

To the ‘Manor Born’

The Secrets of New Zealand Settler ‘Plain’ John Gotty: Son of Prussian (Count) Achim von Arnim and Grandson of Literary Great Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

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Abstract

Folklore has it that Prussian John Gotty, who migrated to Aotearoa New Zealand and married Maori poetess, Puhiwahine, descended from the German literary great Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. This ancestry is regarded as a taonga, a treasure, by his extended Maori family – to whom I belong – and it informs the pioneering work of Maori scholar Pei Te Hurinui Jones. Whilst Jones is correct to make such a claim his explanation for Gotty’s paternity relies overly on interpretation of Goethe texts. Furthermore, a key component is missing that arguably overshadows the much-revered connection to Goethe. This essay, in revisiting the research outlined by Jones (1960), develops an alternative model of explanation. It draws on correspondence between ‘mother and son’ to claim that a daughter was born to Goethe, not a son, and that this daughter is the mother of Gotty. She married a Prussian noble, a Count, the father of Gotty. The mystery surrounding Gotty was purposeful so as to keep secret not only his mother’s illegitimate birth but also her status as a commoner, having married a Prussian noble.

Road to Rediscovery

Sicily is the clue to everything (Goethe cited in Portraits of Men).

I watched with great interest the documentary *Te Kati*, aired on Maori Television in 2014, which unveiled genealogy linking Gotty to Goethe based on the work of the late Pei Te Hurinui Jones in three installments (1959; 1960; 1961). My excitement, though, turned to unease as unlikely paternity for Gotty was presented: A son, named Antonio von Goethe, was born to Goethe and his former fiancée Elizabeth ‘Lilli’ Schonemann in 1780. Antonio had son Johann Maximilian von Goethe (‘Max’) in 1808 with Wilhemine ‘Minna’ Herzlieb, ‘Max’, said to be Gotty, set sail for “Maoriland” around 1837 due to a disgrace travelling as Yohann Maximilian Gotty. Anonia and Emma von Goethe are named as Gotty’s parents on his death certificate.

In support of this, emphasis is given to interpretation of Goethe texts. Jones (1960) recounts a dream in which Goethe’s ghost reveals that his life can be found in the pages surrounding him namely in *Faust* and *Elective Affinities*. *Faust’s* ‘Gretchen’, the mother of an illegitimate child, is read as symbolic of Schonemann. Faust’s killing of ‘Valentine’, brother of ‘Gretchen’, in a duel, represents Gotty’s leaving to avoid capture. In *Elective Affinities*, the ‘Captain’ who is the guest of ‘Eduard’ and ‘Charlotte’, is symbolic of Antonio as is the youthful ‘Otilie’ of Herzlieb. Tragedy befalls ‘Otilie’, who accidentally drowns the son of ‘Eduard’ and ‘Charlotte’. Not well received, Biggs (2013) describes such blending of historical writing as “fanciful”. Jones, nonetheless, makes an important contribution because he started the debate in challenging understanding on the end of the Goethe line. This essay picks up where he left off.

Correspondence held by the Marton Historical Society concludes that the absence of evidence can be taken to mean Gotty is not a descendant of Goethe (thecommunityarchive.org.nz). But, it can be claimed that the absence of evidence is significant in itself. It would be easy to disprove a connection if paternity for Gotty was established but there is nothing to be found as yet. The question is why to which an answer is that this was intended. The humungous task then is to open a door that has been firmly closed for some time so as to develop an alternative theory for explaining the mystery of John Gotty.

Records for Gotty predating his arrival in New Zealand, much of which was sourced on line, are replete with incomplete entries or omissions. This is not an oversight, it was a means to protect not one but two secrets pertaining to Gotty: such that he was the illegitimate grandson of Goethe, thereby defying convention that the Goethe line ended with the death of his grandsons, and furthermore that he was the son of a Prussian Noble. (Count) Achim von Arnim.

Jones (1960) justifiably describes Gotty as a “man of mystery”. He is on the right track in other respects too. There is an Antonio though not the son of Goethe but of Italian merchant Count Antonio Brentano and an Antonie Birkenstock, who married Franz Brentano, the half-brother of Bettina Brentano. Antonie is said to be the inspiration for Beethoven’s ‘Immortal Beloved’. There is also a ‘Max’ though not Goethe’s grandson Maximilian but Maximiliane Euphrosine Brentano, the mother of Gotty, who married Antonio Brentano. Goethe had an affair with Maximiliane resulting in the birth of a daughter, Bettina (or Bettine) Brentano, born April 4 1785. Bettina married Graf (Count) Achim von Arnim, Gotty’s father. Gotty could not take the Goethe name because he was a von Arnim. Instead, he adopted a modified (Italian-like) version of Gotty in a nod to his grandfather Goethe, who became acquainted with Maximiliane, the daughter of his friend Sophie von La Roche, during his famed sojourn to Italy in the late 1770s. This is relevant since Goethe alludes to Italian territory Sicily being a clue to his life. Somewhat annoying, Goethe implies a lot without giving away much at all. Almost a dare of sorts.

“Plain John G”, as he preferred to be known (Woon, 2000), seemingly continued the ruse as did his son John by naming Antonio and Emma von Goethe as Gotty’s parents on his death certificate. Of the two secrets, beneath the veneer of plain John G, the ‘greater’ arguably by royal standards at least is his birthright to Prussian nobility. His father’s marriage to commoner, Bettina Brentano, would have been shameful and cause for stripping of title. This must have been difficult to contain because Gotty himself could not forgo entirely his heritage since he

sought reinstatement of his title from the Prussian Parliament, which was granted (Hirsch, 2013). Whilst Gotty preferred plain John G., it is important to unpack reality from myth, and to reveal his birth name in the process, so as to unveil an alternative theory, perhaps even a discovery. This does not change the fact that his name was John Gotty as he chose it to be.

It became clear that there was to be no joy in trying to trace Gotty through official records of passenger lists and the like. A different approach was developed based on a set of clues drawn from reading sources related to Goethe including correspondence – to identify Antonio and Max – and to solve the mystery of the mother of Gotty. Italy was a big clue as was reference to Gotty being a Count, which narrowed down the potential candidates significantly. It is noteworthy that Gotty’s cousin Count Kuno Rantzau-Breitenburg was responsible for bankrolling Prussian migration to New Zealand and that another cousin Count Augustus Henning von Arnim married the New Zealand writer Elizabeth von Arnim (nee Beauchamp).

The position of the Goethe Institute in Germany is that Goethe had no surviving issue other than son August. August had three children but neither of his two surviving sons Walter or Maximilien had children. Descendants of Gotty dispute the position that the Goethe bloodline ended with the deaths of his two grandsons passing without issue. They point to Goethe’s history of relationships with women and a son was duly born. But, it was a daughter, not a son.

