

Die Kirche Rued
(The Church of Rued)

Vorwort(Foreword) rejoices that the church has been renovated, and features the 84th Psalm: "How lovely are thy dwellings, o Lord of Hosts, etc..."

(p. 5)

Die Kirche als Baudenkmal (The Church as a Monument): p. 6:

This article discusses the historical facts that were learned during the renovation of the church, as different aspects of prior building activity were discovered. Excavations took place in 1954 under the direction of Dr. R. Bosch, and an ecclesiastic continuum of over 1000 years was established. Within the present-day church the surrounding walls of a pre-Romanic structure were unearthed, which was much smaller. Then evidences of a second Romanic church from the 11th or 12th century came to light, which had taken over the choir apse from its predecessor. The third rebuilding was a Gothic structure around 1500, thereby attaining the size it enjoys today. Since that time and until the renovation of 1962 there were no basic design changes.

In spite of its variegated history, the structure today shows a remarkable state of unity and proportion. In the simple geometric relationships of the form the art of the Middle Ages can be seen.

p. 7: A double quadratic nave surrounds the Gothic polygonal choir, in whose surface an equilateral triangle can be drawn. In 1682 there was a change made in Post-Gothic architecture affecting the main aisle and middle choir window. The recent renovation of modern time attempted to renew rather than change many of the original features . . .

Changes were necessitated by the use of a new, larger organ, and thus the lovely Barock organ housing had to be scrapped. It is further hoped that the somewhat mundane plastered roof of today may in the future be replaced by a lovely wooden one.

Certain works of art in the church bear witness to the past. Especially the cabinetry of the Renaissance and Baroque should be highly praised. There remains also from the renovation of 1500 a baptismal font hewn from sandstone, one of the oldest in the Canton, which is almost modern with its simple, eight-sided chalice form. There is choir stooing scarcely 100 years more recent, the so-called "Göttistüel" (God stools). A work of a local master, Rudolf May (p. 9:) made at the birth of his first son (footnote: Carl Friedrich Albrecht, born 25 May 1792, died in a climbing accident 2 September 1806 near Goldau) is the pulpit made in 1792. See: p. 8, left picture: Pulpit(supposedly 1792), to the left behind it the grave plaque of Magdalena von May-Manuel) Typically Baroque, it has an uninterrupted classical stairway, richly-profiled standing area and a "sound lid" above. Further grave markers mentioned on p. 9 are those of previous Castle and Patron Lords of Rued, who were buried in the church here. The work on these markers were often artistic and included long Baroque epitaphs in a very few cases. One of them makes reference to the transience of the earthly. The article invites the reader to see the historical treasures of the church with the words: "He who has eyes, let him see!"

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Die Baugeschichte der Kirche Rued von den Anfängen bis heute
(The Building History of the Church Rued from the Beginnings to Today)

p. 9:

As mentioned before, remains have been found of a pre-Romanic church, whose dates of origin can not be figured exactly. It was probably first a Castle's little chapel on the hill of the castle. In any case we can be sure that the church has been on its present foundation at least since the year 1000. It was originally about half the size of the present church, however.

p. 10:

Here further building specifications of probably little interest are given, except that the nave was probably originally of wood, which was so readily available in this vicinity.

p. 11:

Floorplan of the church 1953. (Results of the excavations have been entered, though other later changes are also entered.)

1. plaster remnants / 2. Beam remnants / 3. Choir stages for expansion of the choir / 4. Choir stages, wooden beams / 5. Split (earthquake?) / 6. Markwart von Rued / 7. Margarethe von Rinach / 8. external ornament of the apse / 9. point where a Romanic -style brick / 10. ^{was found}

place where a fragment of a glass portraiture was found / 11. place where individual bones were found / 12. Doors which have been walled in / 13. Romanesque windows / 14. baptismal font (stone) P.S. The grave chamber (6) and a portion of the old foundations in the nave can be viewed by the public.

The inscription under the illustration on p. 10 states:

Dr. R. Bosch's reconstructed conception of the oldest (pre-Romanesque) church.

The inscription at the bottom of p. 13, referring to the picture on p. 12 reads:

This is how things appeared during the excavations in the interior of the church. To the right of the baptismal stone the grave chambers, running from below in an arch are the foundations of the apse.

p. 13:

Here the grave of Margaretha von Rinach is discussed with its lovely epitaph of 14. August 1360; today the grave plaque (epitaph) graces the north wall of the nave. In one of the grave chambers was found a well-preserved skeleton, which was identified by an anthropologist as a very powerful man. The assumption is made that this was the Knight Markwart von Rued, while his wife (above Maggie) was laid at his left side. There was found some of the grave chambers yet another skeleton, which because of its poor state of preservation could not be commented on intelligently. In deeper strata and with other directions of orientation were found remains of skeletons from the time before the erection of the Romanesque apse.

p. 13 (contd.)

