

1837, 1876

inherited the farm and sold out when he fell into financial difficulties, and another brother became a common laborer and a drunkard.

There were thousands of illegitimate children in the Waldviertel, and the birth of Alois Schicklgruber caused no particular surprise. No shame was attached to illegitimate birth, but there were inevitable disadvantages, for such children tended to become farm workers without any legal claim to any property, and usually they were doomed to poverty.

The boy spent the first five years of his life at Strones. On May 10, 1842, Johann Georg Hiedler married his mother, and shortly afterward the boy was taken to live in the household of Johann Nepomuk Hiedler at Spital.

No one knows why Alois Schicklgruber became the ward of Johann Nepomuk Hiedler. What is known is that Johann Georg and his new wife were living in great poverty in Strones, and it may have been simply an act of mercy to rescue the child. It has been suggested that Johann Nepomuk was the real father, and by taking the boy into his household he was assuming the responsibilities of fatherhood. But all this is surmise, as unrewarding as the many theories advanced to prove that this or that person was the boy's father. The father might have been almost anyone at all, and it is quite possible that Maria Anna Schicklgruber did not know who the father was. Hans Frank, once Governor General of Poland, remembered or half-remembered that toward the end of 1930 he was directed by Hitler to investigate a story that the father of Alois Schicklgruber was the nineteen-year-old son of a Jewish family called Frankenberger, living in Graz. He says he found letters written by the Jewish family to Maria Anna Schicklgruber, and that for the first fourteen years of his life regular payments were made for the boy's support. According to Hans Frank the results of his inquiry were "to the highest degree painful," but Hitler remained unconvinced. He had heard differently from his father and believed that his grandfather was Johann Georg Hiedler. No substantial proof that Hitler had a Jewish grandfather has ever been offered.

The birth certificate of Alois Schicklgruber survives, and we know that it was tampered with in a strange way during the summer of 1876, almost certainly at the instigation of Alois. Originally the document had blank spaces under the words "Father" and "Remarks." These were now filled. Under "Father" the local priest wrote: "Georg Hitler. Cath. rel. Living in Spital." Under "Remarks" he wrote:

The undersigned witnesses hereby confirm that Georg Hitler, who was well known to them, acknowledged paternity of the child Alois, son of Anna Schicklgruber, and they request that his name be entered in the

baptismal register. +
Breiteneder, Witness +

These insertions in the a mark, prove only that and found a compliant years had passed since had died of consump- tion passed since the death of with the help of three il- gruber legitimized him- self

Only one of the wit- nesses with the family. This was Nepomuk's daughter Wa- his testimony would have- ntly led to believe that J- as "living in Spital," whe- about the altered docum- ent

If there was deliberate and August Kubizek, a f- reason was a very simpl- daughters and the family- He therefore wrote a wi- on condition that he cha- been found.

On January 6, 1877, i- recorded in the governm- Schicklgruber was always

The mystery of Alois' records possess no legal fo- It was the Austrian custo- legitimacy unless they in- siderable wealth. If a ma- no obligation to submit d- legal proceedings. He sim- of the matter. The fact tha- than Hiedler has no speci- tion on a name that was sp-

To the question: Who- Both Johann Nepomuk ar- candidates, but there are- them. Nor are there any c- A number of photograph-

possible inclusion

*D. T. We could find out but it would take too much disbursement of effort

inspector of the customs service possessed status, and he was paid at least as well as the principal of the local school. He was given a resplendent uniform with many gilt buttons and a cocked hat richly embroidered with gold lace. In this uniform he cut a fine figure, with his sweeping mustaches, beetling brows, and jutting jaw. He permitted no one to forget that he represented the power and glory of the bureaucracy. One of his colleagues called him "rigid and pedantic," but others remembered him as a warm-hearted, earthy man with a wry sense of humor and a gift for enduring friendships. Some of his letters have survived, and they show him to be kindly, sensible, and no more pedantic than one would expect of a customs official. To a cousin who asked about the prospects of a career for his son in the customs service, he answered: "Don't let him think the *Finanzwach* is a kind of a game, because he will be quickly disillusioned. First, he has to show absolute obedience to his superiors at all levels. Second, there is a good deal to learn in this occupation, all the more so if he has had little previous education. Toppers, debtors, card players, and others who lead immoral lives cannot last. Finally, one has to go out on duty in all weathers, day or night."