Jones contributed by challenging orthodoxy that Goethe had no surviving issue. He oversteps a bit though in drawing narrow claims from *Faust* and *Elective Affinities* and, as a consequence, overlooks the likeness of ‘Gretchen’ to Margaretha Brandt who was executed for killing her illegitimate child (Luke, 1994: xix). Goethe was sympathetic to Brandt’s circumstances amid then debate on the death penalty for infanticide. A moving passage in *Faust* (Part One) is ‘Margaretha’s (Gretchen) address, on the eve of her execution, to ‘Faust’ who beseeches her to escape. Goethe imbues a deep nobility in Margaretha her preparedness to accept her fate:

I can’t leave, for me there’s no hope anymore.
What’s the use of escaping? They’ll be watching for me.
T’s so wretched to have to beg one’s way
Through life, and with a bad conscience too,
And to wander abroad; and if I do,
In the end they will catch me anyway! (Scene 28, p. 146).

Jones suggests that his theory would be difficult to prove or disprove. Whilst it indeed may be difficult to prove, it is open to being disproved. There is no evidence to establish the existence of Antonio or Emma von Goethe. An extensive search for Emma revealed nothing except a brief note to an Emma Hamilton, the consort to Sir Warren Hamilton with whom Goethe was acquainted. She was a dancer (Peakman, 2005). Moreover, the argument for Schonemann and Herzlieb is not convincing. Schonemann was respectably married with five children and Herzlieb died childless in an asylum. So far, there has been no adverse response from the Goethe Institute perhaps because it sees no reason to object with no credible claim to deny. Even so, criticism from the families of Schonemann and Herzlieb is foreseeable (see 63mago).

Glib commentary has not helped the status of the debate either. Appleton (1991) hinted that a “secret son is conceivable with childhood friend Lili...” He cites the letter *Beautiful Man* which records Goethe and Lili becoming reacquainted in 1779 with a child being born as a result in 1780. He suggests that the very absence of correspondence between Goethe and Lili is ‘proof’ of their affair since they did not wish to be discovered by their correspondence being intercepted. This does not hold given that Goethe was a prolific correspondent. It is quite possible that there was no correspondence because there was no affair. Having called off their engagement first announced in 1778, Goethe later thought Schonemann “conceited” (Carus, 1915). Schonemann married the banker Bernard du Turkheim to whom she bore five children, the first a son Jean-Frederick (1779–1850). The life of this son is well documented. Jean-Frederick was a politician who became the Mayor of Strasbourg. He is not Antonio.

The task for Jones was understandably herculean given that Gotty himself muddied the waters of his former (pre-New Zealand) life, to conceal matters of privacy, a pattern in part established by Goethe. For instance, Jolly (2013) argues that Goethe employed narrative techniques in his semi-autobiographical writing to mislead, to conceal the truth. Since Gotty left no verifiable paternity, only confusing parental names, he appears to have continued the pattern of concealment. This in itself is instructive of an intent to withhold from subsequent generations the truth of his parentage. The question is why. On face value, Gotty sought a life independent of his heritage. It goes beyond that though to upholding honour for two families given the commonality of an illegitimate birth of a daughter that defies the end of the Goethe line, and constitutes a means for disinheritance of title in relation to von Arnim nobility.

Gotty descends from Goethe, not from a son but a daughter. His surname then is not Goethe. It is von Arnim. Gotty could not claim inheritance given that his mother Bettina, famous in her own right, was illegitimate (to Goethe) as well as a commoner, not royal in other words.

Bettina married and had seven children with Achim von Arnim – four sons and three daughters. It is claimed that the second eldest, a son, named Seigmund who was close to Goethe is Gotty. There are significant historical references linking him to Goethe. Seigmund was one of a few to have an audience with Goethe in the days before his death. This is the subject of the play *Death in Weimar* (Hirsch, 2013). It is proposed that Seigmund migrated to New Zealand as Seigusmund von Angen in 1841. The second son, he was not destined to inherit the von Arnim estate in Wiepersdorf (Hirsch, 2013) which could explain his seeking of fortune elsewhere.

There was a ‘disgrace’, not for a killing but rather for the marriage of a noble, a Count, to a young woman born out of paternal wedlock. Antonio Brentano was not her biological father. Goethe was – himself a commoner. Although Achim had an older brother, Otto, who would inherit the bulk of the estate, a perceived ‘weakening’ of the family line would have been a mitigating factor. Thus, presumably, to not cause havoc, Gotty becomes largely invisible from public life taking solace in Europe. In this context, the lack of detail as to the lives of the von Arnim sons – Johann, Seigmund, and Anton (youngest brother Kunemund drowned) – compared to their sisters whose lives are well documented, daughter Gisela Otilie married one of the Grimm brothers, famous for their fairy tales, is purposeful of a silence in this regard.

Seemingly safe, this secret has been locked away. Not anymore. It is proposed that a reading of correspondence between Goethe and Bettina and Bettina and Seigmund is crucial to unearthing blood ties. Bettina once implored Goethe: “ask to me, what is my life but a profound mirror of your own” (*Portraits of Men*). She dispatched Seigmund to Goethe in his final days so that Goethe may “set eyes on him” and was fraught with anxiety for news of Goethe of which Seigmund was reticent to comply with (see ‘A Mother’s Plea to her Son’).

Bettina also corresponded with members of the Goethe family. Indeed, Goethe’s mother Elizabeth relied on Bettina for news of her son. In her correspondence, she addressed Bettina as “Dear Daughter...” (Walker, 1993). As told by Bettina in *Goethe: Conversations and Encounters* (Luke and Pick, 1996), Elizabeth tells of her young son’s love of storytelling. “I, for my part, never tired of telling him stories just as he never tired of listening. There I would

sit and he would almost devour me with his great black eyes...” (p. 31). The closeness of Bettina’s relationship with the Goethe family is reflected in contemporary literary celebrations. The 150th anniversary exhibition of Bettina’s works was held at the Goethe Haus in 2009.

A reading of correspondence unearths important clues to the intricacy of relationships between Bettina, Goethe and Seigmund. Yet, Gotty for all intents and purposes remains an enigma. Part of the task then is to identify familial traits attributed to Gotty that can be traced back to Prussia in particular to the von Arnims. For instance, the von Arnims were Counts. They served in the military and in the judiciary. So too Gotty. The von Arnims were acquainted with Bismarck, the Prussian Prime Minister. So too Gotty. Bismarck’s sister married a von Arnim. And, Gotty descendants can be traced back to von Arnim. The name of his granddaughter, Emma Te Kune, bears similarities to Seigmund’s brother Kunemund and his aunt Kunegund.

