

## PLANT AND ZOOLOGICAL REMAINS FROM A HOLE IN THE KITCHEN WALL OF THE CASTLE IN JEVEER NEAR WILHELMSHAVEN

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'Schloss Jever' was built in AD 1428 and the castle was further enlarged and fortified during the following centuries. It was used and inhabited by several noble lineages, first by the Frisian Wiemken family of chieftains. When the last autonomous regent of 'Jeverland', *Fräulein Maria*, died in 1575, the counts of Oldenburg inherited the castle but used it only occasionally and as a subordinate residence. In 1667 Count Anton Günther of Oldenburg died and it passed to the Princes (Fürsten) of Anhalt-Zerbst. When in 1793 the last of them, Friedrich August von Anhalt-Zerbst, died, his sister Katharina II, Tsarina of Russia, became owner of 'Jeverland', leaving the administration to her sister-in-law Friederike Auguste Sophie until 1807. From 1813 the Duchy of Oldenburg ruled 'Jeverland' again and established the castle as a residence, making substantial modifications from 1821-1842.

The kitchen area had originally been built in the 15<sup>th</sup> century as a hall-like room with a high ceiling but it was used after the 16<sup>th</sup> century only when a larger court was held in Jever.

In the southern outer wall of the former kitchen area several holes or niches were found during restoration in 2003, and in one of these organic remains preserved by drying, molluscs (snails and mussels) and ceramic fragments were found. Two <sup>14</sup>C dates (230 ± 25 BP, AD cal 1642–1672 and 1778-1799; 315 ± 25/-20 BP, AD cal 1492–1601, 1613-1643 and 1943-1955) gave an age of about AD cal 1640-1645 because the content should have been deposited within a short time period and both dates should therefore represent the same age.

At least 4 mammal species (cattle, pig, sheep/goat, house mouse), 14 bird species (12 wild, some from the coast) and 6 fish species (fresh and sea water) were identified. The bones found, mainly from domestic animals, are interpreted as butchery and kitchen waste.

The botanical material consisted of cultivated plants: *Secale*, *Hordeum*, *Cannabis* and *Linum*, together with typical weeds of rye fields, *Agrostemma githago*, *Centaurea cyanus*, *Rumex acetosella* and *Arnosaris minima*.

Astonishing finds are aquatic plants and taxa from wet places like *Hippuris vulgaris*, *Oenanthe aquatica*, *Ranunculus aquatilis* agg., *R. sceleratus*, *Sphagnum magellanicum*, *Juncus* spp., and also *Calluna vulgaris* and *Erica tetralix*. Maybe these were part of the peat sods used for fuel in the kitchen. More difficult to interpret are taxa from grasslands and many ruderals (*Anthriscus sylvestris*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Taraxacum* sp., *Arctium minus* s.l., *Lapsana communis*, *Urtica dioica*, *U. urens*). From the garden are *Buxus* leaves, *Prunus domestica/insititia*, perhaps *Crataegus* sp. and *Prunus spinosa*.

Exotic and not growing in the area are *Olea europaea* (an import from the Mediterranean) and *Carex brizoides* known as a filling stuff of mattresses, probably indicating this use. Why all these taxa were deposited in the niche or how they got there is unclear – most probably as waste. Nevertheless the intention is unknown and additional interpretations are welcome.

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