Alois Hitler was drawing a self-portrait without knowing that he was doing so, but in one respect it was inaccurate. It was perfectly possible to remain in the customs service while leading an immoral life. Gross public immorality was not condoned, but private immorality was tolerated and even expected of an unmarried man, and Alois Hitler had his full share of romances.

In October, 1873, at the age of thirty-six, he married for the first time. His bride, Anna Glassl-Horer, fourteen years older than himself, was the daughter of an inspector in the imperial tobacco monopoly. She was a widow, and it is possible that he married her for her money. She soon became infatuated, and he seems to have lost interest in her quite early in the marriage. Since he lodged in an inn, where chambermaids and waitresses were available, he continued to enjoy an ample sexual life. His wife endured his infidelities until 1892, when she finally sued for a legal separation. After the separation there was very little change in Alois Hitler's way of life, for he continued to live with his mistress, Franziska Matzelsberger, a farmer's daughter who worked as a waitress in the *Gasthaus Streif*, where he was lodging. In addition to Franziska, known as Fanni, another young woman was living in Alois Hitler's apartment, ostensibly as a maidservant. This was Klara Pölzl, the twenty-year-old granddaughter of Johann Nepomuk Hitler.

Franziska Matzelsberger had no illusions about Alois Hitler, and she insisted that the maidservant leave the apartment. Klara Pölzl went

to live elsewhere permanent mis illegitimate son Alois Hitler di able to marry child. The wedd

In a small t long, and Alois He was not th and since he w and got on wel his job. After His daughter, Those who the When Franzisl recuperate, Alc servant, his mi at the age of ty common-law wi

Klara Pölzl v so settled in hi weight and cur Josef. A vigor panionship of t a sitting, but ne always rose pur for supper.

His common gentle manners seven inches, v She dressed ne she had almost life on the farm ficulty playing months after th him "uncle."

Since Alois S legal purposes . Hitler blood in difficulties. Alois consulted a pri dispensation fro

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Most Reverend Episcopate!

Those who with most humble devotion have appended their signatures below have decided upon marriage. But according to the enclosed family tree they are prevented by the canonical impediment of collateral affinity in the third degree touching the second. They therefore make the humble request that the Most Reverend Episcopate will graciously secure for them a dispensation on the following grounds:

The bridegroom has been a widower since August 10th of this year, as can be observed from the enclosed death certificate, and he is the father of two minors, a boy of two and a half years (Alois) and a girl of one year and two months (Angela) and they both need the services of a nurse, all the more because he is a customs official away from home all day and often at night, and therefore in no position to supervise the education and upbringing of his children. The bride has been caring for these children ever since their mother's death, and they are very fond of her. Thus it may be justifiably assumed that they will be well brought up and the marriage will be a happy one. Moreover, the bride is without means, and it is unlikely that she will ever have another opportunity to make a good marriage.

For these reasons the undersigned repeat their humble petition for a gracious procurement of dispensation from the impediment of affinity.

Braunau am Inn, 27 October, 1884

ALOIS HITLER, Bridegroom
KLARA PÖZL, Bride

With this document went the essential elements of the family tree, showing that Alois Hitler was the son of Johann Georg Hiedler, whose brother Johann Nepomuk Hüttler was the grandfather of Klara Pözl.

The Bishop of Linz felt that he could not grant the dispensation, and Alois Hitler's plea was therefore translated into Latin and sent to Rome, a friendly priest having arranged that Alois Hitler should receive a certificate of poverty, a *testimonium paupertatis*, so that he should incur no expense in what was usually a costly proceeding. The papal court dealt leniently with such petitions, and the dispensation was granted three weeks later. Alois Hitler and Klara Pözl were accordingly married in the Catholic church at Braunau am Inn on January 7, 1885, with the bride nearly four months pregnant, and once more Alois's friends in the customs service attended the wedding. The marriage took place early in the morning, and Klara is said to have complained: "We were married at six o'clock in the morning, and my husband was already at work at seven."

