

The autobiography of
Adolf Benedict Schartow

Royal Prussian Forestry Officer
born October 3, 1853 in Frankfurt (Oder)
died February 28, 1933 in Naumburg

My father, **Adolf Friedrich Benedict**, was born in Frankfurt on September 30, 1817, and left behind nothing in writing that could provide information about his life. Therefore, I will endeavor to recount his life to the best of my ability.

Unlike his gentle brother Gustav, the father had been a lively boy whose upbringing, given his advancing years and his father's work outside the home, rested primarily in his mother's hands. Therefore, as soon as possible, he was entrusted to the boarding school at the Monastery of Our Lady in Magdeburg, which his father had also attended and which enjoyed a reputation as a humanist educational institution. Here, the father passed the university entrance examination. With his father's approval and following his own example, and also at his mother's particular wish, he turned to the study of law. For his first semesters, he attended the University of Heidelberg, which enjoyed a special reputation and was favored by the sons of wealthy families. In the summer of 1841, he enrolled at the University of Berlin to complete his studies and prepare for his final exams. While in Heidelberg he had belonged to the First Student Corps, Saxo Borussia, and, as his sword basket and corps ribbons indicate, was a feisty duelist who regularly carried off his opponents, in Berlin he stayed away from corps life and worked so diligently that he was able to register with the Minister of Justice, Mühler, on April 4, 1842, to take the examination to become a certified civil servant. This examination has since been abolished. His father took the examination before the Chamber Court on May 11, 1842, and at his own request was transferred to the Higher Regional Court in Frankfurt/Oder, where his father lived. There, his father worked at the then-united Regional and Municipal Court.

In the autumn of 1844, he registered to take the examination for the position of Referendar (junior lawyer), and after passing it and declaring that he had no debts, he was appointed a Referendar with seniority dating from November 7, 1844. In September 1846, his father registered to take the third state examination in law at the Immediate Justice Examination Commission in Berlin and, after passing the examination, was appointed Assessor of the Higher Regional Court with a commission dated March 12, 1847, and seniority dating from March 2 of the same year, by the then Minister of Justice, Uhden. Following this, he was entrusted with the duties of a government counselor.

In 1850, the father requested a release from the judicial service and was appointed government assessor by decree of October 31, 1850. This fulfilled his and his parents' wishes. He now received an annual allowance of 600 talers. After passing the assessor's examination, the grandparents, in the interest of the father's health after years of strenuous work, deemed it necessary, and in accordance with the custom of the time among educated families, to arrange an extended trip to Italy for him. The necessary leave was granted to the father without hesitation, and in March 1847, he embarked on the "Tour to Italy" with the son of the Ratke family, who were friends of his, traveling via Berlin, Vienna, and Trieste to Venice. He recorded his experiences, impressions, and observations in a diary, which, along with a packet of bills and notes, as well as letters exchanged with the family, was found among his belongings and is enclosed here. From Venice, the tour continued via Rome, Florence, and Capri to Sicily, where Syracuse and Palermo were visited. From all the places visited, the father brought back pictures, which he then compiled in an album with a pressed leather cover, and which is still preserved.

Here I would like to mention that a number of family registers were found among my father's estate, including his own from 1788, containing entries from schoolmates, fellow students, acquaintances, and relatives. Among the items in my father's estate was a children's portrait, commissioned by his parents in Frankfurt from a Berlin portrait painter *.

* I, Anneliese Wittke, born Schartow, granddaughter of Adolf Benedict Schartow, own a miniature of this child portrait. I gave it to my daughter Dorlies Falkenhagen, née Wittke. - January 23, 1962

My father told us children that he had suggested to the artist that the lively eldest son, Adolf (my father), be depicted with a flag, while the younger son, Gustav, who was gentler and therefore my mother's favorite, should be depicted with a dove. However, the artist mixed them up. He portrayed the younger, more obedient son with the flag. This flag provided an impeccable backdrop for Uncle Gustav's curls, and the artist, whose name is unfortunately unknown, had certainly made the right choice with his mix-up. The obedient Uncle Gustav later became an officer, while my father became a quiet, thoughtful, and deliberate lawyer.