A most difficult task has been to find details of Gotty’s ‘leaving’ Prussia – once an independent kingdom, now part of Germany. This was complicated by the fact that unchecked information can be uploaded onto ancestry websites. That Gotty purportedly travelled as Yohann Gotty remains to be supported by reliable sources. If anything, it is more likely that he had the means to travel as an ‘unassisted passenger’ which would further his desire for concealment. That aside, it is argued that Gotty departed under the name Seigusmund von Angen.

The Goethe Bloodline and its Continuation

The official position of the Goethe Institute is that the Goethe bloodline ended with the passing of his two grandsons. This does not mean that there are no descendants, only that there are unacknowledged descendants. Given that there were no sons, it becomes relatively straightforward to claim that the Goethe line ended with the death of his son August. But this ignores the continuance of bloodline through a daughter. Thus, it is proposed that the Goethe bloodline did not end but rather it lives on in the descendants of Bettina von Arnim.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was born August 28 1749 and died 1832. His father was Johann Casper Goethe and his mother Catherine Textor. Casper and Catherine had seven children with only two surviving: Johann and his sister Cornelius. Goethe married Christiane Vulpius in 1806 after eighteen years together. Christiane died in 1816. They had several children. However, only son Julius August Walter von Goethe (December 25 1789 – October 28 1830) survived. Julius married Ottilie Wilhemine Ernestine Henriette von Pogwisch (Baroness von Pogwisch).

Otilie Pogwisch was born October 31 1796 and died October 26 1872. Her father was Wilhelm Julius Baron von Pogwisch and her mother was Henriette Ulricke Otilie von Pogwisch. Otilie's father was a Prussian major (Browne, 1920: 605). August and Otilie had three children: two sons and a daughter:

- Walter Freiherr von Goethe (April 9 1818 – April 15 1885)
- Wolfgang (Maximilian) Freiherr von Goethe (September 18 1820 – January 20 1883)
- Alma von Goethe (October 29 1827 – September 29 1844)

August was not a 'good' husband and was understood to have had affairs. He died of 'consumption' in 1830. Neither of the sons are thought to have married or had children. Goethe was fond of his daughter in law Otilie and was responsible for introducing her to August. Otilie devoted herself to the care of Goethe senior until his death in 1832. Her reputation was marred by gossip on the birth of an illegitimate child born after the death of August. She purportedly killed her daughter, Alma, and had an affair with her father in law. Part of the reasoning for this is the central character of 'Otilie' in *Elective Affinities* in which an older 'Eduard' (representative of Goethe) falls for the much younger 'Otilie'.

Such rumouring is fuelled by confusing identifications on website sources. Otilie is referred to as the "daughter" of Goethe (Deutsche Biographe) and Goethe is referred to as "Father Goethe" to Otilie (kulturalportal-west). In an important distinction, Wilhelm Julius Baron von Pogwisch is acknowledged as father of Otilie. Reference then to "Father Goethe" is not literal. There is no indecent relationship, only a benign fatherly one. If Goethe was Otilie's biological father, it would be unseemly for a half-sister to marry a half-brother, August, with the blessing of the father. There is no illicit liaison between father and daughter in law.

Goethe enjoyed relations with women, married and unmarried. He maintained a long-standing affair with Charlotte von Stein, who was married with seven children, and with Christiane Vulpius, whom he married after eighteen years. There were also rumoured affairs with Anna Amalia, the princess of Prussia (Ghibellino, 2007), Katchen Schonkpf, Elizabeth Schonemann and Wilhemine Herzlieb, among others. Not surprisingly, the many potential candidates for identifying the mother, or grandmother, to Gotty made for an exacerbating task in terms of matching timelines between Goethe, the women in his life, and birthdates. After careful scrutiny, it came down to Maximiliane Brentano with whom Goethe acknowledged a relationship of an intimate nature. A child was born from this relationship. Part of the problem

is the assumption that the child was a son when in fact it was a daughter. In this light, the Goethe bloodline continues through the descendants of Bettina von Arnim, whose mother was Maximiliane Brentano. Having drawn this connection, the task is to continue to demystify the enigma or secret of Gotty by narrowing down the name he travelled under, on what vessel, when he travelled, and what he did on arrival beyond that already known.

The Enigma of Gotty

The lack of biographical detail for Gotty has contributed to the draping of a cloak that conceals him. Presumably he departed Prussia under his birth name then adopted the name Gotty on arrival yet an extensive search of Passenger Lists in New Zealand Archives yielded nothing. A search using the name Miller, the name Goethe took when he travelled to Italy, was without result. That said, the search revealed that vessels from Prussia did not arrive in New Zealand before 1843, which tests the theory of Gotty arriving around 1838, and that they stopped in Australia on route. This necessitated a search of Australian records. A John Gotty disembarked at New South Wales without a date of entry or name of the vessel on ancestry.com.

Twenty-nine vessels sailed from Germany for Australia between 1838 and 1850 (www.theshipslist.com/ships/australia). Two single unnamed unassisted men, possibly brothers, departed from Hamburg on board the 'St Pauli' arriving in Nelson via Sydney in 1843 (Old Lutherans). The term 'unassisted' is most relevant implying that certain passengers had means to migrate and that this allowed for their details to be withheld from the public record. Such anonymity is consistent with the absence of records in relation to marriage, the birth of children, and place of death or burial for the sons of von Arnim, including Seigmund. Either of the unassisted passengers, who departed Hamburg in 1843, could have been Johann or Anton.

A listing of interest is for John George Gotte who disembarked from the 'Warrior' in New South Wales in 1833. Prior to his departure, he was in London from 1829 for four years undergoing a trade (Historical Records, 1968). Gotte's Certificate of Denization, signed by British Prime Minister Gladstone, states that he was born in Rusebeck Westphalia in Prussia in 1806. His naturalisation took place on July 26 1856 aged 48 years old. Three justices of the peace signed certification: John Wild, M. McAlister and Richard Blackwell (Historical Records, 1968). His occupation was listed as Ferrier, which is consistent with the Goethe tradition of Ferriers. Gotte was granted 500 acres funded by Bismarck implying that he was

also an officer and as such entitled to land for services rendered. Again, this is consistent with the military tradition attributed to von Arnim.

Gotte's lawyer is listed as Alfred Lyons, who was based in Marton. This is the same office where the painting *Iphigenia in Taurus* was held before being returned to the Goethe Institute in Weimar. Gotte's history is similar to that of Gotty. They could even be brothers. John George Gotte died in Picton in 1864 (www.K-bardoux.dde/gotty.html).