In the evening there was a wedding reception at the Gasthaus zum Pommer, attended by a few relatives and friends. Klara's younger sister, a hunchback called Johanna, was present. The maidservant, Rosalie Schichtl, prepared the wedding supper and piled so many logs

in the fireplace that her about her inability were all very hot, supper, which was a man, and it would meal. There was no

Since Klara was husband, the marriage own but never permitted husband, she was observed that she was band's two children every young girl had granted to me," and pen?" She was not he was.

She gave him six or one son and one daughter in his second year. I died in her second year after birth. All these the marriage. Adolf was nearly a year's response more children for me born in March, 1894 and died in 1960. No therefore no living children.

In those days some year hundreds of thousands of the measles, pneumonia, died of diphtheria and many children do not Klara's parents died in their eighties. One the mother of a hunchback existed in her family.

lives outwardly all conventionally raised their children saints' days, and did class family. Alois Hitler's husband, and his young suffering, but this is true

the local ecclesiastical
were worried about
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Alois' remark

1895-1899

~~1895-1899~~

The Young Hitler

2a

were born and died; the breadwinner was posted to different stations; and the family followed him. We hear of no feuds, no violent outbursts of temper, no sudden upheavals. The very ordinariness of the family commands a kind of respect.

Klara lived out her full and quiet life with dignity and patience. She had her vanities, as we can see from the only surviving photograph, which was taken when she was about twenty-five, not long after her marriage. She wears a dress of dark silk with a neat white collar, and her hair is parted, with small curls framing her smooth forehead. At her breast there is a bib of white lace, on which she has pinned a little bunch of grapes made of blown glass. Both the curls and the grapes set off her large and luminous eyes, her most attractive feature.

In the photograph she looks vulnerable, but not too vulnerable. She was a spirited woman who could, if necessary, stand up to her husband. She was not beautiful in the conventional sense, but her face suggests an uncommon gentleness and tenderness, an essential goodness. She was one of those women who live for their husbands, their children, and their faith.

see photograph p 81

Desc. of Klara

wedding

She has one good dress she has been wearing for the very occasional special occasion - her wedding.

on the wedding night party.

Could begin w the wedding night party + how 4 years later, she still was the audience.

into Braunau + his relation to the town.

Knows nothing of their economic standards other than his dairy (not large) and the other two.

Anna Clara must have received some of it back, - Desc. of Anna

Half-year rest in concentration - Gustav b

Jela b
Otto b
Adolf b

5/84
9/86
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3/89

Adolf Hitler's bit the evening on A later, at a quarter Ignaz Probst, the Adolf's name is g official, and Klar Pölzl, peasant, an was Franziska Pc Prinz, distant rel living in Vienna.

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The small borc century, had so crumbling mediev imposing Stefans fought over durin Johann Palm, a l written a pamph Her Deepest Hun

Although Adol he would share child. A photogr him to have inhe



1892

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eyes, the same nose and mouth. It is as though no trace of the father was permitted to remain. The chubby child sitting up in the velvet chair in the photographer's studio wears a white dress, white stockings, and a frilly white collar, and as he gazes out of the photograph he has an air of appealing innocence and intelligence, so that one could imagine him growing up quite normally, without strain, secure in the affections of a mother who treated her two stepchildren with the same loving care as she treated her son.

1892-1892

At the time of Adolf's birth his half-brother, Alois, was seven, and his half-sister, Angela, was five. They were noisy, rather mischievous children, and soon it became necessary to leave the Gasthof zum Pommer for a larger apartment. They found one in the Linzerstrasse, a stone's throw away, and there the family remained until the summer of 1892, when Alois Hitler was promoted to the position of Higher Customs Officer at Passau. He had spent twenty years as a lowly customs officer in an unimportant town, and this was his first big promotion. Passau was on the German side of the border, but by an arrangement between the German and Austrian governments all the work of the customs was concentrated there.