After this digression, I return to the further course of my father's life. By royal decree of King Frederick William IV dated January 10, 1854, countersigned by the Minister of the Interior von Westphalen and the Minister of Finance von Bodelschwingh, my father was promoted to Government Councillor on the recommendation of the Frankfurt Regional President von Selchow and, effective April 1 of the same year, appointed by Minister von Patow as an assistant in the Ministry of Finance in Berlin. On the same minister's recommendation, my father was appointed Privy Senior Finance Councillor and, upon the transfer of the Department for Direct Taxes, Domains, and Forests from the Ministry of Finance to the newly established Ministry of Agriculture, received the title of Privy Senior Government Councillor, issued by Finance Minister Hobrecht and Minister Friedenthal. On June 17, 1880, my father was appointed Privy Senior Government Councillor with the rank of Councillor of the First Class and Director of the Domains Department in the Ministry of Agriculture. He held this office until April 1, 1883. He was in his 66th year and had received his last order of decoration in 1881, the Star of the Order of the Red Eagle, 2nd Class with ribbon.

This is, in brief, a description of my father's professional career. He was a hardworking, tireless civil servant, endowed with rare physical vigor and mental acuity, combined with an astonishing memory and a profound knowledge of history, which always interested him and which he supplemented by reading numerous books. He was a good judge of character, a sharp observer, and full of gratitude and appreciation for services rendered. Lazy people and weak politicians were anathema to him. He was loyal to the monarchy and conservative to the core. Towards his superiors, he was an upright man, not a sycophant like some of his colleagues. Towards those below him, he was appreciative and grateful for work done and encouraged diligence and industriousness. So much for my father as a civil servant and as a man. Now to his family. My father became engaged on September 16th to the widowed Mrs. Wilhelmine Berend, née Köhne, a senior civil servant and councilor, born on January 6, 1823, in Berlin. The wedding took place on December 16, 1849, in Berlin. That was also his parents' wedding day. From my mother's first marriage came our half-sister, Johanna, our favorite. Johanna Behrend's great-grandmother was Johanna Schartow, born on April 11, 1759, daughter of Christian Schartow, born on July 24, 1726, in Magdeburg. She was married to a Mr. Kunckel in Berlin. Descendants of this Kunckel family live in Berlin and Castrop-Rauxel (one of whom is a mining official). My father's marriage to Wilhelmine Köhne produced nine children.

I, **Adolf Benedict**, as the eldest currently living, continue the family records here. I was born in Frankfurt/Oder. My memories of my early years are scant, and they lie far in the past. My parents lived in the so-called Silk Factory, an old building with large rooms, arched windows, and arched doors. We children had a room facing the Oder River, from which we could watch the Oder Bridge. We were always happy when our sister Johanna came home at dusk. We could recognize her from afar by the small lantern with colored lenses that she carried. Street lighting was inadequate back then, and the bridge was dark. Johanna had to walk to the school on the other side of the river in the old town. My grandparents lived in a large house with a lawn in front, "around half the city," as the street was called. There was a double sentry post in front of the house, which greatly impressed us children. The garrison commander also lived in the house, and the flags of the Grenadier Regiment were kept in his apartment. My mother often took me to the post office, where we waited for my father, who was returning from his frequent business trips by mail coach. I also remember the outings to the Buschmühle, where we children used to romp around.

In the summer of 1854, we moved to Berlin, where my father had been transferred. I still remember the farewell: my grandfather, tall and leaning on a walking stick, in his dark suit; my grandmother, stern with her harsh face and many good admonitions. With five children, that was probably necessary. In Berlin, we first lived in a low house on Bendlerstrasse near the Tiergarten. By winter, we had moved to a larger apartment on Matthäikirchstrasse, near the canal. It was here that my brother Wilhelm was born, the first of our siblings to be born in Berlin.

