

In the evening, however, a slight croak arose again. "This must just be the echo of the few surviving frogs that were driven away in the direction of Düdelsheim", claimed the mayor and he had the operation recorded as a complete success.

And the Countess Elisabeth? Somehow, the Büdinger's commitment had convinced her. She is not known to have ever been disturbed by the frogs again – or perhaps she got used to the nocturnal sounds and thus became a true Büdinger?

Since then, the people of Büdingen have been known as "Büdinger Frogs". They regard this as an honorable title. Only the frogs have since then been the ones who are offended, hence the Büdingen idiom: "Now don't be a frog!"

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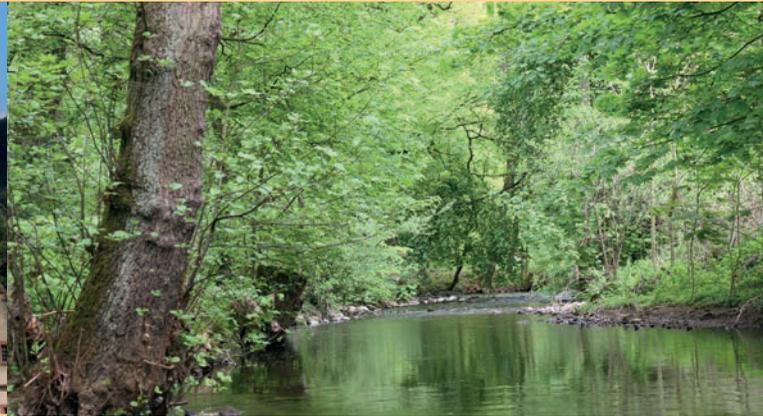
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THE FROG WAR | *Or how the people of Büdingen got their nickname "Büdinger Frääsch" (The Frogs)*

Why are there so many frogs in Büdingen? The historian and archivist of the castle, Dr Klaus-Peter Decker has researched and discovered the "shocking" history of the Frog War. Enjoy reading!

The year is 1522. **Count Anton of Ysenburg and Büdingen** held a wedding in his bride's hometown and brought his newlywed wife **Elisabeth von Wied** home. Büdingen gave the wedding couple a splendid reception with wedding flags and ceremonial arches, gun salutes and bonfires.





After the exertions of the journey and the no less strenuous welcoming ritual, the night finally came to a close when Count Anton carried his young wife over the threshold. While Count Anton started to snore barely a moment after lying down on his pillows, Countess Elisabeth immediately gets up again. A concert started from the castle pond: loud and not necessarily harmonious. The croaking, gurgling and splashing of hundreds of frogs.

Countess Elisabeth elbows her husband in the ribs, causing him to jump up in fright. Elisabeth: *"You kept this from me! I'm not going along with this. This is grounds for divorce. The croaking, these noises, I will get a migraine. I will go back to my father tomorrow!"* Anton: *"It can't be that bad. I don't hear it anymore. I've been used to that since I was a child, as have all people of Büdingen. In fact, they wake up when the croaking stops!"* Elisabeth: *"I'll never get used to it! Do something about this or I will leave you! I will have the marriage annulled on the grounds of non-execution of the marriage due to noise terror."* Then Count Anton rose with a sigh and sent for the courtier. *"Today, the citizens of Büdingen shall keep the peace"*, Anton exclaimed, *"and exterminate the frogs or drive them away, whichever way it may be. This is my will and command!"* Then the bailiff rang the citizens' bell, and half-dressed, the citizens flocked together, some with crossbows and armor, but most were the Bourgeoisie.

And so, male and female and the young people, still without breakfast, went into the grove and to the castle moats. The frogs blinked in amazement at first – but then disaster struck.

Anything that wriggled was grabbed, the baskets and buckets were filled with the green creatures, everything was taken to the market place and closely guarded.

Slowly the croaking around the castle thinned out, and when the mid-day sun was over the castle tower, nothing more could be heard. Countess Elisabeth writhed before she gave Count Anton a kiss of reconciliation, that made him beam across both cheeks, and he murmured: *"You can always rely on my people of Büdingen!"*

The noise level in the market square had become unbearable. Something had to be done, but what? How would they get rid of the frogs now? Leave it to the fire brigade, someone said. The material is far too damp for a pyre. Grilled frog legs are out of fashion anyway. Then the butchers have to get at it, said the innkeeper. But they politely referred to their guild rules, which did not mention frogs. That leaves only the shooters, but the shooting master waved them off, alarmed. They had only practiced target shooting.

The mayor stepped out onto the market: *"We have found the solution to the frog problem. The frogs will be drowned in the Seemenbach!"*

The scales fall from the eyes of the citizens. Why didn't they think of that in the first place!

Baskets, buckets, knapsacks and jute bags were filled and shouldered, and off they went with their wiggly cargo to the Mühltor Bridge. Here at the Schlaghaus, they opened the containers and let the contents splash into the Seemenbach. A brief wriggle in the water and nothing more was to be seen. *"It's working, it's working"*, cheered the people of Büdingen!