The accepted year of arrival for Gotty is around 1838 though on further consideration it is proposed that he arrived sometime between 1841 and 1843. He quickly established himself in New Zealand's settler society running the Rutland Hotel in Wanganui in the 1850s. He was also a farmer with 2500 sheep and was known to provide sheep to settlers. He married Puhiwahine, the famous Maori Poetess of Tuwharetoa and Maniapoto lineage, at Poaru Taupo in 1847 and lived with her people at Meringa before moving to Wanganui. They later lived at Matahiwi (Davis, 2012). They had two sons; John and George who were educated at Oxford. George married Te Waiata and John married Riria Te Huruhuru. They had five daughters including Emma Te Kune and one son Oti – who perhaps mirrors Otto, the brother of Achim. Son John, who spoke fluent Maori, lived at Ohinepuhiawe.

Gotty was naturalized in 1851. He received a Victoriae Crown Land Amendment and Extension, or Crown Grant, on August 1 also in 1851 (Victoriae 15, No.10, p.343). He subsequently acquired a portfolio of property notably in Wanganui including section Nos 171, 172 and 72, as well as Wanganui Grants 385 and 387 (Archives Wellington and Land and Survey). He obtained another Crown Grant (No. 1562) on December 8, 1888 (<http://gazette.govt.nz/notice>).

Less known is that Gotty was part of a select cohort of men – “comprising magistrates, civil and military officers and other inhabitants of the town of Auckland – congratulating the appointment of William Hobson as Governor and Commander in Chief of the New Zealand Colony” (Accounts and Paper, 1841). Gotty was on the Auckland Jury List 1842 (Whyte, 2001). His inclusion in the 1842 Jury List is not inconsistent with an estimated arrival in 1841.

Like Woon (2000), Davis (2012) describes Gotty as a modest man, who preferred to be known simply as “John” and not by his title of Count. This was important for searching German or Prussian Counts associated with or having settled in New Zealand. There were few: his relations Count Kuno Rantzau-Breitenburg and Count Augustus Henning von Arnim, the grandson of Bettina and Achim von Arnim, who married the writer Elizabeth Beauchamp.

Gotty was careful in speaking about his connections to Prussia. He is reported as having confided in a Mr Donald Fraser (a farmer) that “he never need be at a loss for money for all he had to do was write to Bismarck and relief would be afforded him but he had too much self-respect to do so” (The Advocate, 1893). What he did not mention is how he was connected to the Prussian Prime Minister. Bismarck’s sister Malwine married Oscar von Arnim. Nor does he mention that his inheritance by title was granted by the Ministry of Prussia (Hirsch, 2013).

His reputation was at times tarnished. *Wanganui Herald* archives cite court appearances for Gotty for ‘intoxication’ (pastpapers.natlib.govt.nz). He was also accused of stealing pigs from Iwikau (Farger, 2007: 29). He died aged 84 in 1893 and is buried at Matahiwi. His death certificate (No 6063) completed by his son John cites Gotty’s father as Anonia von Goethe and his mother as Emma von Goethe. It is timely here to return to the work of Jones.

A Ghostly Spectre

The ghost of Goethe appearing in a dream is the inspiration for reading Goethe texts so as to unlock the secrets contained within.

All my works are but fragments of the grand confession of my life. You will find there in the pages of the books I see around you I have woven my living garment (Ghost of Goethe quoted in Jones, 1961).

The ‘living garment’ of Goethe’s life is to be found in two of his great works *Faust* and *Elective Affinities*. However, the dream is taken from a famous Goethe quote “...all my works are fragments of a great confession...” It is understandable that Jones turns to *Faust* and *Elective Affinities* in which a common theme is the seduction of simple young women by older jaded worldly males – ‘Faust’ and ‘Eduard’ respectively. Contrary to Goethe’s works being ‘confessional’, Sigmund Freud argued that Goethe’s quote is misleading (Jolly, 2013). His poetry is literary: a response to or use of a particular poetic form in which he strives to explain the moral and ethical dilemmas of love and obligation. Goethe says as much in his autobiography *Life of Goethe* to “...understand man in all their conditions...” (p. 545). Thus,

“it is highly improbable that Herzlieb or Brentano are the subject of the poet’s erotic attention” (Williams, 2002: 53).

The story of *Faust* in simple terms is as follows: ‘Faust’ is a disillusioned scientist who makes a deal with the Devil, ‘Mephistopheles’. If ‘Faust’ experiences a pure moment of enlightenment then the Devil will take his soul. ‘Faust’ has an affair with the maiden ‘Gretchen’ who gives birth to his child. ‘Valentine’, the brother of ‘Gretchen’, seeks to revenge the shame wrought on Gretchen for the birth of her illegitimate child. A soldier returning from the battlefield, Valentine confronts ‘Faust’ but is killed by ‘Faust’ who then flees for his safety. Gretchen not able to tolerate the disgrace kills her child (Luke, 1987).

There are two parts to Goethe’s tragic play *Faust*. The first is devoted to the dilemma between reason and subjectivity: the second explores the realm in which ‘Faust’ is forgiven, having been rescued from the devil by angels, and thus mankind (Kaufman, 1963; Taylor, 2005). Luke (1987: ix) writes that *Faust* was conceived in the early 1770s during a period of German literary revival and when Europe stood at a turning point between the Enlightenment and Romanticism. This precedes the birth of an Antonio around 1780.

Part of the difficulty in reading texts is that too much can be read into them. In this context, the theory of ‘Gretchen’ being a pseudonym for Schonemann is not persuasive. According to Luke (1987: xix) an important source for ‘Gretchen’ was the execution of Susanna Brandt for killing her illegitimate child to avoid a public disgrace in 1772. Her brother like Gretchen’s was a soldier. The execution of Brandt in 1772 precedes the engagement of Goethe and Schonemann in 1775. Thus, it is unlikely that Schonemann is the inspiration for ‘Gretchen’. *Faust* is based on Dr Johann C. Faust (1400-1466) a chemist and magician (Luke, 1987: xiv).