The apartment must have soon become too small, because in 1859 we moved to a larger apartment at Eichhornstrasse 4, again on the second floor. As was the custom at the time, our parents would visit their neighbors. This sometimes led to a certain amount of social interaction. On the ground floor lived an elderly Miss von Rahden, who only lived in Berlin during the winter. Our parents would socialize with this lady on so-called "Whist" evenings. She was a tall, imposing figure, often accompanied by her nephew, a cavalry officer with a clanging saber and spurs, whom we children gazed at in wonder. This von Rahden later became quite well-known because he married the famous singer Pauline Luna.

The landlord terminated the lease on the grounds that the tenants had complained about the noise from the children; and the parents were now forced to find a ground-floor apartment. They found one at Hafenplatz 4, on the corner of Dessauer Straße, in the so-called Moorish House, which belonged to a Mr. von Diebitsch. The apartment was spacious and had the advantage of a bathroom; unfortunately, the bathroom fixtures broke down, so its use was suspended. We children could only float little boats in the oversized tub, which never seemed to run dry. Among the other residents were the von Funcke family, who only lived in Berlin during the winter; District Forester Ulrici, a childhood friend of my father's from Frankfurt; and a Jewish family named Leo, consisting of the parents and a daughter about the same age as my sister Marianne. A friendly relationship soon developed, which continued for many years afterward. This was around 1862.

Since 1860, my parents had been taking their children and servants to the Kösen salt spa, the so-called "Berlin nursery," where they spent their holidays. I had been a new student since Easter [?], so on the first day of my vacation, I received a bottle of acetone ink to complete my holiday chores. I accidentally dropped the bottle on the scrubbed white floorboards and thus received my first holiday beating. At the end of the vacation, after four weeks of salt baths, my father drove us two boys back to Berlin. My sister Johanna had to come along to help with the household chores. My mother and my other sisters stayed in Kösen for another four weeks. These summer trips to the Kösen salt spa continued until 1866. They were wonderful weeks of relaxation for young and old alike. My father regularly hired a carriage for our stay, so we could take excursions every day without any problems. He also regularly took us older children to Weimar and Wartburg Castle.

In 1861, we witnessed King Wilhelm's entry into Berlin after his coronation in Königsberg. For this occasion, my father had rented a room with two windows on the street leading into the city. In the summer of 1866, during the war against Catholic Austria, cholera broke out in Berlin. The windows of our ground-floor apartment remained closed during the day because long trains of all kinds of wagons transported corpses from the city to the cemeteries across the canal. The bodies were scantily clad, often covered only with rags or an old carpet. People walked in front of the wagons ringing bells to warn onlookers. We didn't go to Kösen; we remained in Berlin until the peace treaty was signed and also saw the entry of the victorious troops.

Because the landlord had given notice, my father, without hesitation, bought the house at Schellingstrasse 4, where we moved into an apartment on October 1, 1866, and from then on were independent of landlords. Grandma Köhne lived on the same floor as us; she ran her own household with maids, but was nevertheless our daily guest. In the summer, she lived on her son Wilhelm's leased farm in Hohenschönhausen.

We spent the next summer holidays in the Harz town of Grund, where my father's brother Gustav and his daughter Cäcilie from Wiesbaden, their permanent residence, also arrived.

On March 5, 1870, our eldest sister Johanna – our mother's only child from her first marriage to Councilor Behrend – married the head forester Rudolf Witzmann. This was the first gap that fate tore in our family circle.

The outbreak of war against France in 1870 thwarted all travel plans. Fortunately, my father had already completed his annual spa and drinking cure in Kissingen. The first news of victory sparked great joy in Berlin, which intensified tremendously when news of Napoleon's capture arrived on September 2nd. The jubilation knew no bounds, but was quickly dampened when the war against the Parisian government continued and only ended with the Peace of Frankfurt on May 10, 1871.