Braunau
+
Passau
Provincia
+
cultured

1892

While Braunau am Inn was little more than a sleeping village, Passau was an ancient city. Once the Prince-Bishop of Passau ruled over large areas of Bavaria and Austria. The splendor of the Middle Ages clung to the castles, towers, and churches built on a little tongue of land at the confluence of the River Inn and the Danube.

For Alois Hitler the promotion meant a substantial increase in income, and he was now receiving 2,600 kronen a year. Yet the change must have produced a wrench, for he was a man of settled habits and had deep roots in Braunau am Inn, where his former wives were buried. According to the official calendar of the Austrian Ministry of Finance, he received only a provisional appointment, which meant that he would have to satisfy his superior before the appointment was confirmed. He probably regarded the transfer with some trepidation, because it involved a test of his ability.

Adolf, who was known as Adi, was just over three years old when the family moved to Passau. He was at the impressionable age when the sights and sounds of a large town produce enduring images on the brain. Speech patterns, too, begin to acquire their final form, and to the end of his life he would speak in the accents of this German border town. He said later that he always felt more German than Austrian, and he was never to forget the impression left on him by this old German imperial city. The years he spent as a child in Passau were as close to paradise as he ever came.

On March 23, 1893, Klara gave birth to a son, her fifth child. The

Conceived June 13, 1893

april spring
For three years 1889-1892 she breast-feeds Adolf. Then conceives

Edmund Edmund in 1893. (Early spring 1893.)
(Klara is most impressed by his promotion in the summer of 1892.)

+ its confirmation later.

boy was called satisfied his sup Because Edmund remained for an

In this way A permitted to do was no father 1 years spent in 1 childhood in a Nevertheless it architecture in around him. Du in Linz and Alo himself, for Ed affections.

Adolf was a r incurably devote sometimes open seems to have th tioned. For his fi he was so old ar authoritarian fig very end of his the heart of burn and found himse graph of his fath father, it was us

Already the s being so devoted no woman equal would be compa wanting. From h stern dogmatic a

Early in 1895 in his life. He di property in the v It was a small vill inhabitants, and t The village was c in abundance.

There were ser of serene beauty. winds blew for

1945 a reprint of 59
The Early Years 1944 17

60

boy was called Edmund. A week later Alois Hitler, who had evidently satisfied his superiors, was appointed to an even higher post in Linz. Because Edmund was too young to travel, Klara and the children remained for another year in Passau.

In this way Adolf came to enjoy another year of paradise, for he was permitted to do whatever he wanted by his indulgent mother, and there was no father to warn and chastise him. He says nothing about the years spent in Passau in *Mein Kampf*, but one does not write about childhood in a book devoted to revolutionary struggle and invective. Nevertheless it was here that he encountered Gothic and Baroque architecture in their fullness, and saw the Renaissance flowering around him. During the last year at Passau, when his father was absent in Linz and Alois and Angela were off to school, he had his mother to himself, for Edmund was too young to challenge his hold on her affections.

Adolf was a mother's boy, a *Muttersöhnchen*, one of those who are incurably devoted to their mothers and therefore capable of latent and sometimes open hostility to the father. He was perfectly aware of it and seems to have thought it was a natural state of affairs, not to be questioned. For his father he possessed a respect amounting to awe, because he was so old and so powerfully built, because he was so obviously an authoritarian figure whose instant commands must be obeyed. To the very end of his life, when he was living in a subterranean bunker in the heart of burning Berlin, he kept his mother's photograph with him and found himself continually gazing at it. He did not keep a photograph of his father, and on the rare occasions when he spoke about his father, it was usually with suppressed fury.

Already the seeds of many future disasters were being sown. By being so devoted to his mother, Adolf was ensuring that he would find no woman equal to her, for she alone represented the ideal. All women would be compared with Klara, and most of them would be found wanting. From his father he inherited the authoritarian temper, the stern dogmatic approach to all problems, and a sense of purpose.

