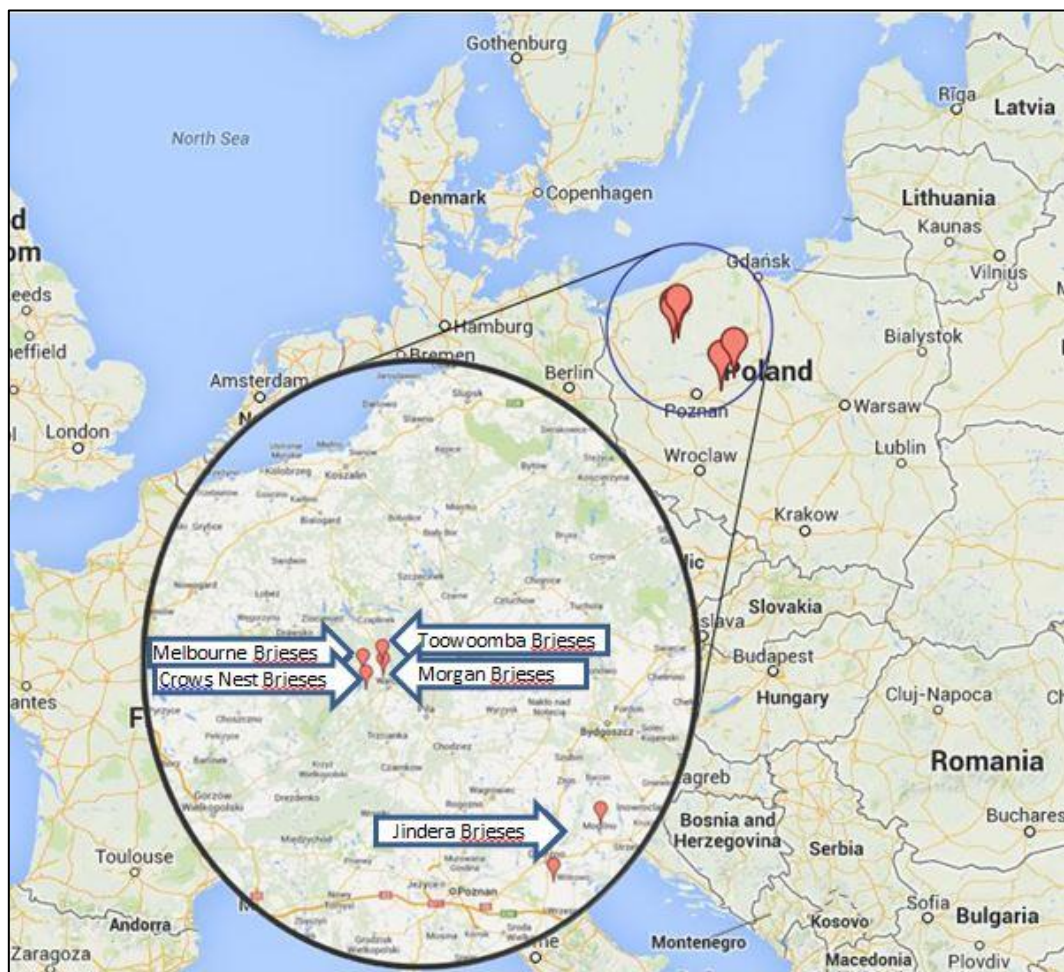
On 25 June 1884, Bertha Louise Briese, the daughter of Ernst Briese from Klein Nackel, in the Deutsch Krone region of West Prussia, arrived in Brisbane, Queensland. She moved to the Crows

Nest area, where in 1886, she married Hermann Hartwig. She was followed in later years by two of her brothers.

The first brother, August Ferdinand Briese, his wife and child, arrived on 15 Sep 1889 at Brisbane aboard the “Quetta”. They too settled in the Crows Nest area and eventually had 13 children. Many of their descendants remain in the south-east Queensland area.

The younger brother, Ernst Eduard Briese, arrived 10 years later, with his wife and three children. They disembarked from the “ Duke of Fife” on 30 September 1899 at Brisbane and joined the rest of their family in Crows Nest. They had seven children and are also centred in south-east Queensland.

Details of these families are given in the Appendix.



Map showing the origins of the Briese families that emigrated to Australia.

## *Inter-relationship of the Families*

It is tantalising to hypothesise a connection between the different Briese families, particularly as four of them emigrated from the Deutsch Krone region, in West Prussia, and the fifth from the nearby area of Czarniejewo, in Posen (see map). The two Crows Nest Briese families are clearly related, being descended from siblings. This may also be the case for the Morgan/Melbourne Brieses, as there are published family trees which show them as brothers.<sup>3,4</sup> However, different names are given for their supposed father on their death certificates, which raises some doubt. It has not proved possible to find paper records that connect the Jindera and Toowoomba Briese to these two groups or to each other.

