

Abstract: On Dates of Birth and their Variation when Transferred

Until 1938, birth dates in Austria were recorded in handwritten form in the reference source of registers (Matriken), from which birth certificates were drafted regularly when required, the data of which was used when other important personal documents were issued. Frequently miscopied, misread and mistranscribed, they sometimes found their way into printed publications. First of all the birth dates were written in various ways in Arabic or Roman numerals, then abbreviated in ways that were no longer understood. The copying technique of line holders played no small part in the (mis)reading of Roman numerals. This paper presents and explains examples of frequently recurring mistakes.

Keywords: Personal registers – Austria – dates of birth – practice of copying – misreading and miscopying

Schlagworte: Matrikel – Österreich – Geburtsdaten – Kopierpraxis – Lese- und Schreibfehler