Only a small part of the foundations from early times were laid bare, but these can be viewed upon demand. Further excavation on the nave indicated and indicated that two different building periods are to be differentiated. (Romanesque 11-12 century & Gothic around 1500).

p. 14:

On this page such morsels of information come to light as the fact that the very moist soil made necessary the support of the eastern wall by tree roots during the first half of the 16th century. These of course became very soft and mushy during the following centuries. Under the foundation, as a result, empty chambers had arisen. Shifting and swaying of the not-so-steady soil may then account for the splits found here and there in the foundation, rather than earthquakes.

p. 15:

The inscription on the picture at the top reads:

The old over-decking has been hacked off, the Romanesque masonry work has come to light. Immediately under the edge of the roof, the location of the Romanesque windows has been indicated with white markers.

On the text of this page, it indicates that for a great while this church was the closest to Solothurn, and also speaks of further moisture damages, all of which makes it clear why renovations became necessary.

p. 16:

Here the not - uninteresting fact is told that a new organ was about to be purchased in 1805, when suddenly the Napoleonic era required the call forth of young men - not to mention funds - and therefore the organ had to wait. In 1807 they got around to getting their organ. Other organ interludes follow, and the second paragraph goes into the successful interior renovation of 1953. The third paragraph below tells of the smallest bell in the church which comes from the 15th century and bears the inscription: O rex glorie Christe veni cum pace (O glorious King Christ come with thy peace). A second bell was foundry-ed in 1725 and until 1879 there was a double-voiced chiming to be heard from aloft the small village church. The second bell was supplied by the Von May family. The inscription in verse is found at the bottom of the page:

Although I'm not made of gold /
As Aarons bell in the priest's costume /
Yet still I call to Israel /
That each soul might become God's offering.

A

p. 17:

Under that inscription was found:

"Out of fire melted and folded, by Sl. Kuhn in Zofingen molded. Anno 1725." This bell was replaced in 1879, for it had split. The company Rüetschi in Aarau offered to take the split bell and to make a three-bell harmonic set. Today's large bell was originally destined for the Catholic church in Canton Lucerne, but through Ruëtschli and Sons was made available to our church. The inscriptions on both sides read in Latin: "Bell of the archangel. Messenger of Heaven who leads the children to the Holy Bath (baptism), lead them after all into the Heavenly heights." and on the other side: "Behold, Jesus, who once embraced the children with such great love and pressed them to himself." Under that: "Poured in the year 1879." The middle bell today bears the inscription: "Blessed are they that hear and keep God's word. Poured in Aargau 1879."

The Church Renovation (Die Kirchenrenovation)

p. 17

Note the name of the first of the seven-membered Building Commission: Bolliger Max, Master Cabinetmaker. (Last names are given first).

p. 18:

Here the two tasks are discussed:

1. Choice of an architect, who will have the duty of working out a project for the total renovation.
2. financing (what else)

Hans Hauri was selected for number one, the Swiss Franc was chosen for number two.

p. 19:

Inscription under the picture: The entire church scaffolded-in 1964.

p. 20:

Mauerentfeuchtung is a good word meaning "Wall-de-dampifying" and discusses the age-old problem at Rue of keeping things dry and solid and on the up-and-up.

p. 21:

Here the new organ and its construction and mounting are discussed. I wonder if their expert H. Holliger, is related to Bolliger?

p. 22:

Here they get into the Swiss franc again, with Kostenvoranschlag (estimate of costs) and Kreditgewährung (Attainment of credit). The cost estimate is broken down at the bottom of the page into its constituent parts.

p. 23: inscription to picture:

Setting up the vertical middle-beam (made from one piece!)
for the roof-seating of the tower, 1964.

p. 24:

Masonry work / Window framing / Sundial

pp. 25-26:

Roof and tower (tower-let) / Front roofing and passages upward
to the galleries / Galleries / Paint work: NB the paint work was
done by the Firm P. Bolliger in Schöffland. / Electrical installations
(since those in the Romanesque church were inadequate)

The inscription on p. 28 under the picture reads:

The interior of the church before 1962.

pp. 29 to 36:

On these pages the new organ is discussed, laid out, dissected
by pipes and stops and pedals. The expert on this subject, Hans
Holliger (any relation?) really let out all the stops.

pp. 34-35 are the nicest in the booklet, and say a lot.

p. 37:

Zeugen der Vergangenheit (Witnesses of the Past)

The history of the church and the church congregation is not
retractible from that of the noble families residing on the Rued castle.
The church itself was no doubt a donation of the Noblemen of Rued.
Again and again the governor of Rued were the Patrons of the church
as well. Certain items of art and history in the church bear mute
testimony to this relationship of church and state.

