



ff-Debat(familie)



Die Gestaltung der Feste
im Jahres- und Lebenslauf
in der ff-Familie



Die Gestaltung der Feste im Jahres und Lebenslauf in der SS-Familie

von



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Celebrations in the Life of the SS Family

This publication explains the meaning of the various celebrations and provides guidance to the SS family on how to celebrate them in the right spirit. Through reading this booklet, every SS Man and SS Woman should come to a deeper understanding of these celebrations. This booklet should be especially useful to the SS Woman, as most of the preparations will fall to her.

Knowledge of the customs of our forefathers gives us inner peace; keeping to these customs gives us direction and strength.

Annual Feasts of the SS Family: The Yearly Cycle

Since time immemorial our forefathers worshipped the Sun as giver of life and warmth. Like a golden disk it shone above them, like a wheel it rolled across the sky.

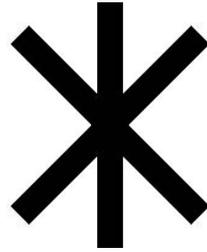
The Sun determines the passing of every day, and its path is itself a circle. It draws longer and shorter lines around the Earth. At 6.00 we see it in the East, at noon in the South, and at 18.00 in the West. And on the Summer midnight, we see it in the far North, where it ends its daily cycle.

Furthermore, our ancestors saw the passing of the whole year as points on a wheel. That was the old wheel calendar, which could be seen on the horizon. During Winter Solstice the Sun appears in the Arctic North for a short time on the southern point; during Midsummer Day it is on the northern point. The connection of these points gives the North-South line of the horizon.

In our latitudes the Sun rises on the Midsummer and Midwinter Days in the Northeast and the Southeast, and then sets in the Northwest and Southwest. The connecting lines of these points form an X: divide the already divided circle into six parts (the *Malkreuz*, or 'marked cross'), and from there follows the age old sign of the wheel:



Then remove the outer Circle and you have the Hagal Rune:



From the far North our ancestors brought with them a foundational experience that became very important for their future and especially for us as we rediscover our heritage. It was as follows.

In the high North, Summer and Winter fought each other as the forces of light and darkness. The dark Winter with its harshness and cold seemed to win over the short, barren Summer. And yet Summer arrived year after year despite the might of Winter. If its arrival every year had not been a certainty, it would have meant the death of the Nordic Folk. Sad and depressed the Nordic Folk watched the circle of the Sun get smaller and smaller at the end of Summer. The Sun became old, weak, pale. Its path got shorter, and during Jul time there would be only a few hours of daylight and then it would sink into the cold North Sea and be gobbled up, as if eaten by a monster on Midwinter Day. It was dead and lay in its grave. The question of whether the Sun would stay buried was of equal importance to the question of whether mankind would live or die.

On Midwinter Day the miracle happened: the Sun rose from its watery grave. It was born like a child, gathered strength and appeared in front of the celebrating and joyous Folk, who felt that life was given back to them. This happened every year. And every year they celebrated it as their most important festival, their sacred and holy night festival. They greeted the Sun with lit torches to help free it from the ties of the death of Winter. And they celebrated as often as possible the ever increasing circles of the Sun. Fires would burn high on that day in the Spring when day and night were of equal length, for surely the Sun had finally won the battle. And again on Midsummer Night, when the Sun had won its greatest victory and night lasted for only a few hours. This celebration eventually became the most important one of all.

The strong Sun made harvest possible, reason for another feast, after which its strength waned fast and it headed once more toward death, which in turn would become new life.

As far back as the Nordic and Germanic times of the German Folk, people told of the death and resurrection of the Sun in many different tales. We are fortunate to know more about this early culture of our Folk than about some periods much later in our history. This Sun experience is the subject of nearly all of our pre-Christian fairy tales, which the brothers Grimm have collected, written down more than a hundred years ago and thereby preserved for all time. The Sun-like princess, killed by a bad, wintry force, resurrected by a young hero: that is the essence of all these stories, which were wonderfully extended and varied.

Man saw this law of 'die and become' – Goethe's *Stirb und werde* – all around him in Nature. The yearly cycle of the Sun determines the rhythm of all living things, animals as well as plants. Their whole life revolves around youth and ageing, dying and rebirth. And man's own life followed this rhythm. The Nordic man knew that his life came from the loins of a man destined to die. In the knowledge of his own death he handed on life. That was the essence of his beliefs. What he learned from the Sun he saw in his forests. That is why he considered trees to be sacred. He imagined that the whole universe was supported by a gigantic tree: the old ash tree described in the Edda. In its eternity the law of 'die and become' provides constant renewal, eternal rhythm.

As Nietzsche observes in the *Zarathustra*:

Alles geht, Alles kommt zurück; ewig rollt das Rad des Seins. Alles stirbt, Alles blüht wieder auf, ewig läuft das Jahr des Seins.

Alles bricht, Alles wird neu gefügt; ewig baut sich das gleiche Haus des Seins. Alles scheidet, Alles grüsst sich wieder; ewig bleibt sich treu der Ring des Seins.

Everything goes, everything returns; eternally rolls the wheel of being. Everything dies, everything blooms again; eternally runs the year of being.

Everything breaks, everything is joined anew; eternally the house of being builds itself. Everything parts, everything greets itself again; eternally the ring of being stays true.

Therefore the Nordic man had at his celebrations the fires, the Sun Wheel and the tree as symbols. In stories we read about the Tree of Life, which grows on the grave of the mother and protects the young life through its blessings.

The Celebration of Yuletide

When Nebelung (November), the month of the dead, has passed, the time of Yuletide is begun, with its knowledge of the rising of the Sun from its sleep, of renewal after the wintry death, of the birth of light from the darkness of the long nights.

Although we Germans no longer live in the far North, and although we can alleviate depressed feelings through light and heating, the old experiences of our ancestors are very strong and vivid in us. We still feel that Yuletide is the greatest celebration of our year. Therefore we make every effort to celebrate it in style with our families.

The Timetable

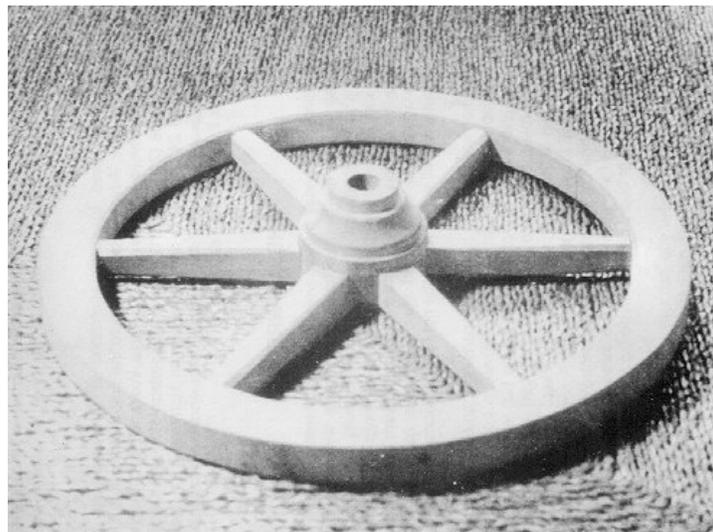
First you have to look at the whole of this festive time. It used to last from the 6th day of Jul (December), which was Wotan's Day and is now St. Nikolaus's Day, to the 6th day of Hornung (January), which was Frigga's Day and is now Epiphany. The main celebration was at Midwinter Night, the night of the 21st of Jul, when mountain tops would have been alight with fires.