My father's brother Gustav was commander of the main contingent in Nancy during the war when, in September 1870, he tragically lost his wife to a lung ailment in Wiesbaden. Our father had to arrange the funeral because his brother was indispensable in Nancy.

Here I would like to include an episode that illustrates Uncle Gustav's thoughtfulness and energy: The French had secretly blown up the railway embankment near Nancy to destroy the supply line from Germany to Paris. In response, my uncle arranged for a military band of the occupying forces to hold a concert daily in the Nancy marketplace, attracting residents from the town and surrounding countryside to listen to the Prussian music. When the marketplace was once again teeming with French eavesdroppers on Sunday at noon, he had patrols block the access road and took all the French men prisoner. They were then forced to work day and night on the railway embankment until it was repaired; and the mayor, along with several city councilors, had to ride on the engine that pulled the first train across the newly created gap. The method proved effective, and the railway lines were spared further destruction by the French.

Soon after the peace treaty, my father was delighted to learn that his eldest daughter, Auguste, was engaged to Ernst Heinsius, then a government assessor. The wedding took place on September 24, 1872, the bride's birthday, in a hotel on Unter den Linden in Berlin. On September 16, 1874, my parents celebrated their silver wedding anniversary with only their closest family. No guests were invited. My father had requested this, as it was impossible to limit the number of people he would invite. Gradually, the family dwindled. I graduated from high school in the autumn of 1875 and left home. My second daughter, Sophie, married Carl Loewe, a government assessor who later became district administrator in Heinsberg, Aachen district, on October 15, 1877.

On January 24, 1878, Grandma Koehne died. In the same year, my brother Wilhelm went to the University of Tübingen to study law, as his father had wished. Since his parents now only had three daughters at home, they moved to a smaller apartment on Derfflingerstrasse, which they had to exchange in 1880 for their official residence on Tempelhofer Ufer. After his father's retirement in 1889, his parents moved to an apartment on Köthenerstrasse, but they always remained in Berlin.

In February 1887, my brother Wilhelm married, and I married in August of the same year. Finally, in 1889, my sister Marianne married a merchant named Springorum. Thus, in their final years, only their two youngest daughters, Wilhelmine and Dorothea, remained at home for our parents. Therefore, to be rid of the burden of managing the household, our father soon sold his house on Schellingstrasse. He had bought the house for 60,000 talers in 1866; it fetched 120,000 talers when it was sold.

Our dear, kind mother died on November 27, 1896, after years of asthmatic suffering that had long confined her to a wheelchair. Before her, in 1889, my brother had died in Arosa, Switzerland, from pleurisy and its debilitating consequences. He had been sent there by doctors, albeit without any hope of recovery. He left behind his widow and a son, Walter, who died in the field as an officer in the First World War (1914-1918).

To celebrate my father's 80th birthday on September 30, 1897, my two cousins, Hans and Ernst, the sons of my father's brother Gustav Schartow, joined me. My father was still mentally sharp, but physically frail. He died of old age on December 13, 1899, at noon, in his 82nd year. I accompanied him, as I had my mother in 1896, to the family burial plot in the old cemetery in Frankfurt/Oder. He was a kind father to me. I feel the same love and gratitude for my kind mother. She came from the old and respected Koehne family, whose ancestral home was in the Pomeranian towns of Kolberg, Köslin, and Stargard, and who held high offices under the Prussian kings, serving the state as mayors. Her father was the son of Court Consistorial Councilor Koehne in Köslin, who was born in Stargard on March 24, 1735, the son of Mayor Jakob Friedrich Koehne and Anna Sophie Meyer from Belgard. He married Charlotte Henriette Elisabeth Oldenbruch in Stargard on July 11, 1772. The Koehne family tree goes back a long way; unfortunately, I don't know who currently owns it. My mother's father was Privy Archivist Carl Bernhard Wilhelm Koehne in Berlin. He married Henriette Sophie Charlotte Andresse on March 24, 1816. She was the daughter of Susanne Schartow and Johann Heinrich Michael Andresse.