Early in 1895 Alois Hitler made one of the most important decisions in his life. He decided to retire from the customs service and bought property in the village of Hafeld, some thirty miles southwest of Linz. It was a small village with about two dozen houses and about a hundred inhabitants, and there was a fine view of the Salzkammergut mountains. The village was on a high ridge, and there were orchards and nut trees in abundance.

There were serpents in this paradise, but the first impression was one of serene beauty. Later, when the autumn rains came and the sharp winds blew from the mountains, Alois Hitler would have second

1945

1895

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1924/04

1897, 1924,

1991

amuse himself with such an obvious pun. Adolf, who was now living in a well-designed building at the corner of the Linzerstrasse and the Kirchengasse, could see the swastika from the window of his father's apartment, and he saw it more clearly when he went to school. Abbot Theodorich von Hagen's swastika was probably the ancestor of the Nazi Hakenkreuz.

About this time Alois Hitler's eldest son, Alois Jr., left the family roof. He was the black sheep of the family, and no good news ever came from him. In 1900 he was arrested and sentenced to five months' imprisonment for theft, and two years later he received another sentence, this time of eight months' imprisonment. He wandered to Germany and France, practicing the trade of a waiter. In 1909 we find him in Dublin, and in the following year he became the owner of a small restaurant in Liverpool, where he married an Irish girl, Elizabeth Dowling, and fathered a son, William Patrick Hitler. Shortly before World War I he abandoned his wife and settled in Germany. In 1924, he was sentenced to six months' imprisonment in the provincial court of Hamburg for bigamy, and when his half-brother came to power he opened a bar and restaurant in Berlin on the Wittenbergplatz. It was much frequented by Nazi officers, who were not unaware that Alois was closely related to the dictator of Germany. The restaurant and bar, called Café Alois, prospered, and Alois himself survived the war. A son, Heinz, by one of his many marriages, fought in the war against Russia and was taken prisoner. He, too, survived, returning to Germany many years later. In 1945 Alois Hitler changed his name to Hans Hiller, and nothing more was ever heard of him.

Although Alois Jr. was the black sheep, he was probably the happiest member of the family. He had an earthy robust character, charmed women, and lived by his wits. He was always inventing schemes for getting rich quickly, and most of them came to grief. Neither prison nor poverty soured him. He was unfailingly good-humored and polite, even when he was about to be sentenced by a judge or when he was abandoning his latest wife. He was one of those who enjoy life to the full.

The unhappiest member of the family was Paula, who was born on January 21, 1896. She was the last of Klara's six children, and the most docile. Quiet and easily led, she faded into the background almost from the day of her birth and spent most of her life in obscurity. She never married, and died in 1960 as quietly as she had lived.

The family at Lambach now consisted of Alois, Klara, and the four children, Angela, Adolf, Edmund, and Paula. At first they lived in a lodging house in the center of the town, but later they moved into an apartment on the second floor of a mill, where there was also a blacksmith's shop. The children appear to have enjoyed the move, but Alois

Alois

same time as at

1900, 1906

working the land
bought a small
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of land, and it
property was the
way

roof and two
small garden. Alois set up
Realschule, or elementary
about the house,
Edmund, and keeping an
teachervous. Josef Mayrhofer,
Klara came to his house
always neatly dressed and
there is so much work

was like every other
and there would be the
drink with his cronies. In
drinks at one of the local
in church only on
he was strict with his family,
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watch, I'll give you a beat-
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in Leonding, Edmund,
It was the first time
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death. From being a rather
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of, nervous boy, who never
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attending the fourth class
open, eager face, a forelock
across his chest, and as he
he wears an expression of

calm self-assurance and conscious ease. A photograph taken in the fol-
lowing year, when he was attending the *Realschule* at Linz, shows him
looking glumly and moodily at the camera, and there is no trace of his
former self-assurance.

Quite suddenly something had snapped within him: a sickness of the
soul or a sickness of the flesh. Exactly what caused this abrupt change
in his character must remain unknown, but the death of Edmund was
probably the main cause, outweighing all others. Whenever he looked
out of the bedroom window, he would be reminded of Edmund, for the
grave lay just behind the high cemetery wall. Alois and Klara, too, were
inconsolable, for they had lost four of their children and feared for the
remaining two.

