

Chapter 1:
Edward and Margaretha (Jung) Koch
Surnames Koch, Cook, Scheu, Bruntsch

Richard L. Kenyon

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rlkenyon@cox.net

32 Almond Tree Ln, Irvine CA 92612-2230

Introduction

The widowed Margaretha (Jung) Koch and her six children traveled over the Isthmus of Panama to San Francisco in 1853. There she raised her children. All remained in the San Francisco area, although one (Phillippena) also had a residence in Marysville.



This ornately framed, hand-colored photo was in the possession of the late Leonard Scheu. He said that the subject was the father of his grandmother Phillippena (Koch) Scheu. If so, this is a photo of Edward Koch.

Collection of Nancy Kenyon. The frame measures about 9 X 10 inches. The portrait at right is reproduced about actual size.

There were remarkable parallels between the lives of Margaretha's two daughters Clementina and Phillippena. Both husbands were German immigrants who became prosperous businessmen, both had large families, and both husbands died in their fifties, well before most of their children had grown up. Both families had assets that comfortably supported them after the husband's death.

The sons were not nearly so fortunate. The strangest life was that of Alexander Koch. He married Margaret Sweeny and had two children Clara and Grace. Sadly, Margaret died October 9, 1875, when Grace was 4 years old, and Clara was about 2. Alex was unable to care for the children. Grace was sent to live with her Uncle Ferdinand and his wife Mary and a little later to her Aunt Clementina Bruntsch, while Clara was sent to live with her mother's sister Mary (Sweeney) Hayes and her family. Ferdinand died in poverty in 1912 and was buried by the county.

Grace Cook was raised in luxury by Margaretha's daughter Clementina Bruntsch, and lived a very colorful life as a prominent socialite and actress. She married Carl Rhodin, a wealthy civil engineer and yachtsman. Grace's sister, Clara, lived a life opposite in every way to that of Grace. She barely made a living, never married, and died in obscurity.

Edward and Margaretha (Jung) Koch

Edward Koch was German immigrant born about 1801. Almost nothing is known about his youth. About 1837, he married Margaretha Elisa Jung, who was born February 5, 1817, in Bad Kreuznach in the German State of Rhineland-Palatinate (*Rheinland-Pfalz* in German). Edward and Margaretha's first child, Phillippena, was born in Pennsylvania in 1837. The family was in Mobile, Alabama in 1839 when their second child Edward was born, but by 1841 had returned to Pennsylvania where their third child Ferdinand was born, followed by Alexander, and Edmund.

By 1848, the family moved west to St. Louis, Missouri. There, Edward Koch operated a family grocery store at 138 Franklin Ave. He employed 15-year-old Leonhard Scheu as a clerk. Leonhard boarded with the family, which included their 12-year old daughter Phillippena. Thirteen years later Leonhard would marry Phillippena. Two more children were born in Missouri: a daughter who died in infancy, and another daughter, Clementina

Edward Koch disappears from the city directory in 1851. It is assumed that he has died.

In 1853, Margaretha and her six children traveled from St. Louis to California via the Isthmus of Panama. After the family arrived in San Francisco, the city directories and census records show that Margaretha was the head of the household.

What would have motivated a widow with six children to travel to California in Gold Rush days? My guess is that she had relatives in California, and wished to live close to them after the death of her husband.

In 1853, the Isthmus of Panama could be reached from St. Louis by traveling down the Mississippi River to New Orleans and thence by steamer to Chagres, Panama. Although at the beginning of the Gold Rush the crossing of the Isthmus was an arduous and risky journey, by 1853 the partial completion of the Panama Railroad made it possible to go most of the way by train, with the final stretch on muleback over a greatly improved trail. There still was a serious risk of contracting a tropical disease, especially if there was a long wait at Panama City for the connecting ship.

In 1854 the widow Margaretha was living at 64 Montgomery St. in San Francisco with her six children. She appears to have had the means to live comfortably despite the death of her husband. She moved to 443 Bush St. by 1861. She is said to have invested in “sand dune property out McAllister St.” in San Francisco. This land would become very valuable as the city expanded into all available land.

Margaretha Elise Koch died at age 71 on March 31, 1888, at 464 E. 12th St., East Oakland, California, the home of her daughter Clementina Bruntsch.

The following obituary was printed in the *San Francisco Call*:

KOCH—In East Oakland, March 31, Margaretha Elise, beloved mother of Edward, Edmund, Alexander and Ferdinand Koch, and Mrs. Charles Bruntsch of San Francisco and Mrs. L. Scheu of Marysville, a native of Kreuznach, Germany, aged 71 years.

Margaretha was buried in the “Masonic Cemetery” according to her death certificate. It appears than ten years later she was cremated, apparently due to the closure of the cemetery. This cemetery no longer exists, and we do not know what happened to Margaretha’s remains. They are not at the Chapel of Memories in Oakland, where a number of her relatives are inurned.

