

LECTURE SUMMARY:

Title: Surname Changes in Northwestern Germany

Level: All

Duration: 60-90 minutes

Description:

During the feudal era, hundreds of large estate farms were established in Western Hannover, Oldenburg, Westphalia, and Lippe-Detmold. On many of those estates, the surname of the owner did not change for over a thousand years, though blood lines almost always did. The conditions under which people lived on these estate farms and the patterns for surname changes and acquisition are discussed in this presentation. The focus is the effect such a widespread complex system has on the tracing of family lines in this part of Germany.