Grave plaque (epitaph) of Margaretha von Rinach

p. 38 carried Margaretha von Rinach's Latin epitaph. She was the
wife of the knight Markwart von Rued. We read from history that a
close relation soon after (1415) gave over the Castle of Rued to the
advancing Bernese without resistance, and that he and his family's
possessions were thereby protected. Margaretha's tombstone is to
be seen on p. 39.

p. 40:

United coat of Arms Büttikon / Effinger. At the time of marriage
of Knight Georg von Büttikon and Kungold von Effinger (Wildegge), a
glass work of art was prepared with their combined coats of arms. In
1520, Jacob (Georg's brother) sold the Castle of Rued to Glado May, in
whose family it remained until the end of the 19th century. (Von May
family).

Coat of Arms of Glado May: This is especially important, as
Glado (Claudio) May was the father of the entire line of Von Mays
who played such an important role in the history of Rued.

Coat of Arms of Benedict Mey. Benedict was a son of Glado, and took
over the rule after the death of his father. Many of these glass images

were horribly defaced in some hail storms before the end of the 16th century. When repaired, some other artistic items were added, such as the people berating Job and the prophet Jonas being spit ashore by the whale, since you can't keep a good man down. The inscription reads: "Benedict Mey, anno Domini 1534." All of these lovely items are to be found, by the way, not in the church at Rued, but in the Landes Museum in Zürich (inventory numbers are given for the curious). The congregation got 3000 Francs for them and had a stained glass work of art made of Jesus and the Rich Disciple. The Zürich Museum has made it clear that Rued can count on never getting the originals back, though fairly decent copies could be made.

pp. 42-46 show these works of art with the incorporated coats of arms.

p. 47:

Coat of arms of Katharina May, nee Wattenwyl. Her name is given as "katrina meygin", that is, it was given a feminine ending. She was the wife of Jacob, who was low in funds for a while, sold his part of the rule to the Gants, but then Benedict, his brother, was able to purchase it back again.

United Coat of Arms May- Mülinen . Johann Rudolf May I was an important representative of the May family in the seventeenth century. At the time of his second marriage, to Margarita von Mülinen, a united coat of arms was prepared (compare Büttikon / Effinger, p. 40). The year was 1651.

p. 48:

Another United Coat of Arms commemorating a marriage into the May family. This time (1684), it was the marriage of a nephew of Johann Rudolf, Beat Ludwig III with Maria Magdalena Manuel.

Gravestone of Magdalena von May-Manuel. Epitaph of the above mentioned wife, bearing the inscription: "She exchanged this Temporal for the Eternal in expectation of a holy Resurrection, the first of February, 1733.

Coat of Arms of Beat Ludwig the Fifth (V.)

This nobleman was a Lord of Rued (as were they all) who served for thirty years in the military, and died of a musket shot in the head, and was buried in Mening in 1709.

p. 49: Inscription of the portrait of Johann Rudolf May reads:

An officer in the Peasant Revolt of 1653 and in the first Villmerg War of 1656. Today there still exist progeny of his.

p. 50: Tombstone of Georg Ist (died 1584). (ffoottnote: the stone bears the year 1581, so he had it made when he still was alive). This is a grandson of that May-father, Glado. To wit: We sleep here in hope, the time / of resumption be not far hence, / when body and soul will come together / unto Christ in the Heavens' throne.

p. 50 (cont'd):

The Von May burial place along the external wall. Here, on the south side of the church is situated the family grave for collective later members of the Von May family. The stones were removed during renovation and the sculptor Heinz Elsener combined their features on a new plaque that was sunk into the surface of the new wall. Those mentioned are Carl Friedrich Rudolf from the Von May dynasty, 1768-1846, overlord of Rued, his wife, Margaretha von May, nee von Steiger Montricher, 1772-1843, the son of this union, Sigmund Amadeus Friedrich, 1801-1883, the last of the Von May line to reside in the Castle Rued, and his daughter (daughter of Sigmund), Ester von Hallwyl, 1840-1899. There is an older plaque with chiseled-out coat of arms for Sigmunds wife, Karoline Elisabeth Julie, 1808-1875.