The descendant chart on the following page gives an overview of all of the decendants of Edward and Margaretha (Jung) Koch that have been researched by the writer. Complete inforation and sources are presented in a series of chapters. The writer is in the process of getting them all on the web. If the desired information cannot yet be found there, the writer will be glad to send a PDF copy on request.

Related chapters at this site

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Edward and Margaretha (Jung) Koch | 4. The Koch Brothers |
| 2. Carl and Clementina Koch Bruntsch | 5 Leonhard and Phillippena (Koch) Scheu |
| 3. Carl and Grace (Cook) Rhodin | 6. Children of Leonhard and Phillippena
Scheu |

Contact the writer if more information needed

Overview of the children and grandchildren of Edward and Margaretha (Jung) Koch

The chart below shows the descendants of Edward and Margaretha (Jung) Koch based on my research.

Edward Koch, 1801–1852, m. abt. 1836 **Margaretha Elise Jung** 1817– 1888.

- **Phillippina Koch**, 1837–1927, m. 1863 **Leonhard Scheu**, abt.1834–1888.
 - **Francisca Marguretta Scheu**, 1864–1935, m. 1891 **Hermann Juch**, 1866–1928. Descendants include Barbara Barnett.
 - **John L. "Len" Scheu**, 1865–1933, m. abt.1896 **Mary Ann McFall**, 1867– 1957. Descendants include (John) Leonard Scheu, my wife's father.
 - **Clementina K. "Clem/Clemy" Scheu**, 1867–1947, m. **Henry Phillip White Jr.**, 1868–1955.
 - **Philip E. Scheu**, 1871–1951, m. **Mathilde "Tillie" Schirmer**, 1885–1957.
 - **Maybell Scheu**, 1873–1880.
 - **Richard Edmund "Rick" Scheu, D.D.S.**, 1875–1937, m1 1909 m1 **Blanche**____, m2 **Howard Elizabeth Diekmann** (female).
 - **(Alba) Grace Scheu**, 1877–1969; m. 1903 **Clarence Bretherick**; 1878–1960. Descendants include Ormond Bretherick and Dona Bretherick.
 - **Elmar E. Scheu**, 1879–1952; m. 1912 **Stella/Estelle M. Kaintz**, 1885–1971. Descendants changed name to Shaw.
- **Edward E. Koch/Cook**, 1839–1911, m. 1869 **Catherine Culver**, 1841–?
 - **Amelia Cook**, 1880–1965, did not marry.
 - **Edward W. Cook**, 1882–1968, m. **Ethel R.** ____, 1883–?
- **Edmund L. Koch/Cook**, abt.1842–1920, m. **Mary** ____, abt.1846–?
- **Ferdinand Koch/Cook**, abt.1843–1906, m **Mary** ____, 1848–?
- **Alexander A. Koch/Cook**, c.1844–1912, m. 1870 **Margaret T. Sweeney**, 1845–1875.
 - **Grace Cook**, 1871–1966, m. 1908 **Carl Jonas Rhodin**, 1877–1932.
 - **Clara Cook**, 1874–1958, did not marry.
- **Clementina Koch**, 1851–1913, m. 1875 **Carl Christian Godfried Bruntsch**, abt.1844–1899.
 - **Margaretha "Gretchen" Bruntsch**, 1876–1965. Opera star and voice teacher. Did not marry.
 - **Ernest Adelbert Bruntsch**, 1878–1946, m 1916 **Ray K. Kranth**, 1889—1973. Descendants include the late Bob Bruntsch
 - **Herbert Anthony Bruntsch**, 1884–1959, m. 1912 **Shannon Mhoon**, 1883–1967.
 - **Carl C. G. Bruntsch**, 1886–1946, m1 **Helen Van Slyk**, abt.1890–1924, m2 **Mary M. Wood**, abt.1898–1940, m3 **Margaret** ____, d 1971.
 - **Tosca Bruntsch**, 1890–1967, m. 1912 **Dudley Sales**, 1882–1971.
 - **Harold Clement "Hal" Bruntsch**, 1891–1959, noted San Francisco cartoonist and artist, m. **Mary Carmen Pokotilo**, dates unknown.

Sources

Family of Edward and Margaretha: The complete family is found in the 1850 census, 5th Ward of St. Louis city, St. Louis Co, MO, p. 216, enumerated Aug 6, 1850. The spelling of names below is verbatim. The census-taker has Anglicized the spelling of Koch, Margaretha, and Leonhard, misspelled Scheu and Phillippina, and written Edward instead of Edmund for the 5 year-old boy.

Edward Cook, 49, Grocer, b Germany

Margaret Cook, 32, b. Germany

Philipina Cook, 12, b PA

Edward Cook, 11, b AL

Ferdinand Cook, 8, b PA

Alexander Cook, 6, b PA

Edward [Sic] Cook, 5, b PA

Elemendena [sic] Cook, 1, b MO

Leonard Sheuy [sic], 15, Clerk, b Germany

Mary Jeager, 15, b Germany

Because of the age difference between Edward and Margaretha, it is natural to wonder if Margaretha was the mother of all of the children. If so, Phillippina was born when Margaretha was 20 years old, which is reasonable. Moreover, Margaretha's obituary clearly states that she is the mother of Phillippina. Phillippina's death certificate, for which her grandson John L. Scheu was informant, has no entry in the blank for mother's maiden name, but states that Phillippina's father's name was Edward.