Years later, when Adolf had become famous, journalists would some-
times descend on Leonding and ask the villagers what they remembered
about him. They remembered him climbing the apple trees, or playing at
Red Indians, or pretending to be a Boer soldier fighting against the
English, for the Boer War had broken out in 1899. Many people remem-
bered him standing on a hill near Leonding, his arms waving as he com-
manded his followers to attack. They remembered how old Alois Hitler
would sometimes put two fingers to his mouth and there would come a
shrill whistle. Immediately Adolf would stop whatever he was doing
and run to his father, whose broad shoulders, fierce drooping mustache,
and air of authority exacted instant obedience. And they remembered
that in the presence of his father he was quiet and humble. But they
also remembered a curious detail that had nothing in common with their
other memories. They said Adolf was sometimes seen at night sitting
on the cemetery wall, gazing up at the stars.

The Linz Realschule, which Adolf entered in September, 1900, when
he was eleven years old, provided a four-year course of education,
equivalent to a high school. Unlike the *Gymnasium*, which emphasized
a classical education and prepared the student for the university and
a professional career, the *Realschule* emphasized science and modern
languages and prepared the student for a career in technology and
engineering. In the *Gymnasium*, a student learned Latin and Greek
until he could write those ancient languages almost as well as his
native German. The *Realschule* had no courses in Latin and Greek, or
ancient history, or philosophy, or art, and the teaching was severely
practical.

Adolf sometimes made the journey from Leonding to Linz on foot,
but more often he went by train. The journey on foot, lasting about an
hour and a half, was not unpleasant, for there were rolling meadows
and watchtowers left over from the days when the Austrians feared the
approach of Napoleon's army, and there were also some ruined castles,

62

1948, 1903

refused

(27)

the horizons, with power over all living creatures, perpetually at war with the inferior races and consigning them to their doom. Long after his boyhood was over he continued to read these novels, and he was reading them again while he fought the war against Russia, which exceeded in brutality anything Old Shatterhand ever dreamed of. Sometimes, when talking about the Russians, he would refer to them as "Redskins."

The strange moody boy who read Karl May's novels and failed in his lessons was entering a world of fantasy, which gradually closed round him. From time to time he would break out of the circle, but the world of fantasy was the only place where he felt completely at home.

Outwardly he looked like any other schoolboy, except that he was unusually pale and thin. Professor Theodor Gissinger, who taught science in the Linz *Realschule*, remembered that he looked like a consumptive and had bright, glowing eyes but otherwise left neither a favorable nor an unfavorable impression. He did, however, add one curious detail. "I remember," he said, "that he used to hold conversations with the windblown trees."

Meanwhile the boy was still waging a sullen, resentful war against his father, who wanted him to do well at school and become an official, gradually working his way up to the top and finally achieving an assured pension. One day the boy accompanied his father to the customs house. As he remembered it many years later, the customs officials were cooped up in little cages, and his determination never to become an official was reinforced. As he tells the story, he was overcome by panic when he saw the cages. In fact, the customs officials under the Habsburg Empire were not cooped up in cages but moved about freely in the customs sheds like customs officials today. It was one more of the fantasies he wove around his father.

In December, 1901, the old gentleman caught a bad cold and was in bed for several weeks. By the spring he had fully recovered. In August he felt strong enough to haul coals into his cellar and as a result suffered a lung hemorrhage. Such hemorrhages were not considered dangerous, and he was soon on his feet again. He appeared to be in fairly good health all through the later part of the year. On Saturday, January 3, 1903, he went out early to see a farmer about buying some apples. It was a bitterly cold day, and suddenly feeling unwell he made his way to the inn and called for a glass of wine. While waiting for the wine, he collapsed. There was a story that just before he collapsed someone offered him a "black," or clerical, newspaper, and he shouted indignantly that he would never read a newspaper that was full of lies, but the story is probably apocryphal. They carried him to an adjoining room, and he was dead within a few minutes.