We have become accustomed to some alterations in this timetable. The preparation time, Advent, now lasts from the first Sunday in Jul to the 24th day of Jul. Advent contains four Jul Sundays, Wotan's Day (6th) and Winter Solstice (21st). The Twelve Sacred Days start with Yuletide Night on the 24th of Jul and end on Frigga's Day on the 6th of Hornung. These 12 days are filled with special celebrations, especially on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

The Jul Wreath

On the first Jul Sunday the Jul Wreath is hung up in the living room. Its fir branches fill the house with pre-Yuletide smells, its red ribbons awaken joy for the coming celebrations, and its red candles brighten up the dark Winter evenings. The Yuletide Wreath is equivalent to the old Sun Wheel, and as it is made from living greenery it reminds us of the old Tree of Life. Once we have made these connections we will surely make the right preparations for the festival.

The SS Man should go to his friendly cartwright and ask for a wooden wheel of about 50-80 cm in diameter. There is bound to be a spare one lying about. He cuts off one side of the hub so the wheel can lie flat. It is then stained dark brown or bright red and so becomes the Jul Wheel of the family, which should be kept on a low table or on the family chest in a corner of the living room.



The Jul Wheel, or 'Sun Wheel', with its deep rooted Germanic religious meaning is utilized as the base for the SS Tree.

A small, young, forked tree trunk without branches is stuck into the center of the hub, so we can recreate the Tree of Life growing from the Sun Wheel. This Tree of Life will be used by the SS family at every celebration of the year.

Instead of the cart wheel you can use a wooden wheel with the dividers inset and decorated with Runic Letters. The tree should still be fixed in the center. It may be replaced every year by the

trunk of the Yuletide Tree at the end of the season. Thus the deeply symbolic Wheel replaces the meaningless cast iron christmas tree stand, which has no place in the SS home. The same goes for the electric tree lights and the horrible glass ornaments.

We now place a red ribbon both ways across the fork at the top of the tree, the ends of which are tied to the Jul Wreath, which now hangs freely about half way up the tree.



The typical SS Yuletide Tree sits at the center of the family chest. Directly behind is a Wedding Plate and on either side is a Jul Plate.

The Jul Wreath is made by binding bundles of small pine twigs around a wooden hoop (a child's toy hoop is ideal) and fastening four red candles onto it.

When the SS Woman prepares the table for afternoon coffee on the first Jul Sunday, she decorates it with further twigs of pine and lights the first candle on the Jul Wreath. Every succeeding Sunday an additional candle is lit. In this way the lights grow slowly until there is an explosion of light on the Yuletide Tree by the time of Winter Solstice, portraying the Solstice fires. Alternatively, it is also customary to light four candles on the first Sunday, then to decrease

the number by one each week. Thus the old, dying year is portrayed, which is reborn in the many candles on the Yuletide Tree even as its last candle dies away.

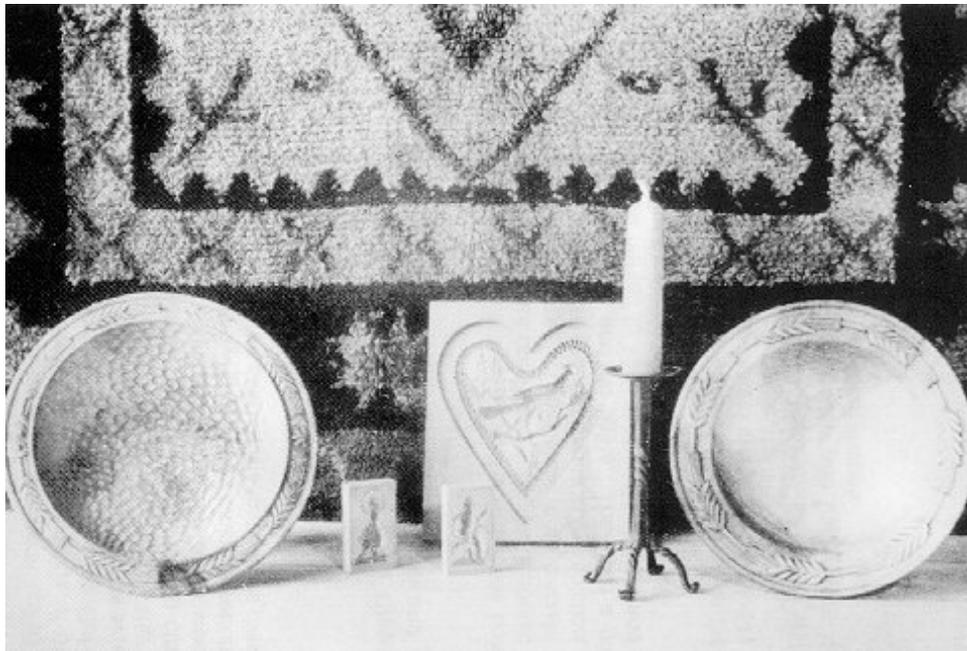
The Baking

Traditionally the German housewife will bake three different types of cakes for Yuletide:

1. Large cake,
2. Gingerbread and almond biscuits,
3. Shaped biscuits.

The housewife should keep in mind that the Yuletide baking has a special meaning. Not only should it taste good, it should add to the meaning of the celebration. Thus the cakes and biscuits should, like the Yuletide Tree, the Jul Wreath and the candles, symbolize the great changes that occur at Winter Solstice. And therefore a good SS housewife should pride herself on keeping to the old recipes and shapes and rejecting all cheap and American factory produced goods.

The large cake served with a candle in the middle and the large flat cake are still to be found in every house today. The gingerbread cakes and biscuits, which taste so nice made with honey and syrup and which fill the whole house with their delicious aroma, should be cut into hearts, stars and wheels.