Birth of Margaretha Koch: Calculated from age 71 yr, 1 mo, 26 days when died Mar 31, 1888, from her death certificate, City of Oakland, CA. The ages reported in the census are inconsistent. Birthplace given by death certificate and obituaries.

Maiden name Jung: Clarence Bretherick (1878 - 1960) prepared an extensive genealogy chart in which he gave Margaretha's maiden name as Jung, and wrote in "countess" above her name. The chart is in the collection of Dona Bretherick of

Oakland, with a copy in my collection. The chart was prepared sometime between 1903 (when he married Margaretha's granddaughter Grace Scheu), and his death in 1960. There were people still living during this period that might well have known the maiden name. For many of the people in his chart, I could compare his data with data that I had obtained from original sources. I found no errors. He was even correct as to the name of Margaretha's husband, who apparently died about 1851. His chart is the only known source for Margaretha's maiden name.

Birth of Edward Koch: Country from age in 1850 census. Year estimated from age in 1850 census.

Places the Koch family lived: Derived from the age and place of birth reported for the children in the 1850 and 1860 Census.

Birth of the children: The birth and lives of the children are covered in separate chapters, as listed on page

Death of Edward Koch: The last known record is the listing of Koch, Edward, family grocer, 138 Franklin Ave., in Green's St. Louis Directory for 1851, St. Louis, 1850. He obviously was alive in early 1850 when Clementina was conceived. He did not appear in the 1852 St. Louis directory. He is not listed in the St. Louis Death Register (not complete) nor in the St. Louis will records. We found no record of him in San Francisco.

Margaretha coming to California in 1853: Year from obituaries of Phillippina in the *Marysville Appeal*, Marysville, CA, May 25, 1927, p. 6, and the *Marysville Evening Democrat*, May 24, 1927. The same year was given by Phillippina's grandson Ormond Bretherick in a letter to Beth Kenyon, Feb 16, 1988. The same year is also obtained from the years lived

in "this city" given in her death certificate (although it appears that the informant meant the years lived in the San Francisco Bay area, rather than Oakland). The statement that Phillippena "came with her mother" is from the 1988 letter mentioned above. The investment in "sand dune property" is from a typescript by Ormond Bretherick sent to Beth Kenyon in 1988. Now in my collection.

Isthmus of Panama: Most accounts of travel across the Isthmus describe the period prior to construction of the Panama Railroad. For details of the period during the construction we relied on Alexander Saunders, "Short History of the Panama Railroad," Bulletin No. 78, Railway and Locomotive Historical Society, 1949, p. 8-44.

Margaretha in San Francisco: The first evidence of Margaretha in San Francisco is the 1854 listing of Cook, Mrs. Margaret, 64 Montgomery, in Le Count & Strong's San Francisco City Directory for 1854, FHL 6044475. In 1858 there is a listing for Koch, Mrs. Margaret, 135 Bush, in The San Francisco Directory for 1858, compiled by Henry G. Langley, San Francisco, FHL 6044479. In 1859 the listing is Koch, Margaret (widow), 135 Bush, in the *San Francisco Directory for the Year Commencing June, 1859*, compiled by Henry G. Langley, San Francisco, FHL 6044481.

The widow Margaretha was found in the 1860 census in San Francisco City and

County, p. 1390, line 20, enumerated Jun 29:

Margaret Cook, 39, occupation blank, \$2000 real estate, \$800 personal estate, b. Germany

Phillippena, 20, occupation blank, b. PA
Edward, 18, coppersmith, b. AL

Ferdinand, 16, apprenticed to carriage-maker, b. PA

Alexander, 15, occupation blank, b. PA

Edmund, 14, occupation blank, b. PA

Clementina, 9, occupation blank, b. MO

Note that there is no child corresponding to the "Elemendina" who was 1 year old in the 1850 census. In 1861, there is a listing for Koch, Margaret (widow), 443 Bush, in Henry G. Langley, San Francisco City Directory for 1861, Valentine & Co., FHL 1377422. In 1862, Margaretha's sons Edward and Edmund were listed at the same address, 443 Bush, in Henry G. Langley, San Francisco City Directory, Valentine & Co., FHL 1377422. Their occupations were coppersmith and clerk, respectively. Margaretha was not listed, but that is not surprising because the directories often list only the employed members of a household.

Marriage of Clementina: *San Francisco Call*, Dec 24, 1875, p. 4.

Death of Margaretha: Death certificate: City of Oakland, Alameda Co., No. 7790 (original in Oakland Public Library). **Obituaries of Margaretha:** *San Francisco Call*, Apr 2, 1888, p. 8; *Oakland Tribune*, Apr 2, 1888, p. 3