Under the picture on p. 51 is the caption:
tin (pewter) baptismal vessel from around 1700

Under the picture on p. 52 it reads:

The old Von May burial place

The inscription at the bottom of p. 52, referring to the picture on p. 53 reads:

The new burial place of the von May family(not visible in the picture is the grave cover.)

p. 53: (top)

The final ceremonies of the last of the Von May clan is described; Sigmund Amadeus (the last von May to rule over Rued) died in his house in Berne, where he had moved in disgust over his son in law's having moved into the Castle. Still he wished to be buried in Rued, and the old civil servant Hofer and the agronomist Christian Lüthi brought back his mortal remains to the valley. The report of G. Maurer tells how he arrived late at night, was given the funeral rites the next day to the silent respect of all, and how all the inns in town were order^{ed} to give food and drink gratis to all who came, so that the poor among the valley's inhabitants might for once get all they wanted. Thus the inhabitants said farewell to the family that had been concerned about the fate of the valley for more than two centuries.

Epitaph for Preacher Vögelin

With the sundial mentioned previously (see picture, p. 55), there is found a burial plaque for the preacher Leonhard Vögelin, who was active in the congregation from 1676 until 1685. It was during his time in ecclesiastical office that the great renovation took place where the roof top was transferred somewhat west, and larger windows were installed. Anyway, he is praised as having lived true to God, "studied diligently, taught zealously, fought knightly, and overcome in a holy manner."

p. 56:

Ein interessantes Dokument aus dem Rueder Turmknopf
(An interesting Document from the Rued church tower) a manuscript from
the year 1856

"As in the year 1856 when repairing the top of the church and the walls of the church's courtyard, the weather vane and the top of the tower had to be removed, there were found in the latter writings from the years 1683 and 1820 and it was decided to add a new one to these two. At the present the castle of Rued is lived in by Mr. Friedrich Amadeus Sigmund May, Mr. Carl Friedrichs, former governing lord in Rued, son, with his wife Caroline Elisabeth Julie May von Belltruche and the only daughter Esther May. The civil heads of government of the communities at present are: Rudolf Schädelin von Mooslerau, head man at Schlossrued community, 2) Heinrich Wullschlegel, town counsilor of Schlossrued, 3) Samuel Bolliger, town councilor of Kirchrued, 4) Melchior Neeser, town councilor of ~~Schmiedrued~~, 5) ~~Samuel Häfeli, town councilor of Kläkkli~~, 5) Jakob Neeser, town councilor of Niederhofen; 1) Jakob Weber, magistrate of ~~Schmiedrued~~, in Eggschwil, 2) Melchior Bolliger, town councilor of Matt at Reechten, 3) J. Rud. Klaus, town cuncilor of Walde, 4) Johann Maurer, town councilor of Schmiedrued, 5) Samuel Häfeli, town councilor of Schiltwald. At present our preacher is J. Georg Welti from Zurzach, who has been at that position since October 1838. We have had a very agitated history since 1830. After the fall of Carl the Tenth in France, almost all the governments and constitutions in the Cantons were toppled and folk-soverainty proclaimed. The take-over of monasteries in this canton embittered the catholic cantons and populace and forced the same to a special league, which was then squelched by a campaign in the year 1874 (? this is probably a misprint, the manuscript is from 1856?) and by the defeat of Lucerne and Freiburg. A new league came about. Berne became the federal capital and head of the government, the french coining was introduced and all old Swiss money was reminted. The league pulled in the postal services, in Zürich a technological college was established, Bridge- and toll-monies were abolished in the entire country and in place of them a customs arrangement was set up on all borders for all imported goods. Revolution sped (spread) again to almost all the countries of Europe in 1848 after the flight of Louis Philipp, King of France, until after a great deal of horrible blood-letting in Italy, Austria, Hungary, Germany, the princes again emerged victorious and Napoleon III changed the Republic of France into an empire.

p. 57:

Since (Since) 1845 that has been disease in the potatoes, also in the trees. In 1847 there had to be public soup kitchens for the poor. The winter of 1854-55 saw even worse times, as after a wet, cold summer trade and industry were in a bad way because of the war between Russia o-n the one hand and Franch, England, Sardinia, Turkey on the other; many people died of hunger and other needs. Now peace is again being waged and even with us there is a blossoming of production in silk, cottom, and straw fabrics. Four pounds of bread now cost 75Cs., 1 pound