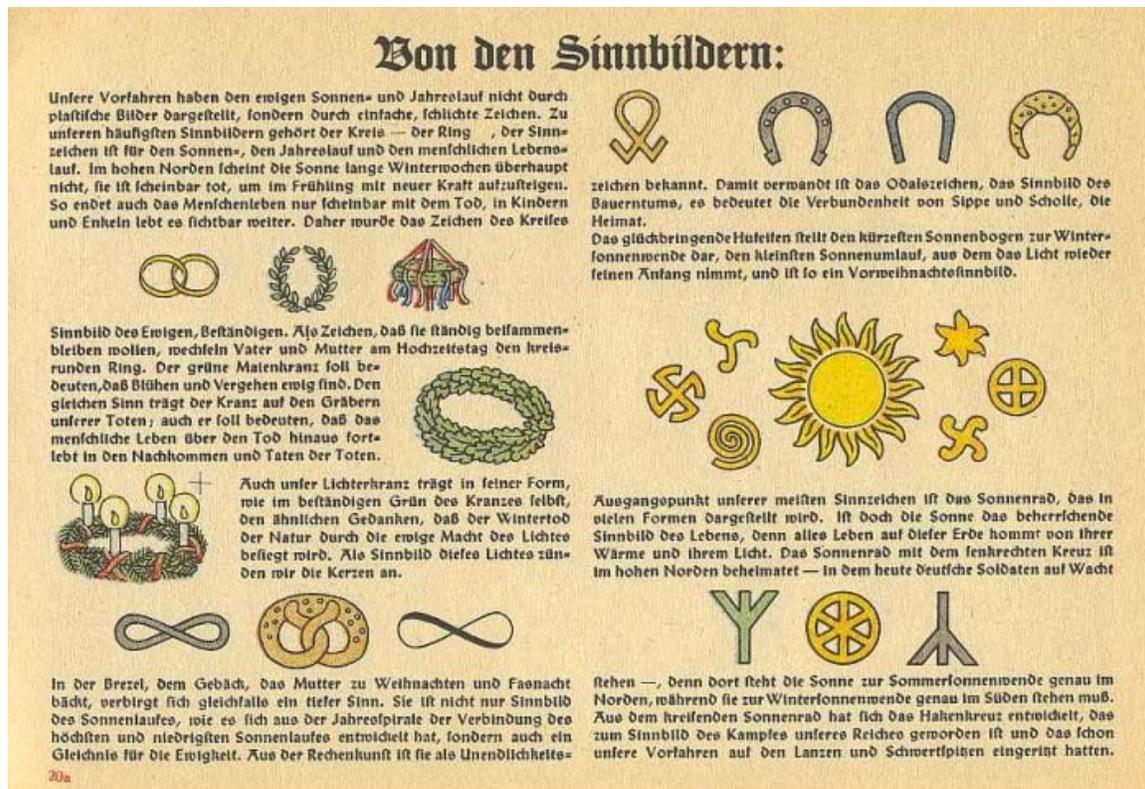


Two wooden Jul Plates are shown carved with wheat motifs. Many different carvings, including Runic, can be found on them, although wheat motifs are among the most common. Also shown are three wooden molds, one large and two small, used to shape biscuits.

Eventually every SS household should have a complete set of wooden cutters for the almond biscuits.

The preferred shapes are:

1. The Cockerel, announcer of daytime;
2. The Boar, a traditional Yuletide food;
3. The Rider, Wotan on his horse;
4. The Hunter, Wotan;
5. The Spinner, Lady Holle or Frigga;
6. The Tree of Life;
7. The Human Couple.



Hand formed biscuits should be made also in the shape of the Runic Letters. This operation is not difficult if the dough is rolled first into a long thick spaghetti. Such Runic Letters as the Swastika, the Odal Rune in all its different shapes, the pretzel, the Sun Spiral and the horseshoe can then be formed easily. So can the four-, six- and eight-spoke Sun Wheel.

These biscuits should be used to decorate the Jul Wreath, the Yuletide Tree and the Yuletide table of every SS family.

Yuletide Songs and Stories

Jul time is especially a time for the children. Parents can't do enough to brighten up these dull days and long nights.

Just think about it: Where do our deep rooted feelings for Yuletide come from?

Mostly they are memories from our childhood days. First impressions last longer and leave the deepest awareness of these celebrations. All later festivities are meaningful only if this initial understanding is awakened.

Because in Germany every generation has passed on the old traditions to their children, we now have the German Yuletide, which is envied by all other Nations.

We need to ensure that these old traditions get handed on in a true and unchanged way, so that they will awaken in our children a strong feeling for their Homeland and their Folk, which will provide them with a sense of security in this modern and stressful world.



At Yuletide the children should sing our old Yuletide songs. Thus mothers need to know the songs themselves and teach them with all their hearts and souls. An evening at the local school will help all those parents who were not taught properly as children to get it right for their own.

Our best Yuletide songs are:

1. High Up in the Winds,
2. O Yuletide Tree, How Green Are Your Branches,
3. Sacred Night Filled with Stars.

The Yuletide season is a time like no other for telling stories. The nucleus of our fairy tales is thousands of years old. If you are able to apprehend the deeper meaning of the events at Winter Solstice, you will not only make your children happy with these stories, but increase your own knowledge of Yuletide and of your racial inheritance.

Each Jul Sunday it is customary to tell one story that speaks of the Solstice and the coming year:

1. On the 1st Jul Sunday, Little Red Riding Hood: The child with the red cap (the Sun) goes into the dark wood to visit the old mother (Earth Mother) and is swallowed up by a monster; the young hunter brings the child freedom and with it the rebirth of the year.
2. On the 2nd Jul Sunday, Snow White: The princely child goes into the deep wood, reaches the kingdom of the Gnomes (Mother Earth) and is killed by the bad one (the stepmother); the child sleeps on a mountain in a glass coffin (the ice Winter) but is freed and brought home by a young hero.
3. On the 3rd Jul Sunday, Maiden Marlene: The princess with the golden hair (the Sun) is incarcerated in a tower (the death of the Sun) and the world becomes barren and empty; the prince tries to free her but is thwarted by the bad one (the bad bride), until the time is right and he recognizes the right bride and brings her home.
4. On the 4th Jul Sunday, Sleeping Beauty: The princess reaches the tower of the old spinning woman and falls into a deep sleep; the world becomes barren and empty until a young prince comes and walks through the rose hedges because the time is ripe (Winter Solstice); he wakes the sleeping girl with a kiss, the world awakes and radiates in new light.

See also the old Saga of Sigurd and Brünnhilde in the *Waberlohe* (or 'Magic Fire') story.

Wotan's Day and the *Jul-Teller*

The old feast of Wotan is celebrated on the 6th day of Jul. In olden days the God of our ancestors drove through the air, visited his people, was friendly to them and left them little presents. He announced the start of Winter Solstice season and the coming of the New Year.

The christian church could not suppress these yearly visits of this white-bearded, one-eyed leader of the good Spirits. So they put one of its assumed saints, St. Nikolaus, in Wotan's place. But in many areas of Germany, the story of the *Schimmelreiter* (or 'White Horse Rider'), known also as Hruodprecht (or Ruprecht, meaning 'Shining with Glory') or Wotan or simply Father Yuletide remained.

SS Families should gather together and make the visit of Father Yuletide a memorable event for their children, who will surely thank them for it in years to come. But where an actual visit cannot be arranged, all members of the family should put their Jul Plates on the window sill,

where they will be found in the morning filled with apples, nuts and hand formed biscuits, the first messengers of the coming feast.

Every member of the family should have his or her own Jul Plate. When a child is born, it should be presented with a Jul Plate at the Ceremony of Name Giving. It should be an old pewter, wooden or ceramic plate decorated with the Tree of Life and lettering. As this Plate is used throughout one's entire life, it should be beautiful, but not too large. It is used on birthdays for the candles; on Wotan's Day, Yuletide Day and New Year's Day for the treats; on Easter Sunday for the eggs; on the Harvest Festival for the apples; in the Wedding Ceremony for the bread and salt; and in the Funeral Ceremony for the Light of Life, which should extinguish upon it.



Produced by the SS porcelain firm of Porzellan-Manufaktur Allach-München for Yuletide 1941 and available for public purchase, the *Jul-Teller*, or 'Jul Plate', shown here has a green border with symbolic Tree of Life motifs on the lower rim. The center of the Plate is decorated with *Schneeglöckchen*, or 'snowdrops'.



The 1943 Allach Jul Plate is decorated with a simple design of *Krokusse*, or 'crocuses', springing up through the winter snow.



Produced by Staatliche Porzellan-Manufaktur Meissen, this 1940 *Jul-Teller* depicts the family, the evergreen tree and bonfire from the mountain, and the *Sonnenrad*, or 'Sunwheel Swastika'.



