



The origin of the proud surname Conrad can be traced to the historic kingdom of Bohemia, which is now part of Czechoslovakia. German surnames developed at a time when most of Bohemia, and most of the German provinces, were states of the Holy Roman Empire. At first people used only a single name, but as the population grew and people began to travel, they began to find it necessary to take on an additional name to differentiate themselves. The surname Conrad originates from the Old German emperor's name, Kunrad, meaning "kuehn im Rat" (bold in counsel). We have traced the notable surname Conrad to Bohemia, a Celtic region that was conquered and settled by the Markomannen from the river Main territory. They eventually fought against the invasions of the Romans in the second century. The Czechs settled in the region in the 6th century. As Christianity spread, Prague became the residence of a bishop, and in the 10th century the ruling dukes became "Reichsfuersten" - Princes of the German Empire. In 1198 they were crowned Kings of Bohemia, as well as subjects and Electors of the Kaiser.

The surname Conrad has been traced to the region of Bohemia, where the family is considered to have made a great early contribution to the feudal society which became the backbone of early development of Europe. The family became prominent in local affairs and branched into many houses which played important roles in the savage tribal and national conflicts, each group seeking power and status in an ever changing territorial profile. The name originates from the Old German emperor's name, Kunrad, meaning "kuehn im Rat" (bold in counsel).

Throughout the history of family names, the spelling and pronunciation of the name varies tremendously from region to region, and names change constantly over time. Scribes often recorded the name based on its sound; therefore the variations of the surname Conrad include Conrad, Konrad, Kunrad, Kunrads, Kunrath, Konrath, Conrath, Konradt, Conradt, Cunrad, Cunrads, Cunrath, Conradi, Conraad, Konraad, Konrads, Conrads, Conraed, Konrade, Konraed, Konrat, Konrat, Conratty, Conratt, Conred, Konred, Coonrod (Dutch), Coonradt (Dutch) to name a few examples.

For the next several centuries these rulers encouraged German merchants, artisans and farmers to develop the country. When the House of Luxembourg married into the throne in 1310, Charles IV made Prague the capital of the Empire, and the "Golden Age" of Bohemia began. He established the first German university in 1348, and made Prague one of the most beautiful cities in Europe.

During this period of change the family name Conrad surfaced in the region of Bohemia, which was established as the primary origin of the name. The family flourished in the regions of Silesia, Austria and Styria for several centuries throughout the early Middle Ages. Later, from the mid 16th century, the family migrated to other parts of the continent as family members pursued their varied interests, sometimes in the military, sometimes the religious milieu, and sometimes into politics. Of the many branches which developed cadet houses, notable were the families of Conrad, Kunrad von Loewenthal, Conrad von Konradshelm, and Conrad von Hotzendorf, also known as Konrad von Hoetzendorf and Konrad von Hetzendorf. The family of Dr. Caspar Conrad of Breslau, ennobled by Kaiser Ferdinand, best represents the family in Bohemia. A descendant of his, Johann Christopher von Conrad, held the position of Councillor and later Chancellor at Breslau. Another branch of the family distinguished themselves earlier in the 16th Century in the Upper Lawsuit. Members of the family Conrad von Konradshelm of Transatlantic held high positions in the State Government in the mid 1800's. Through planned marriages which were advantaged socially and economically, they intermarried with nobility such as the family Sotterius. Other prominent bearers of this name include Conrad Dele von Heidendorff, who was raised into the nobility of the Holy Roman Empire in 1696, and Franz Conrad von Hotzendorf, who was ennobled in 1815. During this early period, notable bearers of the name Conrad included Carl Signified Kunrad von Loewenthal, who was a prominent and honored Bohemian knight. He was granted the knighthood in 1711. August Conradi (1821-1873) was a German composer, conductor, and

organist. He was a friend of Liszt at Weimar, and later Kapellmeister at Berlin, Stetting, Duesseldorf, and Cologne.

Following the Reformation, the Kingdom of Bohemia fell to the Austrian House of Habsburg, who would rule Bohemia for the next five hundred years. However, an international episode in 1618 ignited the brutal Thirty Years War, which wreaked havoc throughout Europe and Bohemia until 1648.

Following the defeat of Germany and the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1919, a new republic of Czechoslovakia was created, which consisted of the unstable mixture of ethnic Sudeten Germans, Czechs, and Slovaks. It is not surprising that Hitler's policies for a greater Germany began with the incorporation of Czechoslovakia into the Reich in 1938.

Many emigrants sought their fortunes in the New World of the North American continent, starting the movement across the Atlantic after 1650. The majority of German settlements centered around Pennsylvania, Ohio, California, Illinois, and Texas, while in Canada they settled in Ontario and the fertile Prairie region. Among them were Johnnies Conrads, who settled in Germantown, Pennsylvania in 1683; Matthew and Anna Conrad, who came to New York City in 1709; Hags Leond Conraad, who arrived in Philadelphia in 1732; as did Jacob Conrade in 1737 and Caspar Conradi in 1750; Frederick Conrod, who immigrated to New York in 1851; Jacob Conrad, who was naturalized in Ohio in 1864; and Joseph Konradi, who immigrated to Brazil with his family in 1878.

Settlers began to increasingly look westward, as opportunities arose. In America, the Homestead Act (1862) offered 160 acres of land for a minimal fee; while in Canada, the Dominion Lands Act (1872) offered 160 acres to any male over the age of 21 for a ten-dollar registration fee.

Modern notables bearing the name Conrad include Charles Magill Conrad, American politician; Con Conrad, American songwriter; Timothy Abbott Conrad, American scientist; Tom Conrad, American musician and photographer; Tony Conrad, American artist and film-maker; William Conrad, American actor; Kent Conrad, US senator; Charles "Pete" Conrad Jr. (1930-1999) spacecraft commander of the Apollo XII in 1969; and Joseph Conrad (1857-1924) English novelist. Notables bearing other spellings of this name include: John Konrad (b.1942) Australian swimmer; Alexander Konrad (d.1940) Russian sailor and Arctic explorer; Christoph Konrad (b.1957) German politician; Franz Konrad (b.1951) former racing driver turned team owner of Konrad Motorsport; and Rob Konrad (b.1976) American NFL football player.

The coat of arms found for a bearer of the Conrad surname did not include a motto. Under most heraldic authorities, a motto is an optional component of the coat of arms, and many families have chosen not to display a motto.