of (Anken: Swiss dialect) 80 Cs., 1 pound of Veal 38 Cs., 1 Zentner of potatoes (earth-apples) 4 Frs., 2 Zentners of seed 32 Frs., 1 seam of wine 16 - 100 Frs. While the peoples become more and more dissatisfied, the poverty of all locales takes the upper hand, the middle class is disappearing, while now earthquake, now floods, now deadly plagues (cholera) spread horror, it is now possible to travel by steam (vehicle) from Aarau via Olten to Lucerne, from Baden via Zürich to the Lake Constance and St. Gallen in a few hours, and by means of so-called telegraph news can be sent in an instant to the most distant reaches. All peoples and empires of the world are approaching closer to one another, Orient and Occident, the old and the new world, one can now travel from Basle to Paris in one day, von Le Havre to New York in 14 days. A new age appears ready to break forth, Heaven and Earth are in movement, ~~x~~ but also the powers of hell are in union with the children of disbelief, quarreling against the Lord, His church and His word. But Thou, O Lord, Allmighty, wilt carry forth the victory and kings and peoples of the earth will tremble before Thee! May those that come after us and that read these writings have better and more peaceful days and rejoice in the mild scepter of the glorious and merciful Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom we call: Yea come, Lord Jesus! and who answers us in the signs of the times: Yea, I come swiftly! Amen. - Written in Rued on the 6th of June 1856 by J. G. Welte, Preacher.

p. 57:

Die Herrschaftsfamilie May auf Schloss Rued und ihre Beziehungen zur Kirche
(The ruling family May on (at) Rued Castle and their relationship to the church)

This is another history of the Von May family, this time from the angle of their church-patronly activities.

p. 58: 1551 was the year Emperor Karl V. gave a letter of nobility to the von May family in Augsburg and thereby validated their coat of arms.

The new ruling family was happily disposed to the new Protestant faith, and so it went (went) with most of the people in the valley. Glado May accompanied the Bernese Reformer Berchthold Haller, along with other, for example, to a disputation in Baden. He was also in a letter-writing relationship to Zwingli. It was he, no doubt, who helped to push through the success of the new religion in the Rued valley.

p. 59: The Lords Von May had great responsibilities in Church affairs. Thus they helped choose new preachers, helped materially with monies whenever possible, and correspondingly came into a close and positive relationship with the church.

From the old Republic to the new Canton Aargau: Karl Frierich Rudolf May is discussed, the last of the Mays under Bernese rule. The inscription under his portrait on p. 61 states: Last holder of rule in Rued. Was chosen a governmental councilor in the region of Kulm in 1803. In 1814 he voluntarily retired from this position. Member of the Great Council 1805-1808. He constructed from 1792-96 the present castle Rued.

p. 62: Letter of Thanery for the rulers of Rued

This is an old letter of feudal relationships, written in the language of the time.

p. 63: Friedrich Amadeus Sigmund von May:

A short biographical sketch is given of the last of the von May dynasty. F.A. S. v. M. was the only male progeny, so he got the castle etc. He studied Political Science at the University of Göttingen, and made extensive travels to Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, France and England. A fall from a horse handicapped him for life. He married in 1827 with a relative, Elise Karolina von May. His hopes for state service were destroyed when the radicals took over in Berne. After this great disappointment he turned to bible studies exclusively and published certain tracts, such as

p. 64:

The lighting of the Spirit of the Age, and
The state constitution according to the Holy Scriptures.
His goal was to find a perfect union between God and people. He is even so opposed to heresy and moral shortcomings that he suggests the capital punishment for them. He believed that the most civilized state would be that one built upon the precepts of the Bible. Poverty such as was prevalent at that time could only be overcome by granting to each patriarch a piece of land. He dealt with the questions of the Jews and was already actively campaigning in that day for the return of that people to Palestine. In 1838 he received the Rued castle and rule from his father. From this time on he had to get out of biblical reverie a bit more and into practical life such as agricultural economics. His fellow valley-Rueders sent him to the Great Council, but two years later, probably for reasons of health, he exits again from this legislative body. In 1840 his only daughter Esther is born. He has no son, and thus the ruling line of the Von May dynasty is destined to die out, though relatives of the von May family still live.

In 1843 he is sent to Italy for a special cure. He is healed enough that he can walk again. The healing art of homeopathy is used, and he learns its precepts himself. He starts studying astronomy and makes his own observatory. (I wonder when he ever gave every patriarch a piece of land like he had contemplated in Biblical days...ah well)
In 1873 his wife inherits a family fortune and lands of the family Marthray, which makes them happy. But she dies in 1875, and his relationship with his son in law stinks, such that he moves to Berne disgruntled. There he died in 1883, but saw to it that he would be buried in Rued. Since 1899 his daughter has also lain at his side.

A final note: despite the letters of nobility, the "von" of Von May is never found in official letters and treaties. K.F.R. May signed his name merely C. May. So maybe it would be more correct to speak of the May family.