Within the border of snowdrops, crocuses and rising suns, the 1944 Allach Jul Plate carries an inscription from 19th century poet and dramatist C.F. Hebbel:

*Und von allen Sternen nieder
Strömt ein wunderbarer Segen,
Dass die müden Kräfte wieder
Sich in neuer Frische regen,
Und aus seinen Finsternissen
Tritt der Herr so weit er kann,
Und die Fäden die zerissen,
Knüpft er alle wieder an.*

*And down from all the stars
Flows a glorious blessing,
So that the tired strength
Can once more feel itself refreshed,
And out of the darkness
Man will walk, as far as he can,
And the threads that were broken
Will be mended all again.*

Special Plates from the Allach factory, made of white porcelain and carrying National Socialist symbols in relief, were handed out as personal gifts from the Reichsführer-SS.



In the center of the 1943 Plate is a raised Eagle grasping a sword and a cluster of Oak Leaves. On the border are the famous words from the letter of Friedrich der GröÙe to d'Argens in 1758:

Wir werden uns solange herumschlagen, bis unsere verfluchten Feinde sich zum Frieden bequemen!
We will strike around us for as long as it takes till our accursed enemy submits to peace!





The central image of the 1944 Plate is a large Mother's Cross surrounded by a ring of six Iron Crosses and six Oak Leaves. The inscription around the plate reads: *Durch Mütter und Held ist unser der Sieg*, 'Victory is Ours through Mother and Hero'.





The 1940 *Jul-Teller* shows the Sword of Victory in the center, with six Sunwheel Swastikas, six Hearts and twelve Hagal Runes on the border.



The 1942 Jul Plate shows the Sunwheel Swastika with Torch in the center, surrounded by four Hearts and six Hagal Runes, along with the words *Nur aus Opfern steigt groß das Reich*, 'Only from sacrifice will the Reich rise high'.



The Sunwheel Swastika and Man Rune dominate the 1941 *Jul-Teller*. Around the border are six smaller Sun Wheels, six Hearts and twelve Hagal Runes.



The 1944 *Jul-Teller* from the Waffen-SS Division *Langemarck* is carved in wood and bears a central Sunwheel Swastika with three horses.

The Yuletide Tree

After the SS Men have stood by the mountain fires during Winter Solstice and heard the words of contemplation and warning, they bring home one of the little trees that have seen the fire.



The true is put into the hub of the Jul Wheel and decorated with the Lights of Yuletide. And thus the evergreen Tree of Life stands in the living room, telling of the dark Winter's death and the shining rebirth of the coming time.

Winter Solstice in the House of the SS Man

We should keep the meaning of the Yuletide Tree in mind, even if we have to buy it at the town market. It should be a beautiful slim tree, the wide branches of which should spread solemnity and festivity in the room. It should stand in the Jul and SS corner of the house. It should be decorated with the greatest care.

Do not start the preparations at the last possible minute and then rush out to buy whatever rubbish the nearest shop has to offer. What possible meaning can there be in tinsel, angel hair, glass ornaments, tinsel and other such nonsense on the Yuletide Tree of the SS family?

The Jul Wheel, which supported the Jul Wreath, now holds the Yuletide Tree. There should be nothing on top of the tree; the crown of branches should remain bare. The best decorations are the lit candles.

In addition, lots of red apples should be hung on the tree with thin wires. The apple is a symbol of the forthcoming life, and red is the color of the Sun. Other symbols with a similar meaning are golden and silver painted nuts. And of course the home baked, hand shaped biscuits with their

different meanings must be hung on the tree, together with a marzipan pig symbolizing the Jul Boar.

During the long Jul evenings the father should cut wooden ornaments in all the different forms of the Jul Wheel and Swastika, to complete the decoration of the tree. But the main impression should always come from the Yuletide Tree itself and not from the decorations.

The Yuletide Celebration

We celebrate Yuletide in the evening, not in the morning. Yuletide is the feast of the newborn light and the renewing life. Therefore it is the feast of the commemoration of the birth of the child, of thanks to the mother, of good wishes for the growth of the whole Folk. The reason for our giving presents at Yuletide is to show respect to other members of our Folk for the part they play in its continued existence.

In Germany Yuletide is thus a feast for both the closer and the wider family, tending to exclude outsiders but for which a long lost son or one living far away is always welcome to return.

The presents, which are valuable only to the extent that the giver has worked on them, are put under the tree secretly by the father. When everything is ready, the family gathers in the adjoining room for the evening meal. The table should be festive and laid with care. This is the start of the Yuletide celebration.

The meal should be substantial, with a main course of carp, goose, boar or hare. These animals have been eaten at the Yuletide meal traditionally and should never be replaced by other food.

Not only the presents but the whole celebration should be full of surprises for all members of the family. The father lights the candle in the *Jul-Leuchter*, or 'Jul Earthenware Candlestick', from which the tree candles in turn get their light. On the tree should be 13 (representing 12 months plus the 13th renewing) or 27 (three lunar weeks each with nine days) candles. Three adjacent candles should remain unlit. He then calls his wife, children and any other family members into the room using a little bell.

As they admire the tree he lights the last three candles and says:

This light should burn for our ancestors who are with us tonight. This light should burn for my dead comrades from the War. This light should burn for our millions of German brothers all over the world, who all celebrate Yuletide with us tonight.

After this all should sing the song 'O Yuletide Tree, How Green Are Your Branches', without which the Yuletide Celebration is unthinkable, and open the presents. The evening should be quiet and sincere. At the appointed time the family will listen to the Yuletide address of the Deputy Führer, feeling through it a bond that reaches out to encompass the whole Folk of

German brothers. During the evening the family photographs should be shown, old family stories told, and the results of research into the family history exchanged.

New Year's Eve and the *Jul-Leuchter*

Yuletide Eve is followed by the Twelve Sacred Days, important feast days for our ancestors during which no one worked. Wotan and his Army of the Dead were said to ride through the air; and Frigga, or Lady Holle, led the Army of the Unborn above the heads of the Folk.

We should light the candles on the tree as often as possible during these days. During the night of New Year's Eve the celebrations reach another pinnacle. The happenings of Yuletide are repeated, and again we say good-bye to the old and look hopefully to the future.

The last evening of the year is a very happy time. The children have bought small fireworks and have their own fun. Mother fetches the spoon for the casting of the lead, which only ever should be used for this purpose. The lead is melted on the spoon and cast into a bowl of cold water. The resulting figures and shapes foretell the future. Greeting cards are sent to distant relatives. Punch fills the house with its aroma, and the evening meal is as grand as the one at Yuletide.



The *Jul-Leuchter*, presented by Reichsführer-SS Himmler to the SS Man, is the most important symbol used throughout the year to mark celebrations and commemorations. Its cut-out Heart represents hearth and home, and the Hagal Rune peace through victory.



At midnight, when the candles on the Yuletide Tree are burnt down, the SS Man will put the *Jul-Leuchter* on the table. The Candlestick with its year-long candle has been lit at every family celebration the past year. Its candle has burned down, and it should receive a new one tonight. Just as our ancestors never let the sacred hearth cooking fire extinguish, so our *Jul-Leuchter* must always have a light. Thus it becomes a symbol of the never dying sunlight. Everyone becomes very thoughtful when the old candle finally burns down and the new one is put in its place.



SS personnel receiving the Jul Earthenware Candlestick and Citation



Jul-Leuchter presentation ceremony in Flanders



World famous Jul Earthenware Candlesticks being produced at the Allach factory

An meine SS-Kameraden!

Ich schenke Ihnen diesen Jul-Leuchter. Er ist nachgebildet nach einem alten aus früherer Vergangenheit unseres Volkes überkommenen Stück.