The storyline for Goethe’s novel *Elective Affinities* (1809) is as follows: Older couple ‘Eduard’ and ‘Charlotte’, having become disenchanted with married life on their grand estate, set about livening things up by inviting Eduard’s former army friend, the ‘Captain’, to visit. ‘Charlotte’ follows with an invitation to ‘Otilie’, the orphaned daughter of a friend, who attends school with Charlotte’s daughter ‘Lucianna’, to visit as well. ‘Eduard’, like ‘Faust’, is a scientist (Hollingdale, 1978). In a chemical reaction (elective affinity) ‘Eduard’ falls for ‘Otilie’ and the ‘Captain’ falls for ‘Charlotte’. ‘Charlotte’ discovers she is pregnant with Eduard’s child but encourages ‘Eduard’ to go to ‘Otilie’. The child dies tragically from drowning after ‘Otilie’

drops it in a pond. 'Eduard' becomes ill and dies. 'Otilie', grief stricken, follows suit by starving herself to death. 'Charlotte' resolves to bury 'Eduard' and 'Otilie' side by side so that they can be together in death.

'Antonio' is likened to the 'Captain' in *Elective Affinities*. The issue here is that the 'Captain' is a bystander. It is 'Eduard', representative of 'Goethe', who falls in love with 'Otilie' thought to be representative of Herzlieb. Jones refers to Lewes, a Goethe scholar, who describes the 'Captain' and 'Eduard' as a "dramatisation of the two halves of his own character", to imply that Goethe is 'Eduard' and the 'Captain'. But the 'Captain' does not father a child. Goethe as 'Faust' is the father of Antonio and as 'Eduard' is the father of Gotty. This would make Antonio and Gotty brothers not father and son. An unintended consequence of the 'two halves' theory is that Antonio is displaced. 'Eduard' loves 'Otilie' (Herzlieb) but it is with 'Charlotte' (Christiane) with whom he has a child.

Elective Affinities is thought to be about Goethe's struggle to maintain his relationship with his wife Christiane and his conflicting feelings for a young maiden Otilie, symbolic of Herzlieb.

The poet was involved in an affair with Minna Herzlieb... Goethe addressed sonnets to her in *Elective Affinities*... Goethe and Christiane [as Eduard and Charlotte] are but thinly disguised. Otilie in the novel may be readily identified with Minna and the Captain according to our conjecture was Lili's son (Jones, 1961).

It is not difficult to see why Jones is drawn to *Faust* and *Elective Affinities*. A theme common to both is the seduction of simple young women by older jaded worldly males – 'Faust' and 'Eduard'. The older man and younger woman pairing of being captivated in a trance, or 'elective affinity', by simple maidens seems clichéd. Goethe explores here the moral dilemmas of love and obligation more so than to record for perpetuity a covert identity to be gleaned generations later. To be clear: there is good reason for interpreting semi-autobiographical works, so long as this is backed up with reliable or verifiable sources.

The Re-Casting of Antonio and Other Figures

Antonio has been and remains a central figure for identifying Gotty. The death certificate for Gotty records his parents as Anonia and Emma von Goethe. The problem here is that they exist only in claims to their existence without verifiable records to confirm this. If they did, in fact

exist, their erasing from the public record is impressive. An Antonio does exist but not as a son. He is the husband of Maximiliane Brentano with whom Goethe had an affair.

The absence of a public record confirming a child named Antonio does not mean that no such child was born. This is why the focus has been on Schonemann. Indeed, Schonemann, gave birth to her firstborn son in 1779 having married the banker Turckheim in 1778. It is possible for Schonemann to have given birth to an illegitimate child to Goethe in 1780 or that her first son born in 1779 is the son of Goethe. However, Schonemann's marriage to the banker Turckheim as well as sources noting that Goethe and Schonemann were reconciled on a platonic basis are missing. "...Goethe called on Lili who was happily married and had just become a mother of a baby" (Carus, 1915: 8).

Biographical elements thought to be representative of Schonemann are read into Goethe's novel *Stella*. For instance, the deceased mother of 'Cecelia' is seen as symbolic of Schonemann since her mother was also deceased (Jones, 1961). Furthermore, the death of her child is read as a template for cloaking or protecting the illegitimate child (of Schonemann) from the cruelty of stigma in a world of polite society [my emphasis].

The mother of Cecelia was a widow and the baby of Fernando and Cecelia dying could have been contrived by the great poet to weave the biographical element into the drama with an impenetrable mist (Jones, 1961).

A baby is born but dies: perhaps a symbolic means for putting the paternity of the child to rest. Such would be the case for Gotty. The "impenetrable mist" is beautiful in its evocation and I can agree that biographical elements may be present since Goethe had several children with Christiane many of whom died in childbirth. In this context, the loss of these children could easily be the genesis for the death of babies in Goethe's prose. As Luke (1987: xix) points out, the death of children was representative of a particular motif in eighteenth century German literary works – a pressing legal and moral issue at the time. As already mentioned, Goethe was sympathetic to Susanna Brandt, who was executed for killing her child.

It is quite possible that Bettina is the inspiration for the orphan child 'Cecelia' in *Stella* and that Maximiliane is the inspiration for the mother of 'Cecelia'. Bettina was an orphan following the death of her mother Maximiliane aged 37. Other similarities relevant to Bettina may be read through *Elective Affinities* such as her daughter named Gisela Otilie and son Kunemund, who

died from drowning. Further to this, potential clues for eliciting relationships with women important to Goethe in his autobiography *Truth and Poetry* (1848) are missed in particular his confession to an affair with Maximiliane von La Roche, the wife of Antonio Brentano.

Antonio is taken to be a cavalry officer in the Prussian army but this could not be confirmed because relevant archives were destroyed in an air raid on Poldsdam April 14 1945. Due to the loss of archives, attention turns to the Battle of Jena, October 14 1806. It is said that a message was delivered to Goethe to assure him that his home in Weimar would not be “pillaged” by an invading Napoleon in 1808. The young officer who delivered this message was Antonio (Jones, 1961). An alternative explanation for Napoleon’s sparing of Goethe is that Napoleon admired Goethe’s *The Sorrows of Werther*. Further to this, his partner Christiane Vulpius made an impassioned plea on his behalf. Goethe in turn admired Napoleon and would defend him to his fellow countrymen (Safranski, 2017).

As has been pointed out, Antonio is Antonio (Brentano) who descends from the Toccia line of Emperor Charles IV. This line was elevated to the rank of Count, which makes Gotty a Count on both his Brentano and von Arnim descent lines. Even though Goethe created havoc for Brentano, with his frequent visits to Maximiliane, it can be said that Goethe retained a degree of respect for Brentano. For example, whether by coincidence or design, Goethe names the protagonist public servant in his play *Tasso Tuquato* (1780) based on the Italian poet Tasso, who chafed at conventions of 16th century court life, ‘Antonio Montecatino’. ‘Tasso’ and ‘Montecatino’ represent the struggle between idealism and pragmatism.

