

My Friend,

**As promised, I am in contact once again. As you know, I have said all along that the reason for my contact was to connect you with the past. I hope that this information contained within will do just that.**

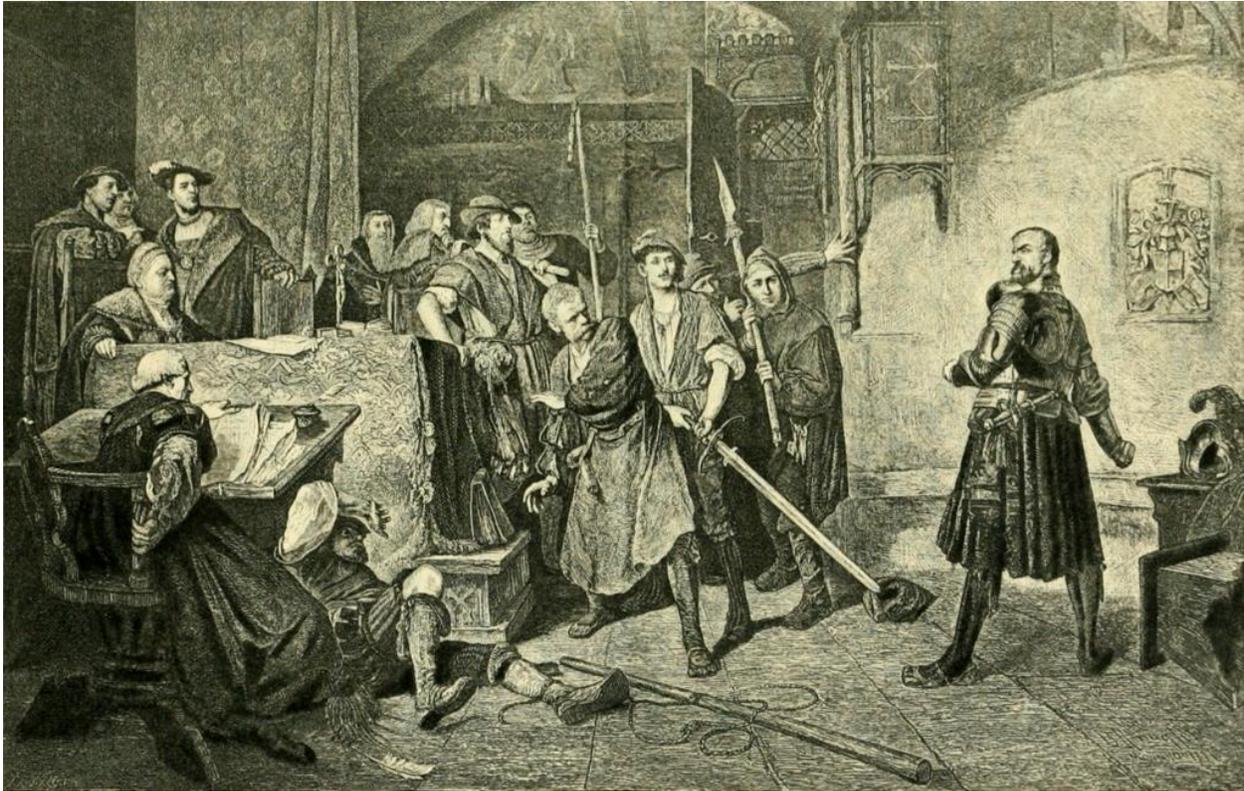
**Please read this note in total before opening the package – it would mean so much to me that you have heard my story.**

**Last I wrote I detailed many facts about who I feel is your namesake: Gottfried "Götz" von Berlichingen**

**It goes without saying that this knight lived an epic life worthy of chronicling. But his story continues...**

In 1519, he signed up in the service of Ulrich, Duke of Württemberg, who was at war with the Swabian League. He fought in the defence of Möckmühl, but eventually was forced to surrender the town, owing to a lack of food and ammunition. In violation of the terms of surrender, he was held prisoner and handed over to the citizens of Heilbronn, a town he had raided several times. His fellow knights Georg von Frundsberg and Franz von Sickingen successfully argued for his release in 1522, but only after he paid a ransom of 2,000 gulden and swore not to take vengeance on the League.

In 1525, with the outbreak of the German Peasants' War, Berlichingen led the rebels in the district of Odenwald against the Ecclesiastical Princes of the Holy Roman Empire. Despite this, he was (according to his own account) not a fervent supporter of their cause. He agreed to lead the rebels partly because he had no other option, and partly in an effort to curb the excesses of the rebellion. Despite his wishes to stop wanton violence, Berlichingen found himself powerless to control the rebels and after a month of nominal leadership he deserted his command and returned to the Schloss Jagsthausen to sit out the rest of the rebellion.



*The image above is a depiction of **Gottfried "Götz" von Berlichingen** resisting arrest*

After the Imperial victory, he was called before the diet of Speyer to account for his actions. On 17 October 1526, he was acquitted by the Imperial chamber. Despite this, in November 1528 he was lured to Augsburg by the Swabian League, who were eager to settle old scores. After reaching Augsburg under promise of safe conduct, and while preparing to clear himself of the old charges against him made by the league, he was seized and made prisoner until 1530 when he was liberated, but only after repeating his oath of 1522 and agreeing to return to his Burg Hornberg and remain in that area.

Berlichingen agreed to this, and remained near the Hornberg until Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, released him from his oath in 1540. He served under Charles in the 1542 campaign against the Ottoman Empire of Suleyman the Magnificent in Hungary, and in 1544 in the Imperial invasion of France under Francis I of France.



. Götz / idol / v Berlichingen - 135/3 Black Feathers ( Costume design for Götz in Goethe's Götz von Berlichingen )

After the French campaign, Berlichingen returned to the Hornberg and lived out the rest of his life in relative peace. He died on 23 July 1562 in Horneck Castle. During his long life, Berlichingen had married twice and left three daughters and seven sons to carry on his family name.

**So, as you can see, there are ample progeny to attribute to your heritage, should you agree to believe me. Of course, there is no DNA proof at this point, only the ramblings of an old man hoping that such an auspicious legacy be maintained through the ages. I am sure you can agree that this legacy is one to be proud of and preserve.**

**Either way, it is I who feels confident to hand on the “torch” so to speak. May you use the contents of my last offering in good health.**

**Raise your chin and hold your head high and proud for I believe you come from a long line of proud knights and deserve the heritage that this line represents.**

**Oh! I almost forgot one of his most auspicious legacies.**

His name became famous as a euphemism for a vulgar expression (*er kann mich im Arsch lecken* "he can lick my arse") attributed to him by writer and poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe(1749–1832), who wrote a play based on his life.

This saying has evolved through the ages to now mean "Kiss My Ass!"