Seine Lichter sollen brennen in der Nacht der Jahreswende, nach unserem heutigen Gebrauch, vom 31. Dezember zum 1. Januar.

Das kleine Licht, das unter dem Leuchter steht, brenne als Sinnbild des zu Ende gehenden Jahres in seiner letzten Stunde.

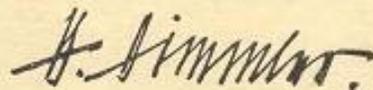
Das große Licht flamme auf im ersten Augenblick, da das neue Jahr seinen Gang anhebt.

Es steckt eine tiefe Weisheit in dem alten Brauch.

Möge jeder SS-Mann das Flämmchen des alten Jahres reinen, sauberen Herzens verlöschen sehen und erhobenen Willens das Licht des neuen Jahres entzünden können.

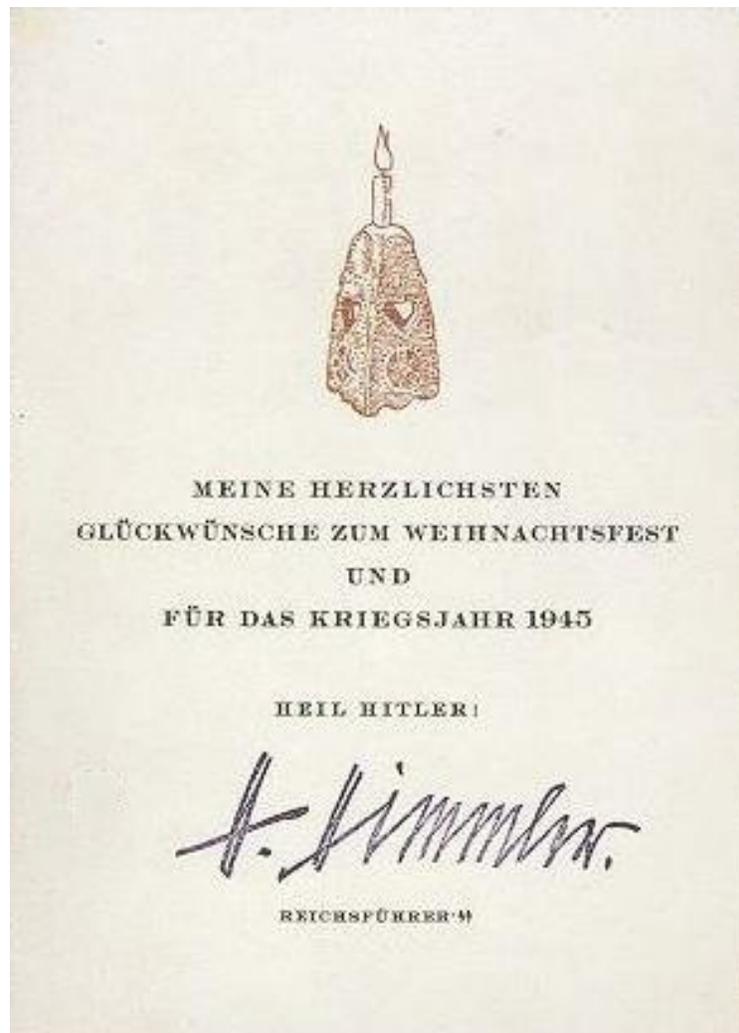
Das wünsche ich Ihnen und Ihrer Sippe heute und in alle Zukunft.

Heil Hitler!



The words of the Citation are as follows:

*I give you this Jul Earthenware Candlestick. It is fashioned in the traditional style of our Folk.
Its light shall burn during New Year's Night, which for us falls on the night of 31 December to 1 January.
The small candle shall burn as a symbol of the ending year in its last hours.
The large candle shall light up at the first moment of the New Year.
There is a deep wisdom in this custom.
May every SS Man watch the little light go out with a pure heart and light the new light of the new year
with renewed vigor.
This is what I wish for you and your kin today and for all the future.*



This image shows a Yuletide Card printed on behalf of Reichsführer-SS Himmler. Note the *Jul-Leuchter* used to decorate this simple card, which reads: 'My heartfelt best wishes for Yuletide and for the war year 1945'.

The Easter Celebration

The name *Ostern*, or 'Easter', is of Germanic origin. It indicates that the Sun rises exactly in the *Ost*, or 'East'. With the arrival of Easter the fight between Winter and Summer is decided in favor of the coming Summer, for when Easter arrives, the Equinox is already past.

Easter is a moveable feast, as it is determined not only by the Sun but also by the Moon. Easter Sunday is the first Sunday after the full Moon that follows the Spring Equinox.

The christian church chose this ancient Germanic feast of reawakening and resurrection for its celebration of the resurrection of the christ. Easter is the feast of the victorious Spring during which the law of the eternal life of Nature is visible in the thousands of buds and growing seeds around us. These days of Easter are celebrated by the Germanic man by gathering round the Easter Fire, the Tree of Life in the house, willow catkins, Easter Eggs and the festive meal. Because he sees God's revelation in the laws of Nature, all these symbols are signs of his closeness to God.

Easter is a festive time that lasts for many days. Today we normally start the festivities on Green Sunday (Palm Sunday), with Easter Sunday being the greatest feast day. If this celebration is to have meaning for us we have to spend as much time as possible with the family and start the preparations early.

The Easter Tree

On Green Sunday the children go into the woods and cut flexible brushwood from weeping willow, birch and hazel trees, which will be bound into a Wreath.

The Wreath should be hung on the branch of the Jul Wheel positioned in the SS corner of the house. On Maundy Thursday the Wreath should be decorated with willow and hazel catkins, and on Easter Sunday the Easter Eggs should be added.

The Easter Eggs

Everyone knows the Easter Bunny lays the Easter eggs. To honor this story the Bunny appears on the table in almond biscuits, and in the Easter nest in chocolate. The Easter nest of each member of the family is his or her Jul Plate, which is padded with moss or cotton and hidden in the house or yard the night before Easter. The main contents of the nest are the Easter eggs. They should not be replaced by sweets but should be real, living eggs. The egg encloses most clearly the force of the new awakening life. That is why everyone eats eggs on this, the feast of resurrection.

To show that these eggs have a special meaning, they are colored and painted. There are many ways to achieve this coloring. Often the eggs are colored brown by boiling onion skins and

letting the eggs soak in this brew. If you buy colored food dyes you can make red, yellow, blue or green shells.

With a solution of 10 percent hydrochloric acid the colored eggs can now be inscribed with mottos, Runic Letters, borders and drawings. The verses on the eggs should be directed toward the finder of the egg, and should make him or her laugh, the louder the better. The children can help with the painting of the eggs, but should not do the engraving because of the obvious danger of drops of acid getting in their eyes.

The eggs used in the Easter baking should be decorated as well as the eggs that are going to be hidden. Those eggs are now only hollow shells, which, after the engraving, can be hung singly or in chains on the Easter Wreath.

The colored half-shells of the eggs that are eaten should be stuck upside down on the ends of the catkins on the wreath. The chocolate Bunnies should decorate the base of the Jul Wheel until they are eaten in turn.

The Easter Walk

It has become a worthwhile custom for the whole family to go for a walk on the first day of Easter. Even bad weather can't stop the morning walk on Easter Sunday. The father must not forget that he should take on the role of the Easter Bunny so that the children will find the woods full of Easter Eggs and (imaginary) Bunnies. Every year the children are awakened from the effects of Winter hibernation through this special experience.