The mother of Gotty is taken to be Wilhemine ‘Minna’ Herzlieb (1789 – 1865), the adopted daughter of Jena Publisher Freidrich Fromann. Herzlieb met Goethe at Weimar and is said to have embarked on an affair with him in 1808 (Garland and Garland, 1997: 290; Grasche, 2007: 61). This would make Gotty the son of Goethe. In 1821, Herzlieb married Karl Walch (Garland and Garland, 1997: 373). An unhappy marriage, Minna died childless in an asylum (Krell, 1997). Scholars of Goethe have questioned the notion of a love affair, arguing instead that Minna and Goethe were not lovers (Krell, 1997: ix; Carus, 1915: 56). Part of the confusion surrounding Herzlieb’s relationship with Goethe can be traced back to his writing in which Herzlieb is the subject of his prose, later published by Bettina. But, again, this is taken literally since Goethe was greatly fond of his daughter in-law, also named Minna, and it is conceivable that she is the source of his inspiration. In any case, the most glaring oversight is Herzlieb is

recorded as having died childless irrespective of whether she was involved with Goethe or his purported son Antonio.

Re-Defining ‘Max’

Goethe’s recognised grandson Maximilian, born 1820, is thought to be Gotty even though Gotty’s birth year is said to be 1808 or 1809. In the absence of a birth certificate, Jones (1960: 14) refers to records held by the Mormon Church purportedly revealing Gotty’s baptismal name to be Johann Maximilian – or ‘Max’. He cautions on its reliability though since this ‘Max’ was born in 1839, not 1820 or 1808/09. Yet, the Mormon baptismal record is not refuted given that the name ‘Max’ is an integral part of the Gotty narrative. This is irrespective of the fact that Maximilian is the name of Goethe’s legitimate grandson born to August in 1820. This ‘Max’ completed a doctor’s degree in law at Heidelberg in 1845 (Carus, 1915: 64). He became a Baron in the Prussian Court in 1850. He died in Leipzig and is buried at Weimar (Gajek, 1964).

The illegitimate ‘Max’ was born ten years before the legitimate Max in 1820. This begs the question of why a legitimate son would be given the same baptismal name as an illegitimate son. Descendants of Gotty question the fact that the legitimate Max is buried in Germany (Bryan, 1998). This implies they think that there is only one ‘Max’. But, this would make Gotty a legitimate not illegitimate grandson. His mother would be Otilie and his father August. If Gotty is the legitimate ‘Max’, Antonio, Schonemann and Herzlieb become irrelevant.

Other factors do not add up either. ‘Max’ attended university and was deported for political strife (Jones, 1961, Footnote 11) or for killing a fellow student as a result of a duel (Footnote 12) requiring him to ‘flee’ to escape prison (Footnote 14). The legitimate Max would have been eighteen when he departed in 1838, little time for university or a military career.

Gotty supplied guns to dissident Maori during their incursions with the Crown in the 1860s, which is indicative of his military background. This is consistent with a birthyear of 1808/09 and of officers being eligible to resettle in New Zealand as reward for their efforts (Records, Public Library Macquarie, 1968). His departure may also be explained by the fact that the Lutheran faith was outlawed in Prussia in 1823 leading to German migration to the US, Australia and New Zealand (Old Lutherans). The first migration was to Moutere in Nelson followed by Auckland, Taranaki, and the Rangitikei where Gotty settled. One certainty: Gotty’s

departure comes well after the first publication of *Faust* in 1808. Thus, *Faust* does not explain Gotty's 'leaving' or his parents. For that, one must turn to the Italian House of Brentano.

An Italian Sojourn: Unveiling the Grandmother and Mother of Gotty

Ask to me, what is my life but a profound mirror of your own...

Bettina von Arnim to Goethe (cited in Portraits of Men)

It is acknowledged that Goethe had a liaison with a married woman (Pizer, 2011: 135). This woman was Maximiliane Brentano married to the Italian merchant Pietro Antonio Brentano, who founded Anton Maria Brentano and Son. Goethe travelled to Italy during the late 1770s and was received by the Brentanos having first met Maximiliane in 1774, then 16 years of age.

Maximiliane is said to have enjoyed a brief but passionate affair with Goethe during his Werther period with Goethe admitting to this affair in his autobiography *Truth and Poetry* (1848: 485-490). Maximiliane is described as "Goethe's girlfriend" whereas Swafford (2003) goes further to claim that she was Goethe's first love. Carus (1915: 102) observes that Brentano was a jealous husband with "painful scenes were occasioned by Goethe's visits to their home" (Goethe, 1848: 564). A daughter, Bettine, Elizabeth Catharina Ludovica Magdalena was born April 4 1785 from their affair. Bettina is the mother of Gotty. Maximiliane, exhausted after the birth of her 12th child died aged 37, in 1793. Her mother took care of three of her children including Bettina.

Goethe's relationship with Maximiliane can be traced back to his relationship with her mother, Sophie von la Roche (nee Gutterman), a novelist with whom he corresponded. Goethe extended his correspondence to include Sophie's daughter, Maximiliane, and granddaughter Bettina. Sophie married Georg von La Roche, the illegitimate son of Count Friedrich von Stadion-Warhasen. They had eight children: Maximiliane their firstborn (1756 – 1793), Fritz, Louise, Carl and Franz Wilhelm.

Goethe's time with the Brentanos underscores his sojourn to Italy, part of his Werther period of biographical and autobiographical writing. In: *The Sorrows of Werther*, Goethe explored the effects of triangular relationships such as between himself and the Brentanos (Jack, 2014). The character 'Werther', based on Karl Wilhelm Jerusalem, commits suicide after his advances to a married woman are rejected.

Bettina, aged twenty-two, met Goethe in 1807. Bettina and Goethe were close leading to speculation that they were having an affair (Huneker, 2015). Some question this arguing instead that their relationship was platonic. This seems more plausible. Her love of Goethe was not sexual but familial. She had already developed a close bond with his mother Catherine Textor before meeting the son (Sainte, 1917). Their relationship was intimate to the extent that Catherine came to rely on Bettina for news of her son. Some observed the closeness of the relationship between Goethe and Bettina leading to speculation that she was his daughter.

It has been conjectured that she (Bettina) may in fact have been Goethe's daughter: their relationship certainly seems to have been an intense but platonic one: she once fell asleep in his lap (cited in Moore, 2011).

Bettina's husband, Achim von Arnim whom she married in 1811, was supportive of her relationship with Goethe encouraging them to spend time together. Bettina, like mother and grandmother before her, corresponded with him. They become estranged, however, as Bettina alienated Goethe by arguing with his wife Christiane. Bettina continued to seek out Goethe. In an attempt to assuage her bruised feelings, she busied herself with Goethe's sonnets (inspired by Herzlieb) of which she is accused of passing them off as letters to herself (Walker, 1993). Bettina was possessive of Goethe indicated by the fact that she built a monument to him.