My mother had been married first to Albert Behrend, whose grandmother Johanna Kunckel was the older sister of the aforementioned Susanne Andresse, both daughters of Christian Schartow and Susanne Rumpf in Magdeburg. My half-sister, Johanna, was from this marriage of my mother's.

My mother had nine children with her father. Of these, Adolf and Christian died in their youth, my brother Wilhelm died at the age of 32, and the others lived to be over 70 years old.

The mother was the only daughter after four sons, was raised in Berlin, and, as she often recounted, quite spoiled. Grandfather Koehne owned a large property on Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin, adjacent to Prince Albrecht's palace, which, like the palace, extended to the then city wall, now Königgrätzer Strasse. A multi-story building stood along Wilhelmstrasse, its apartments rented out. The garden house, facing the garden, stood in the spacious courtyard. This scene is captured in a watercolor. When our parents brought us children from Frankfurt to visit our grandparents, we stayed on the upper floor. On the first floor was a large, oval room adorned with the Koehne family portraits, where meals were served. We children were fascinated by the old portraits, yet also a little afraid of them. After his retirement, Grandfather unfortunately sold the valuable property and moved into a rented apartment on Linkstrasse.

As a child, my mother attended the then-preferred Elisabeth School on Kochstrasse and was also tutored at home by a Frenchwoman. Knowledge of French was considered both a sign of education and a necessity at that time. My mother frequently visited the German seaside resorts in Brandenburg and Silesia with her parents, as evidenced by the pictures in her travel album. She was a wonderful mother and highly respected and admired by everyone in the family. Our parents' marriage was an exemplary and happy one. We children owe our parents a great deal; the household was well-run, and we never knew want. Our father was always accommodating and encouraged our learning in every direction. Every talent was nurtured and received instruction from suitable teachers, who were sometimes quite expensive. The large size of the family meant that it gradually dispersed. At the time of our parents' death, only a few of the sisters remained in Berlin: the eldest, a married Heinsius, and the two youngest, who lived with their parents, unmarried, as portrait and porcelain painters.

I will refrain from mentioning my sisters in the remainder of my account. I will only mention my deceased brother Wilhelm's family. After the death of his son Walter on the Russian front during the war of 1914-1918, his wife Anna, née Bütow, left the Uckermark region and moved with their only child, Friedrich Wilhelm Schartow, to Gothenburg, Sweden. I have never heard from her again.

I have the greatest love, respect, and gratitude for my dear parents. I would like to briefly recount my childhood. After the usual childhood illnesses of measles, chickenpox, and scarlet fever, I frequently suffered from sore throats, which worried my parents. I also developed severe dental ulcers, which raised concerns about the formation of fistulas. The affected teeth had to be extracted under general anesthesia. The swellings disappeared only slowly, I had to stay away from school for a long time, and I became a real worry for my parents. Thanks to the care I received at home, I grew into a perfectly healthy boy, although, much to my annoyance, I didn't reach the height traditionally associated with the male members of our family. My younger brother was a head taller than me, and my cousins Hans and Ernst were 1.78 and 1.80 meters tall, respectively.

After graduating from high school, I pursued a career in forestry administration. I possessed exceptionally sharp eyesight and hearing, was extremely resilient, and could go for hours without food, thus always maintaining a slim figure. A forestry career was lengthy and therefore expensive at that time. After a short apprenticeship in the Mühlenbeck beech forest district near Stettin, I enrolled at the Eberswalde Forestry Academy, passed my traineeship examination in the autumn of 1878, and served with my brother in the 2nd Guards Regiment in Berlin until the autumn of 1879, where we both became reserve officers. I then passed the surveyor's examination with the Potsdam government and completed the required two-year traineeship in forest districts. I served in the districts of Breslau, Stettin, Coblenz, Hildesheim, Erfurt, and Posen, completing the necessary regimental training exercises in between. In the autumn of 1883, I passed the assessor's examination, administered Bischofswald and Letzlingen, worked in Katholisch Hannover, Kuhbrück, and Reichersdorf, and on July 1, 1887, received the administration of Argenau in the then Bromberg district, where I remained until my retirement on January 1, 1920. During the war, I also had to administer the neighboring districts of Woduk and Schirpitz. We moved our retirement home to