Local church records show that the Briese name was very common in and around Deutsch Krone. However, only one Briese family (the Jindera Brieses) appear in the Czarniejewo church records. The death of the earliest ancestor of this line, Michael Briese, is recorded, but his birth place (ca 1738) is not indicated. Church records

from the Luben Evangelical Parish indicate that the name Michael was common amongst Briese families in the Deutsch Krone area in the 1700s. This is very circumstantial evidence that a Briese family may have moved to Czarniejewo from Deutsch Krone in the early or mid 1700s, but genetic evidence does support it.

Recently, a yDNA study<sup>5,6</sup> was started to see whether genetics could shed light on the inter relationships of these five families, as well as Briese families that emigrated to North America. It is only in its early stages, but the results show a close genetic link between the Jindera Brieses and Toowoomba Brieses, as well as a link between these two families and an American Briese family from the Deutsch Krone area.

Further tests are needed (requiring participants from the other Briese families in Australia, and elsewhere) to clarify these findings, but it could well be that all Australian families have a common ancestor – possibly a Briese from the Deutsch Krone area who lived 10-12 generations ago, i.e. the late 1600s to early 1700s.

## *References*

1. Nineteenth-Century Emigration of "Old Lutherans" from Eastern Germany (Mainly Pomerania and Lower Silesia) to Australia, Canada, and the United States. Clifford Neal Smith Genealogical Publishing Com, 2009,- 93 pages
2. Fathers names indicated on the death certificates
3. <http://www.mundia.com/au/Tree/Family/31075607/12453694391> (log-in required)
4. <http://www.mundia.com/au/Person/32959937/18424212031> (log-in required)
5. <http://www.familytreedna.com/public/briese/>
6. <http://www.gang-gang.net/briesegenealogy/dnaproject.html>

## *Appendix: Briese emigrants and the first generation of their families*

The family details below are only as accurate as the information available. If there are errors or additional information, please contact the author.

**Jindera Brieses (Johann Ludwig Briese – Potrymowo, Posen) -** arrived on 19 December 1855 at Port Adelaide, South Australia, aboard the "Steinwaerder".

1-Johann Ludwig Briese b. 20 Oct 1823, Potrymowo, Posen, d. 1 Jan 1911, Jindera, New South Wales (father: Christoph Briese)

+Johanne Dorothea Bartsch b. 23 Jan 1835, Saerka near Bautzen, Saxony, d. 5 Jan 1916, Jindera, New South Wales

2-Anna Juliane Amalie Briese b. 4 Jan 1860, d. 11 Jan 1951

2-Auguste Louise Johanne Briese b. 25 Mar 1861, d. 9 May 1867  
2-Friedrich Wilhelm Briese b. 14 Apr 1863, d. 22 Feb 1902  
2-Christiane Emilie Briese b. 2 Aug 1865, Black Springs, South Australia, d. 14 Jan 1956, Jindera,  
New South Wales  
2-Anna Johanne Emma Briese b. 12 Dec 1867, d. 5 Jun 1945  
2-Hermine Bertha Briese b. 21 May 1870, Jindera, New South Wales, d. 1936  
2-Johann Gottlieb Ludwig Briese b. 11 Feb 1873, d. 16 Jul 1967  
2-Theodor Ernst August Briese b. 1 Apr 1875, d. 19 Dec 1958

---

**Toowoomba Brieses (Friedrich Wilhelm Briese - Neugolz, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen) –**  
arrived 5 Nov 1870 at Moreton Bay, Queensland, aboard the “Humboldt”

1-Friedrich Wilhelm Briese b. 13 Feb 1838, Neugolz, Deutsche Krone, Westpreussen d. 7 Jul 1926 (father: ??)  
+Emilie Auguste Salge b. 09 Apr 1841, Klausdorf, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen  
2-Johann Gottlieb Briese b. 1866, Neugolz, Deutsche Krone, Westpreussen, d. 27 Mar 1949,  
Clermont, Queensland, Australia  
2-Auguste Mathtilde Briese b. 1869, Neugolz, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 1935

.. also on board were August Friedrich Wilhelm Briese b. 1838 d. 1910 (father: Martin Briese)  
+Barbara Betzel  
.. and Emma Ernestine H Briese b. 1850  
+Gustav Schimming

---

**Crows Nest Brieses (August Ferdinand Briese - Klein Nackel, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen) –**  
arrived 15 Sep 1889 at Brisbane, Queensland, aboard the “Quetta”