The proximity of Bettina's relationship to Goethe is hinted at in her work *Goethe: Correspondence with a Child* published three years after his death in 1835. Bettina saw her life reflected in Goethe which is captured in the quote "ask to me..." This is about as close as she goes to declaring her paternity without explicitly saying so. Bettina is famed as a poet, novelist, and crusader for social equality. She was part of society and was on friendly terms with Beethoven and Karl Marx. She is regarded as one of the most important women of the 19th century. For her 150th anniversary, a special exhibition of her works was held at the Goethehaus in Frankfurt Main in 2009 (www.von-arnim.net). Countess von Arnim's image graced the (now out of circulation) German Five Deutsch Note. She is the unacknowledged daughter of Goethe. As such, her children are the unacknowledged grandchildren of Goethe.

Old Prussian Nobility: Unveiling the Father of Gotty

Count Achim von Arnim (1781 – 1831) is the father of Gotty. The honorific 'von' once representative of hereditary title is still permitted though not the means of entitlement. In Northern Europe, with the exception of royal families, a Count is the highest noble title. In

Prussia, Graf/Grafin is the equivalent of Count. Born in Berlin, Achim descends from a Uradel (noble Prussian family) dating back to Brandenburg 1204 (Urbach, 2008: 41). His father, Joachim Erdmann von Arnim (1741 – 1804) was the Royal Prussian Chamberlain (Kammerherr) and Royal Envoy in Copenhagen and Dresden. Joachim was also the Director of the Berlin theatre. Joachim's mother, Amalia Carolina Labes (1761 – 1781) died three weeks after his birth.

Von Arnim descends from the House of Saxe Coburg, a branch of the Wettin House, from which the House of Windsor originates. The current Prince of Saxe-Coburg is Andreas Michale Friedrich Hans Arnim Siegrid Hubetus. In *Heirs of Europe* Elward (2010) lists numerous references to von Arnims including the children of Bettina and Achim. The von Arnims took extraordinary steps to retain their hereditary title. Georg Abraham von Arnim heir to the Boitzenburg (ancestral seat) in the early C18th insisted that his daughter marry her cousin, also a von Arnim, in order that the Boitzenburg remain in the family inheritance (Berdahl, 1998: 126). It is instructive that after much protest, at the loss of title, Seigmund received the mark of nobility from ministerial officials of the Prussian monarchy (Hirsch, 2013). This recognises his status and contribution as a von Arnim to Prussian society with successive generations serving with distinction militarily. His father Achim was a captain during the Napoleonic wars. He was also a prolific writer and was encouraged by Bettina's brother Clemens, himself an acclaimed writer, to move from the sciences to the arts (Achim von Arnim Encyclopedia.com).

Bettina and Achim had seven children. Friemund Johann (1812 – 1863), Seigmund Lucas (1813 – 1890), Friemund Anton (1815 – 1883), Kunemund (1817 – 1835), Maximiliane (1818 – 1894), Armagart Catharina (1820 – 1880) and Ottilie Beate Gisela (1827 – 1889). The name Friemund originates in Achim von Arnim's celebration of the French Revolution.

The availability online of records, in English, for the surviving sons is sparse whereas much is known of the daughters. Armagart married Albert von Fleming, a Prussian diplomat. They had two daughters Elizabeth Fleming (the writer) and Irene Forbes Mosse. Mosse first married her cousin Captain Roderich Wilhelm of Oriola, the son of Bettina's daughter Maximiliane and husband Graf Oriola, divorcing him to marry the English Lieutenant Forbes Mosse.

Grandson, Count August Henning von Arnim married Mary Annette Beauchamp who wrote under the name Elizabeth von Arnim. The youngest, Gisela, married one of the Grimm brothers. An early Grimm tale was written for Bettina's eldest son Friemund Johann. Like her mother and grandmother Gisela was devoted to Goethe. The grand tradition of literary works cut across the integrated family branches – Goethe, Brentano and von Arnim – to Gotty and his sons. Not to be forgotten, Gotty's wife Puhiwahine, was a poet of great standing too.

Judging by his correspondence with his mother, Seigmund (Gotty) like his mother was an eloquent writer (see further on). Seigmund enrolled in law in 1831 studying alongside Otto von Bismarck the German militarist and prime minister, at Gottingen in Berlin. Later, following his cousin Carl Friedrich von Savigny, “he set off on a journey abroad to become a worldly man” (Hirsch, 2013). Whilst in Paris, he receives Bettina's letter of recommendation to Goethe. Goethe was enchanted by his young guest (Pizer, 2011: 134). He grants Seigmund not only an audience, but, “for five days, participation in a common lunch in a small circle” (Hirsch, 2013). This is the subject of the play *Death in Weimar* (Henning, 2003). Part of Bettina's objective, in dispatching Seigmund, was to retrieve her letters from Goethe (www.fragmentum). She published these letters in *Goethe's Correspondence with a Child* in 1835.

Seigmund is described by a sister as being the “most handsome” of the brothers. This does not surprise given that the much-treasured photograph of Gotty which is proudly displayed in the Parewahawaha Marae in Bulls, shows a strikingly handsome man of noble bearing.

A Mother's Plea to her Son

Bettina corresponded with Goethe and wrote about Goethe. She also wrote of her sons, devoting a three-volume compilation of her works to them: the first to Johann, the second to Seigmund and the third to Anton. *Du bist mir Vater und Bruder und Son* translated *You are my Father, Brother and Son* is dedicated to Johann. On face value, this could be read as a statement of paternity to Goethe. Here, again, Bettina plays the game of subterfuge in hinting at a paternity without being clear about it. Not only did she write about her sons, she wrote to them. Published correspondence between Bettina and Seigmund is illuminating. Bunzel and Landfester (2012 touch on the earnestness within which she sent Seigmund to Goethe.

...Forget, forget and embrace me in this child... it will not leave Germany without being blessed by your sight... (Bunzel and Landfester, 2012 cited in Hirsch, 2013).

Bettina is beside herself that Seigmund, as she writes, is the last “earthly object” which Goethe takes with him in the hereafter. The news of his death touched her infinitely (Hirsch, 2013). She is anxious for news from Seigmund who replies:

Dear mother!

You ask me to tell you what Goethe has said about you, and you are rightly astonished that I do not tell you anything of the kind; But I am also, for I thought I had already written to you from Weimar, that he praised you for your talent, and that I would be given a concession to you, that does not seem much to you ...

Herein is a classic example of a grandson abiding with the sensibility of his grandfather, a man who wrote widely on humanity, yet kept private matters private.