This quiet and unspaciously and unspectacularly three times and father restlessly from place to place to suggest that typical small bureaucratic wine, without any redeeming the *Linz Tagespost* print with all the appropriate

Leonding, January 5, 1903
say about Alois Hitler, who was carried to his death in the month his life came to in the Gasthaus Stiefl unwell, hoping to revive

Alois Hitler was in the sphere of joy and sorrow. He first learned the traditional knowledge needed for the tinction, and in addition Braunau, Simbach, Linz

Alois Hitler was a man and as such he was a warm always cheerful, not to fell from his lips could rough exterior. He was well-informed on all kinds of pronounce authoritative happier than when in the sphere of beekeeping characteristics was his great all Hitler's passing has a widow and four children of his friends and acquaintances him.

Although the obituary acquaintances, there were stationed in Salzburg. The provided for. That harsh he regarded himself as a us, for bureaucrats habit as authorities on all subjects a man who was wholly p

1803

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This quiet and unspectacular death suited a man who had lived quietly and unspectacularly all his life. It was true that he had married three times and fathered nine children, and that he had wandered restlessly from place to place, but there was nothing in his life or behavior to suggest that he was anything out of the ordinary. He was a typical small bureaucrat, reasonably honest, fond of his pipe and his wine, without any redeeming virtues or vices. Two days after his death the *Linz Tagespost* printed an obituary from its Leonding correspondent with all the appropriate clichés:

Leonding, January 5. We have buried a good man—this we can rightly say about Alois Hitler, Higher Official of the Imperial Customs, retired, who was carried to his final resting place today. On the third of this month his life came to a sudden end as a result of an apoplectic stroke in the Gasthaus Stiefler, where he had gone because he was feeling unwell, hoping to revive himself with a glass of wine.

Alois Hitler was in his 65th year, and had experienced a full measure of joy and sorrow. Having only an elementary school education, he had first learned the trade of a cobbler, but later taught himself the knowledge needed for a civil service career, which he served with distinction, and in addition he achieved success in husbandry. Salzburg, Braunau, Simbach, Linz, were among the places where he saw service.

Alois Hitler was a progressively minded man through and through, and as such he was a warm friend of free education. In company he was always cheerful, not to say boisterous. The harsh words that sometimes fell from his lips could not belie the warm heart that beat under the rough exterior. He was always an energetic champion of law and order. Well-informed on all kinds of matters, he could always be counted on to pronounce authoritatively on any subject. Fond of singing, he was never happier than when in a joyful company of fellow enthusiasts. In the sphere of beekeeping he was an authority. Not the least of his characteristics was his great frugality and sense of economy and thrift. All in all Hitler's passing has left a great gap, not only in his family—he leaves a widow and four children not well provided for—but also in the circle of his friends and acquaintances who will preserve pleasant memories of him.

Although the obituary was written by one of Alois Hitler's Leonding acquaintances, there were one or two small errors. He had never been stationed in Salzburg. The four surviving children were reasonably well provided for. That harsh words sometimes fell from his lips and that he regarded himself as an authority on most subjects does not surprise us, for bureaucrats habitually utter harsh words and regard themselves as authorities on all subjects. The writer of the obituary had described a man who was wholly predictable, a typical product of his environment.

This quiet and unspectacular death suited a man who had lived quietly and unspectacularly all his life. It was true that he had married three times and fathered nine children, and that he had wandered restlessly from place to place, but there was nothing in his life or behavior to suggest that he was anything out of the ordinary. He was a typical small bureaucrat, reasonably honest, fond of his pipe and his wine, without any redeeming virtues or vices. Two days after his death the *Linz Tagespost* printed an obituary from its Leonding correspondent with all the appropriate clichés:

Leonding, January 5. We have buried a good man—this we can rightly say about Alois Hitler, Higher Official of the Imperial Customs, retired, who was carried to his final resting place today. On the third of this month his life came to a sudden end as a result of an apoplectic stroke in the Gasthaus Stiefler, where he had gone because he was feeling unwell, hoping to revive himself with a glass of wine.

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