The father should make sure of the laughter and happiness of the children by telling them the old fairy tales: the one of the blind man who shot a hare, the lame man who caught it and the naked man who put it in his pocket; how the Sun jumps three times at Easter when he hears laughter; and stories about the *Münchhausen*, *Eulenspiegel* and the daring *Bomberg*. All these tales make people laugh at their nonsense.

A sip of water from a little stream in the wood should taste especially good on Easter Sunday. And on returning home, lunch should consist of soup made from sorrel, fresh vegetables and scrambled eggs.

The Easter Fires

The Easter Fires being lit in all our Folk Community are fires of joy at the victorious rising of Spring. Therefore they already point toward the fires of Midsummer Night.

If the SS Man cannot take part in one of the celebrations around the fires of his Homeland, he should light the Jul Earthenware Candlestick underneath the Easter Tree in the SS corner of his

house and contemplate the meaning of these fires for his ancestors and the meaning of Easter for him and his family. In the words of the old German folk song:

*Spring is come to greet us, the south wind blows mild,
All the meadows bloom with red and blue flowers.
Outside, the brown heathland weaves a lovely dress for herself
And invites everyone to the May dance.
Forest birds sing the songs you wish for,
So come to the happy dance, the journey is worth it.
Under the green lime trees the white dresses shine,
All the sorrows of Winter are over for us children.*



This photo shows an *Osterfeurräder*, or 'Easter Fire Wheel', made in the village of Lügde outside Bad Pyrmont, and carved with a proverb: *Kein Zeit alter, kann unseren anfang denken Gott allein woll unser Ende lenken, 1934*, or 'No one can predict whence we will start. God alone will guide us to our destiny, 1934'.

The tradition of the Easter Fire Wheel has lived on through the centuries. A large wooden wheel is brought to the top of a mountain or cliff and stuffed with straw. The straw is set alight, and then the Wheel is rolled down the mountain or cliff, emphasizing our joy at the rising of Spring. Everyone in the village takes part in this celebration.



The Easter Fire Wheel is taken through the village and then on to the top of the mountain or cliff. An element of sacred ceremony prevails throughout the whole proceeding.



The Easter Fire Wheel is stuffed with straw. Afterward, the straw is set alight and the Wheel is rolled down the mountain.



Upon the Wheel in this photo can be seen the motto *Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer*.



In 1934, torchbearers were organized to form a huge blazing Swastika on the slopes of the Osterberg while the Easter Fire Wheels ran down the hill.

The Time of May

In olden times May was the preferred month for wedding feasts. And after their weddings, the young people used to go and look for land to work and cultivate. With today's celebration of our young, strong workforce, we are connected to this tradition from out past.

All Germans feel a bond with each other on 1 May because they are all part of the German workforce and therefore part of the German existence. The first day of May was made the great festival of unity for all working Germans by the National Socialist Revolution.

On this day, the SS family should spend as much time as possible outside the home with work colleagues and comrades, while flowers and greenery should adorn every house. Everyone should also be aware that the first day of May is connected to another May feast, with the Greek name of Pentecost. But while the first day of May is celebrated outside the house, Pentecost is celebrated within the family.

In this season, the hub of the Jul Wheel should support a small green birch tree, decorated with colorful ribbons: the Tree of Life in May. Every girl should be dressed in white as if she herself were the May Queen, the central figure of the May Dance. And finally, in the evening, a cool drink refreshes all who have taken part wholeheartedly in the largest celebration of the German Folk Community during this, the old marriage month.

The Summer Solstice

The Sun has now reached its longest curve across the sky. On this day, its light is stronger and longer lasting than on any other day. In the far North the Sun remains aloft for 24 hours. After its birth at Yuletide, the light has finally reached the apex of its growth.

The middle of the year is for us symbolic of the middle of our lives, our strong virile actions, the unity in the home and the existence of our Folk.

Together with other organizations taking an active part in building the German Reich, the SS marches to the nightly fires on the hills and mountains. The play of the Sun is a sign of the eternal cycle of life, the fire is the sacred gloom of the never extinguishing strength of the Sun, and the speeches give direction and encouragement for the battles to come.

Inside the SS home, the children have collected pine brushwood and the red blooms of the sorrel, which are bound into a wreath and fastened upright onto the Jul Tree. When the fires have died down, the father will come home, light the Jul Earthenware Candlestick and the candles on the Wreath, wake up the children, and tell them of the celebrations and the speeches. This practice should awaken a desire in the children to be part of the celebrations of the secrets of the Summer Solstice.

The Harvest Festival

During Autumn the days become shorter and the nights longer, and the year nears its end. The Earth has let the plants grow, the Sun has ripened the fruits, and now the barns and cellars are filled with the gifts of the Earth. The harsh Winter may come now. The Folk look thankfully to their God who makes everything grow, and honor him through the Harvest Festival.

Inside the home of the SS Man, everything will be prepared for the Harvest celebration. In the towns especially the connection to the harvest on the farms should be stressed. The children should go across the fields to collect straw for the harvest crown, and not buy it, to deepen their understanding of the harvest.

At home the straw will be bound into a Harvest Wreath or Crown and hung from the Tree of Life in the middle of the Jul Wheel. It will be decorated with red apples and other fruits, and underneath will be placed the Jul Plate holding bread and salt. This provides a good setting in which to hear the Führer's thanksgiving address from the Bückeberg. Many Germans go to the Bückeberg to listen to the address in person.

The Death Rites

Nebelung (November) is the Month of the Dead. The year is now dying, with the last leaves falling from the trees. This time is very sad and melancholic. We understand anew that as the resurrection at Easter is part of the yearly cycle, so too is the dying in Autumn. Life contains both birth and death. Because life is sacred to us, birth and death are untouchable.

Historically, the days of remembrance fall into this month of Nebelung. The day of 10 November 1914 was the battle of Langemarck, the day 11 November 1918 was the death bringing day of the armistice, and the day of 9 November 1923 was the march to the Feldherrnhalle. Every November the Führer, and with him the whole Nation, returns to the Feldherrnhalle to commemorate our dead martyrs.

Everyone should visit the graves of the dearly departed during this month, taking with them wreaths of flowers and lights of life. The SS Man, who feels especially close to the departed, will light his Jul Earthenware Candlestick in honor of his fallen comrades and the dead of his family on these long dusky evenings.

If more members of the family are gathered, a toast should be drunk in honor of the dead. The Wreath that is destined for the graveyard should hang first on the Jul Wheel for a day or so to deepen the meaning and to let it carry all the special greetings of the family to the family's ancestors.

During this time, pictures of the ancestors should be displayed in the SS corner, and the general talk should be about their good lives and brave deaths.



The SS Woman remembers her fallen husband

The Jul and SS Corner

The photo below shows the typical SS corner and family chest, filled with cherished family and SS mementos. Upon the center of the chest is the Jul Earthenware Candlestick with two Jul Plates, and to one end the Family Book. Behind is a wall draped with beautiful traditional motifs. The chest is made to the request of the family, and can be covered with carved Runic Letters.



The home of an SS Man should be recognizable by its SS corner, which is set aside for special celebrations of his family. In this corner all those things should be kept that remind us of our higher duties. From this Jul and SS corner a happy and strong glow should envelop the home and

all the people living in it. In this corner all those things should be kept that strengthen the voice of our blood and the duties to land and Folk, and everything that demonstrates our beliefs.