... And if you had seen the man as he was no longer living in the world but merely leafed through it as if in a book, you would be grateful to him for his great friendliness, according to all your circumstances, and after of our whole family. (Hirsch, 2013).

There is an intriguing hint at the need for discretion in his correspondence to his mother.

I do not want to owe my future to any man, but to conceal it for myself (Hirsch, 2013).

Hirsch (2013) wrote that Seigmund felt stifled by his family name and craved anonymity. His relationship with his mother was volatile given that he was outspoken in his anti-Semitic politics from which his mother tried to persuade him. They later reconciled. Following a successful stint in business in Stockholm. Seigmund returned to Prussia only to depart again in 1841 under Seigsmund von Angen arriving in New Zealand in 1843. The listings for ‘All Brandenburg Prussia Emigration Records’ (Ancestry.com) record a Seigsmund von Angen born in 1812 and dying in 1890 departing for New Holland (New Zealand) in 1841. Seigsmund von Angen parries with Seigmund von Arnim born 1812/13 and dying in 1890.

An important related clue revolves around the painting *Iphigenia in Taurus*, a reworking of Euripides’ Greek tragedy of the same name. Painted in oil by Georg Melchoir Kraus in 1779, it represents Goethe as Orestes, the brother of Iphigenia, and Corona Schroter as Iphigenia. The portrait made its way to New Zealand and was held in the offices of the lawyer Alfred Lyons in Marton. Jones (1960) refers to a Professor Wahl, the Director of the National Museum at Weimar, having traced the painting to New Zealand. This is backed up by the Pennsylvania

newspaper *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (1936: 15), which reported that ‘the portrait [Iphigenia] has been traced in New Zealand and secured’ (www.newspapers).

The obvious question then is how did it get to New Zealand? It is known that Seigmund spent six days in the company of Goethe prior to his death in 1830 (Pizer, 2011). It is conceivable that Goethe bequeathed the painting *Iphigenia in Taurus* to Seigmund. There is precedent. Another portrait, *Goethe Family of Frankfurt*, painted in 1762 by the Darmstadt artist, J. C. Seekatz, was bequeathed to Bettina after Goethe’s death. She left it to her son-in-law, Herman Grimm (Carus, 1915: 70), the famous writer of fairy tales.

Eloquent writing is an artistry that crosses generations. As is the subject matter of ‘electricity’. Goethe wrote *Elective Affinities* (1808), Achim von Arnim wrote a theory of electrical phenomena *Erscheinungen* (1799) and John Gotty Jnr wrote *Electra* (1914). Here is the first stanza:

Oh, hail Electra, goddess bright...
Indeed, it is a glorious sight...
Now darkest night is turned to day
And every heart is made light and gay...

Not ‘Plain’ At All: The Hallmarks of an Alternative Theory of Paternity

This research, years in the making, has been extraordinarily challenging in part due to the necessity of having to rely on online sources, often incomplete, translated from German into English. Nonetheless, I believe its core premise to be ready for public dissemination.

Not a son was born but a daughter. The paternity for Prussian John Gotty, who settled in New Zealand, was closely guarded for two reasons: his birth challenges the understanding on the end of the Goethe ‘line’ and it speaks the unspoken on the commoner status of his mother who married into Prussian nobility. Though championed for her writing and contribution to justice in Germany, a famous woman in her own right, Gotty concealed his paternity due to his mother’s illegitimate birth and to her status as a commoner.

All, from Goethe to Gotty, held to a pact of secrecy. Even so, Italy is the key for unlocking the truth to a reasoned claim linking Gotty to Goethe and to Achim von Arnim. From Goethe’s relationship with Maximiliane Brentano, said to be the ‘love of his life’, a child Bettina was

born. She and husband Count Achim von Arnim are the parents of Gotty. That is to say, their son Seigmund von Arnim is Gotty. The relevant points to be drawn are summarised as such:

- Three generations of women – writer Sophie von La Roche, daughter Maximiliane, and granddaughter Bettina von Arnim (nee Brentano) – with whom Goethe corresponded
- Antonio is Pietro Antonio Brentano, Italian merchant, married to Maximiliane
- Goethe had an affair with Maximiliane, said to be the ‘love of his life’.
- Bettina von Arnim is the illegitimate daughter of Goethe and Maximiliane Brentano
- Bettina was close to Goethe’s mother Elizabeth who would beseech Bettina for news of her son
- Goethe’s mother was Elizabeth Catherina; Bettina was Catherina Elizabeth
- Bettina’s son Seigmund was one of a few to have a private audience with Goethe in the days before his death
- This the subject of the play *Death in Weimar*
- Bettina is the author of *Goethe’s Correspondence with a Child* published after his death
- Bettina lies next to Goethe at Wiepersdorf, which is part of the von Arnim estate
- Goethe works of art were bequeathed to Bettina
- Seigmund left Germany soon after Goethe’s death travelling through Europe
- A Seigmund von Angen arrived in New Holland (New Zealand) in 1841 or 1843
- Bettina was responsible for building a monument to Goethe (Drewitz, 1982)
- An exhibition of Bettina’s works was held at Goethe Haus in Wiepersdorf
- The von Arnims are Counts: Gotty was recognised as a Count
- Seigmund and Bismarck were related by marriage
- The name Kune is consistent with Kunegund and Kunemund (von Arnim family names)
- Gotty was member of colonial judicial system which is consistent with the von Arnims who were philosophers, writers, jurists, diplomats, military leaders and scientists.

In terms of genealogical traits, there are discernible similarities in terms of the shape of Bettina’s eyes: big and dark much like Goethe’s. Alas, no images could be found for Seigmund whereas numerous images of his parents and family members are widely available. It is intriguing, however, that the sole image for Gotty found online can be likened to that for his diplomat cousin Harry von Arnim.

Gotty did not wish for his birth name to be known. Whilst I am mindful of this it is important to underline the weaknesses in the Jones’ thesis which, to do so, requires ‘naming’ him. In any case, he remains John Gotty as he preferred to be known.

Concluding Observations

The hand writes what the heart dictates. (Puhiwahine).

This article builds on the pioneering work of Pei Te Hurinui Jones. It doing so, it presents a new and exciting discovery. It I anticipated that the contents of this paper will be a surprise to many readers and that it will draw criticism from many quarters but hopefully not ridicule. In

developing this alternative theory, I have stuck to facts as best as they can be relied upon and, though incomplete, it is written from the heart. I invite others to examine, to test its veracity. I would be honoured if someone else would, in kind, examine my theory in order to uncover the ‘truth’. The descendants of Gotty deserve nothing less.

*Author notes

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