Naumburg/Saale. I have written about my marriage and family life in a separate booklet and in my war diaries from July 31, 1914 onward.

Before I bring this chapter of our family history to a close, I must mention a tradition that has been preserved in our family and is too interesting to be forgotten. My maternal grandmother Sophie Koehne's family name was Andresse. She was born on September 14, 1792, in Berlin. Her parents were Johann Heinrich Michael Andresse, a senior judge born in Berlin on February 8, 1756, and who died there on October 4, 1824, and his wife Wilhelmine Charlotte Katharina Susanne Schartow, who was born on December 4, 1761, in Magdeburg, the third child and second daughter of Christian Schartow, my great-great-grandfather. Christian Schartow was married to Susanne Margarete Rumpf, the daughter of a wine merchant in Magdeburg. Susanne Schartow died in Berlin on March 31, 1838. Her husband, the aforementioned Johann Heinrich Michael Andresse, was born on September 29, 1724, in Belarus (Ukraine?) and was originally named Jendrczejewski, the Slavic translation of Andréas, but with official permission, he now called himself Andrässe in Germany. The Jendrczejewski family of the Nalec coat of arms, like almost all Polish noble families, was obligated to serve the Polish King John III Sobieski.

One of its members, due to this obligation, participated in the war against the Turks to relieve Vienna and, during the plundering of the Turkish camp after the Battle of Kahlenberg in 1683, captured a young Turkish woman in the tent of Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa. After having her baptized with the name Konradine, he married her. Konradine's mother is said to have been a daughter of Mohammed IV. Johann Michael Jendrczejewski, born in Belarus in 1724, the father of Michael Andresse, was the last feudal estate owner to flee Russia and went to Germany, where on May 2, 1754, he married a daughter of Pastor Johann Peter Womrath from Omellendorf near Dessau. She was born on March 20, 1724, and died in Berlin on April 10, 1802. The veracity of this family tradition can no longer be determined. I obtained this information from the very detailed family records of the Koehne family. It cannot be dismissed entirely without merit; my grandmother Koehne's facial features were striking, especially her nose, which suggested Polish ancestry. This Polish trait was also passed on to her sons, most noticeably in her youngest son Adalbert; his daughter Helene and also my sister Sophie still clearly displayed the narrow, crooked Polish nose!

Source: <https://homorechte-galerie.hpage.com/familiensaga-2.html>

Insertions: Dr. H. Haase

ATTACHMENT

Order of the Red Eagle (1734/1792). 5th Model (1854-1918), Certificate of Authentication (Award Certificate) 4th Class for Forester **Adolf Friedrich Benedict Schartow** from Argenau in the district of Hohensalza, issued in Berlin on October 9, 1907, with printed seal and original signature of the President of the General Orders Commission, Lieutenant General Eduard (Max Vollrath Friedrich) Prince of Salm-Horstmar (1841-1923, in office from 1894 to 1908), folded twice. Also included is his commission as Second Lieutenant, issued in Ems on July 10, 1880, with large embossed seal, folded twice. RUK 118.



In the newspaper "Ostmärkische Tageszeitung Anzeiger für Stadt und Land", Thorn, Sunday, October 1, 1911, No. 231, 29th year, it can be read:

"Argenau, September 29, 1911. Forester **Schartow** killed a fourteen-pointer in the Dombken district. The antlers are of rare beauty."