The corner should be dominated by the family chest, which holds any family heirlooms as well as the various holiday decorations used throughout the year. A small table may be used at first, but eventually every SS family should have its own chest.

The Jul Earthenware Candlestick stands on the chest all year round, surrounded by the Jul Plates, one for each member of the family, which are used for all the annual community celebrations as well as for birthdays, weddings and the day of death. At times the Jul Plates are replaced by the Jul Wheel, which is used for holding the Tree of Life and the five Wreaths of the Year: one each for Advent, Easter, May, Solstice and Harvest.

The wall behind the chest should be hung with a picture of the Führer and one of the Reichsführer-SS, as well as family pictures, the ancestor names and the memorabilia of war times. The large SS Runes and Swastika must be there, too.

The Jul and SS corner is the measure of how much the SS Man and his wife partake in the customs of the SS.

The Family Book

Every SS Man has to be reminded strictly of his duty here, of which his sons and daughters will remind him also in the future: he must ask his living parents and grandparents to write down all their childhood memories right away, along with any other memories that should be handed down to future generations.

The names and dates on the ancestry plaque will be meaningless to those generations if they are not accompanied by as many stories as possible detailing the lives, difficulties, celebrations and environments in which our ancestors lived. This knowledge of the family blood line will protect future generations against the newly rich and the social climbers.

The grandparents, who often have a very good memory for childhood events, are obliged to record their knowledge and experiences for their great grandchildren. The SS Man should simply walk up to them, put a notebook in front of them and say, 'Now write down how it used to be'. Any reluctance normally fades fast, as the elderly generally enjoy sharing their memories.

When the grandparents are done writing, it is now the turn of the parents of the SS Man. And he himself also should begin to keep a record of his experiences, especially those of the War and the comradeship and heroism of his fellow SS Men.

The stories collected in this way should be read to the family on Yuletide Eve. Thus the essential family spirit will be preserved and strengthened.

Our Runic Letters

For 5,000 years the Nordic Folk have been using Runic Letters to express symbolically a wish or a sacred thought. One of the oldest symbols is the Swastika, which is the sign of the sacred cycle of the Sun and which therefore may be looked upon as the symbol of the ideology of the Nordic Race. Today it is the symbol of our Third Reich.

Each qualifying member of the SS Officer Corps wears the Sig, Gibor, Tyr, Fa and Hagal Runes on his *Totenkopfring*, or 'Death's Head Ring'.

The Man and Yr Runes are used as signs for birth and death respectively, on announcements, obituaries and headstones. The Ing and Odal Runes are signs for the blood (weddings) and the ground (on family estates and farms) respectively.

The Ring is a symbol of the new SS religion. Upon the death of the wearer, it is to be kept at Himmler's Wewelsburg Castle.



The *SS-Totenkopfring* is made of silver, with Runic signs amidst oak leaves engraved on the outside. The inside is engraved with the owner's name, the date he received the ring and the signature of Reichsführer-SS Himmler.

Der Reichsführer **SS**

München, den 1. Dezember 1934

SS-Hauptsturmführer **S c h m i d t**
SS-Nr. 4010, 47. SS-Standarte.

Ich verleihe Ihnen den Totenkopfring der SS.

Er soll sein:

Ein Zeichen unserer Treue zum Führer, unseres unwandelbaren Gehorsams gegen unsere Vorgesetzten und unserer unerschütterlichen Zusammengehörigkeit und Kameradschaft.

Der Totenkopf ist die Mahnung, jederzeit bereit zu sein, das Leben unseres Führers einzusetzen für das Leben der Gesamtheit.

Die Runen dem Totenkopf gegenüber sind Heilszeichen unserer Vergangenheit, mit der wir durch die Weltanschauung des Nationalsozialismus erneut verbunden sind.

Die beiden Sig-Runen versinnbildeln den Namen unserer Schutzstaffel.

Hakenkreuz und Hagall-Runen sollen uns den nicht zu erschütternden Glauben an den Sieg unserer Weltanschauung vor Augen halten.

Umkränzt ist der Ring von Eichenlaub, den Blättern des alten deutschen Laubes.

Dieser Ring ist käuflich nicht erwerbbar und darf nie in fremde Hände kommen.

Mit Ihrem Ausscheiden aus der SS oder aus dem Leben geht dieser Ring zurück an den Reichsführer SS.

Abbildungen und Nachahmungen sind strafbar und Sie haben dieselben zu verhüten.

Tragen Sie den Ring in Ehren!



The SS-Totenkopfring Citation awarded to SS-Hauptsturmführer Schmidt in 1934

The words of the Citation are as follows:

I award you the Death's Head Ring of the SS.

It is intended to be:

A symbol of our loyalty to the Führer, of our unwavering obedience to our superiors and our unshakeable sense of bonding and comradeship.

The Death's Head is the reminder to always be ready to risk one's own life for the life of the whole.

The Runes across from the Death's Head are holy symbols of our past, to which we are once again connected through the philosophy of National Socialism.

Both of the Sig Runes represent the name of our Schutzstaffel.

The Swastika and Hagal Rune are intended to keep our unshakeable belief in the victory of our philosophy in front of our eyes.

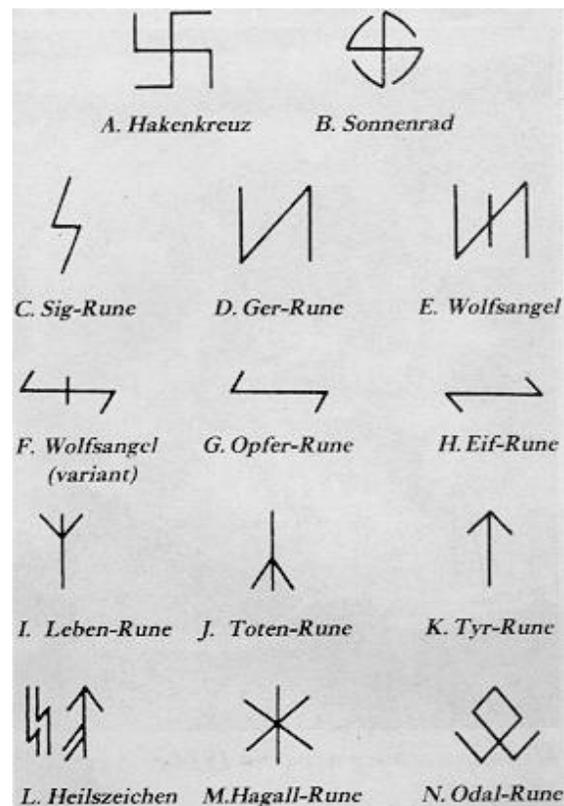
The Ring is encircled by oak leaves, the leaves of the old German tree.

This Ring may not be acquired through purchase nor be allowed to fall into unauthorized hands.

It is to be returned to the Reichsführer-SS upon your discharge from the SS or upon your death.

The making of imitations and copies is a punishable offence, and it is your duty to prevent it.

Wear this ring with honor!



Some of the more common Runic Letters

All of the following Runic Letters should be used liberally in the Yuletide baking and in the decoration of the Easter Eggs and presents:



Hagal Rune: The All Surrounding

The word *Hagal* means 'hail', as in hailstones, and is symbolic of uncontrolled and destructive forces. Through the destruction of the enemy peace is achieved.



Sig Rune: The Victorious Sun

The Sun promises winning strength. The two Sig Runes on the SS flag express the old saying *Sig und Sal*, the redemption that comes from the victory of the Sun.