1-August Ferdinand Briese b. 21 Apr 1861, Klein Nackel, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 1943 (father: Ernst Briese)  
+Anna Maria Stark b. 1868, d. 1944  
2-Augusta Pauliene Briese b. 02 Aug 1889, d. 13 Aug 1962, Crows Nest, Queensland  
2-Maria Olga Briese b. 14 Sep 1890, d. 1917  
2-Heinrich Gustav Briese b. 31 May 1892, d. 9 Nov 1972  
2-Johannes Carl Briese b. 07 Jan 1894  
2-Anna Maria Magdalena Briese b. 12 Aug 1895  
2-August Ferdinand Briese b. 14 Sep 1897, d. 31 Jul 1987  
2-Wilhelm Eduard Briese b. 1899, d. 15 Jun 1977  
2-Hermann Ernst Briese b. 26 May 1901, d. 15 Apr 1966  
2-Walter Johann Briese b. 05 Nov 1902, d. 1964  
2-Alfred Briese b. 07 Dec 1906  
2-Elsie Briese b. 07 Sep 1906  
2-Ernst Briese b. 30 May 1908, d. 2 Jan 1985  
2-Ruby Briese b. 1911

**.. and his brother (Ernst Eduard Briese - Klein Nackel, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen) –**  
arrived 30 September 1899 at Brisbane, Queensland, aboard the “Duke of Fife”

1-Ernst Eduard Briese b. 10 Sep 1863, Klein Nackel, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 11 Oct 1940, Douglas,  
Queensland, Australia (father: Ernst Briese)  
+Wilhelmine Louise Wolter b. 1 Jun 1866, d. 1905  
2-Wilhelmine Augusta Emilie Briese b. 1892, d. 1923  
2-Paul Ernst Eduard Briese b. 1894, d. 1975  
2-Emma Wilhelmine Henriette Briese b. 4 Aug 1898, Klein Nackel, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen  
2-Auguste Pauliene Briese b. 11 Aug 1900, d. 02 Nov 1921, Douglas, Queensland, Australia  
2-Martha Emilie Briese b. 11 Aug 1900  
2-Ernst Heinrich Briese b. 1902, d. 1902  
2-Gustav Heinrich Briese b. 1905, d. 1905  
+Agnes Anna Hartwig (nee Polzin) b. 1860, d. 15 Aug 1938, Douglas, Queensland, Australia

---

**Morgan Brieses (Franz Julius Briese - Klausdorf, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen)** - arrived 25 May 1878 at Port Adelaide, South Australia, aboard the "Eduard"

1-Franz Julius Briese b. 15 Mar 1849, Klausdorf, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 25 Mar 1911 (father: Wilhelm Gustav Briese)

- +Maria Wilhelmine Ernstine Briese b. 15 Jan 1846, Klausdorf, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 08 Aug 1926
  - 2-August Hermann Briese b. 1872, Klausdorf, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 1936
  - 2-Minna Maria Briese b. 1875, d. 1940
  - 2-Friedrich Karl Briese b. 10 Sep 1876
  - 2-Louise Emilie Emma Briese b. 1879
  - 2-Ernstine Anna Bertha Briese b. 1879, d. 1942
  - 2-Wilhelm Gustav Briese b. 07 Jul 1882, Lindley, South Australia, d. 14 Aug 1955
  - 2-Johann Paul Briese b. 1882, d. 1966
  - 2-Albert Julius Briese b. 1885, d. 1956
- 

**Melbourne Brieses (Friedrich August Briese - Appelwerder, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen)** - arrived 25 May 1878 at Port Adelaide, South Australia, aboard the "Eduard", then to Melbourne in Nov 1882 aboard the "Victoria".

1-Friedrich August Briese b. 1831, Westpreussen d. 1915, Heidelberg, Victoria (father: "Fritz" Briese)

- +Henriette Briese b. 1839
  - 2-Emilie Briese b. 1857, d. ?, Westpreussen
  - 2-Julius Briese b. 1859, Westpreussen
  - 2-Carl Friedrich Gotthilf Briese b. 1860
  - 2-Gustav Albert Briese b. 1861, Appelwerder, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen
  - 2-Hermann Paul Briese b. 1863, Appelwerder, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 1956
  - 2-Amalie Ottilie Bertha Briese b. 1865, d. 1933
  - 2-Elizabeth Auguste Briese b. 1868, d. 1942
  - 2-Franz Briese b. 1870, Appelwerder, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 1935
  - 2-Emilie Briese b. 1874, d. 1874
- 

