

Adolphus Johann Friedrich Petri-Palmedo 1784-1859

Adolphus Petri was born in Rostock, Mecklenberg, Germany in 1784. His father Joachim Christian Petri was the first preacher at the Marienkirche in Rostock and his wife, née Crumbiegel, one from of the foremost respected senatorial families in Rostock.

He studied theology in Göttingen, where he was close friends with Johann Friedrich Hebart, the post-Kantian philosopher and the older Grote brothers and then became their and their younger brother Carl's tutor in Jühnde, where he won the love of their oldest daughter Charlotte. She recognized his many intellectual talents and the goodness of his heart and preferred him over other suitors from nobler families. The aristocracy in Hannover did not approve this connection, and even the bride was not entirely free of pride and convinced my father to pursue their well-being in the service of the English. Although not of a noble family, Adolph was beloved by the Grote family and her father the Hannoverian Minister of State, Otto Ulrich approved of the union. He was given a fiction title of Count Palmedo and the bridal couple moved to Italy. There was some scandal about this I'm sure!

In Malta, he was employed as secretary with the English delegation, his oldest son Ulrich was born in 1810. The English had to flee Malta, and they journeyed on a military vessel to Sardinia where they suffered through a terrible war. All import and export was barred, and Sardinia experienced a high increase in prices.

In November of 1813, the family moved from Malta and a military vessel brought them to Menorca, to where he accompanied Admiral Sir Sidney Smith. On this journey, Nenny, was born and baptized in Port Mahon on Menorca. The Admiral was her Godfather and Louis Philipp, future King of France, with his wife, who lived in exile and shared the same level on the ship with us, was the witness.

From Menorca, they traveled to England, via Paris. For several years, they lived quite comfortably in Genoa in the palace of the English delegation.

When the chaos of war had died down a bit, Adolph was made English Consul in Bastia, where many a worry came true and 3 little sons died. In 1819, Lotte was born.

In 1821, the delegate Mr. Noel Hill requested to have him join him in Turin, and because of the mild climate, the family moved to Bagni di Pisa, near Pisa, with the children. There, Carlino was born.

In 1821 after little Carlino's birth, Charlotte desired to be closer to Adolph, and they traveled to Genoa. However, Charlotte fell ill, and died from Pneumonia in Genoa.

Adolph was left as a single father in Italy with 5 little kids, Carlino was left with a wet nurse. At this point these German children really didn't speak German and Italian was their first language and they were all fluent in English. They lived for a while in Mr. Hill's lovely, large country home, cared for by Rose and a maid. Adolph was often in town with the delegation, and they all grew a bit wild.

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Adolph realized he would not be able to raise the children with his busy schedule. He brought the youngest children, Carlino, Lotte, Nenny and Adolphine back to Germany. Carlino and Lotte went to live with their Grandmother Charlotte (nee von Plato) who was living in Brechelshof with her daughter Caroline and husband Carl von Richthofen.

“We now traveled to Brechelshof where we soon felt at home despite our lack of German; and the children there soon liked us for our free-spiritedness, wildness and liveliness. Our little Lotte (3) remained at Brechelshof under the specific care of our Aunt Caroline v. Plato (62), our Grandmother Grote’s sister, and we traveled on to Father’s relatives in Rostock.”

Ulrich stayed with his father and studied at the University in Genoa and spent time with his cousin Adolph Goepel (became famous mathematician). Ada and Nenny travelled on with Adolph to his mother in Rostock and they stayed a while there. Nenny eventually went to stay with Adolph’s brother the mayor of Neukalden. Ada went to live with a relative who lived in Delmenhorst, Widow von Koch, née von Geiso (47) with a son (10) and daughter (6).

Adolph was in the English Diplomat service until 1847 when he travelled with his two sons Ulrich and Carl to America. Both Ulrich and Carl were physicians. Ulrich set up shop in Brooklyn and Carl relocated to South Carolina.

Adolph returned to Germany and died at his daughter Ada’s home in Schnega in 1859.