Gibor Rune: The Victorious Life

The Gibor Rune is constructed of the Sig and Is Runes. The Is Rune is the north-south line of the year and symbolizes the life or personality.



Tyr Rune: Honorable Self-Sacrifice

The Tyr Rune symbolizes the Germanic God of War, Tyr (or Ziu, or Zeus). Its meaning is self-sacrifice for the sake of honor.



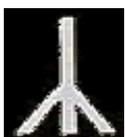
Fa (or Fe) Rune: Riches

Fe is from the Germanic *Feod*, or 'farm animals', symbolizing riches. The Fa and Tyr Runes together denote self sacrifice until death, despite material or worldly goods.



Man Rune: Birth

The lifted arms show the birth of a living creature.



Yr Rune: Death

The downward pointing arms indicate the death of a living creature. The Man and Yr Runes are taken from the spokes of the Sun Wheel.



Ing Rune: To Be Born

The word *Ing* is used in modern German as a suffix for hundreds of words. The Rune shows the linking of two life carriers and is therefore used at weddings.



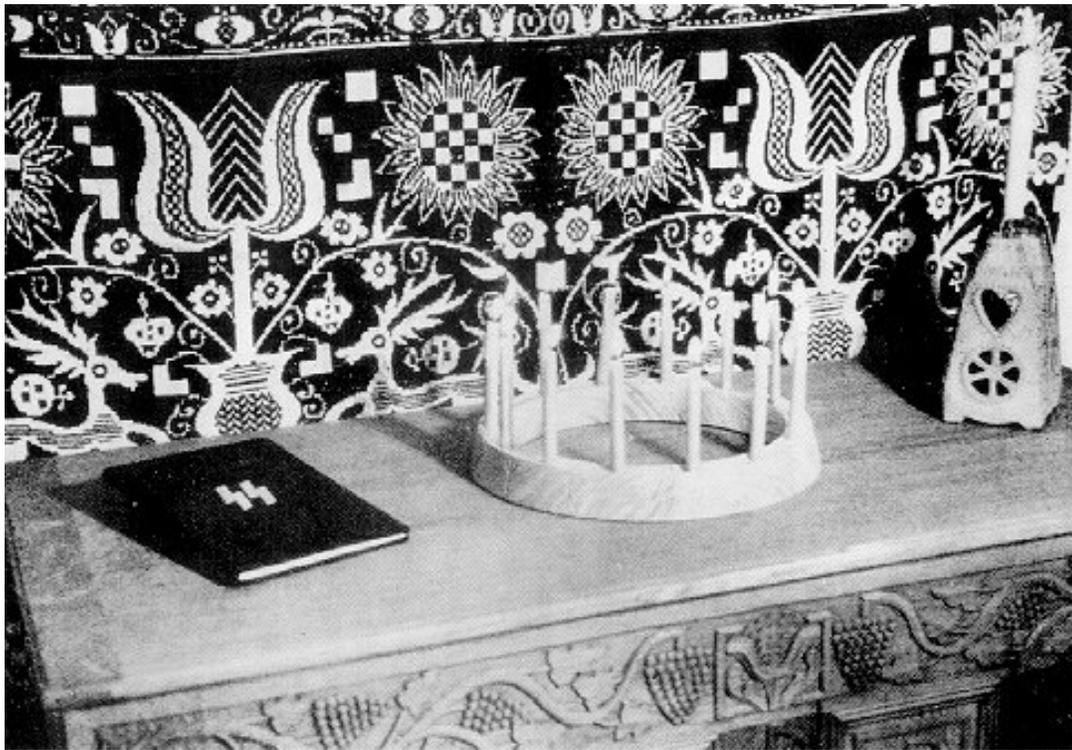
Odal (or Alod) Rune: Kinship

The Odal Rune stands for everything we connect with the Homeland, the family estate, the family farm and the soil.

The Birthday Celebration

Although not one of the great feast days of the year, the birthday deserves mention since it is an annual celebration for every member of the family. As such it should be thoughtfully organized by the whole family.

Decorated with candles, the birthday child's Jul Plate stands on the family chest surrounded by small presents, the cake and flowers of the season. There should be a small amount of earth on the Jul Plate, and the Jul Earthenware Candlestick should be surrounded by small candles equal in number to the child's age. The candles could also be arranged on the outer ring of the Jul Wreath. Alternatively, you could buy a beautiful wooden ring, decorated with Runic Letters.



The *Geburtstagsring*, or 'Birthday Ring'

The Birthday Ring can accommodate 14 candles. Each year one additional candle is lit, until at the age of 14 the child joins the Hitler-Jugend or Bund Deutscher Mädel and begins to shape his or her own life. On either side of the Birthday Ring are the Jul Earthenware Candlestick and the Family Book. A ceramic candle ring is available from Porzellan-Allach GmbH.

A general rule about gift giving is that the value of the gift is not linked to its commercial worth, but rather to the care and attention with which it was made or chosen and to the consequent bond it creates between giver and receiver. When giving presents to children, guard against spoiling them.

Special Celebrations within the Family

Four special celebrations are held within the framework of the SS family:

1. The naming of the child,
2. The enrollment of the child into the SS youth organizations,
3. The wedding ceremony and the wife's induction into the SS,
4. The funeral of family members.

Even to this day it seems impossible for many people to imagine these celebrations without the church and its servants. The woman folk especially have been held captive by the trappings of wedding veil, incense, organ music and dark churches; and they have hardly thought they could do without them.

The Party and its organizations are seeking to promote the celebration of these festive occasions in accordance with our ideologies. But repeatedly it has been observed that the ceremonies of the church were merely copied, with State officials performing the most important actions, and that the celebrations were used for propaganda purposes outside the family.

It must be repeated: our celebrations have to reflect our ideology. They must be simple, clear and to the point. Only then can we fully understand and appreciate them, and only then will they give us inner strength. The Nordic man very definitely rejects any mystical atmosphere created by light effects, nice smells and rousing speeches. We know that our feelings are deeply moved when we have a clear and true understanding of the greater connections of our fate. We are happiest when we receive new vigor and willpower from such an hour of celebration.

Our celebrations should be carried along by the comradeship, participation and sense of belonging of all concerned. In this they already differ from routine church celebrations. The speaker should vary at every occasion, and should not always be the Unit Leader or Senior Leader. A close friend or comrade is often much better equipped to do the honors.

Invitations should go only to the actual participants. Any theatrical widening of this circle is strongly condemned.

The following guidelines present an approved way of celebrating as true SS Men and Women should. But every family should find a form within these guidelines that is best suited to its circumstances.

The Naming of the Child

The giving of the name to the child is a family celebration, with only the parents and the very closest relatives, along with some close SS friends of the father, present. The father or his proxy will give the name and an SS member will accept the child into the SS community.

The giving of the name should take place in the family home. The rooms should be decorated with greenery and flowers. The family will sit in a semicircle, with the parents in the middle and the mother holding the child.



The one who gives the name, either the father or another member of the family if he wishes, speaks first. The speech should be short and simple, thanking the mother and connecting the name to the child.

The right choice of a name is of the greatest importance. Please do read the book of names by B.V. Selchow, which offers a collection of good old German names along with their meanings. It also includes a section on foreign names and their countries of origin, to forewarn against their use.

The SS member will now receive the child into the SS community. He too will speak simply, as a friend of the father. Topics he might speak on are:

1. The rising Germany in which the child will grow up,
2. The Führer's love for all children,
3. The Führer's reverence for mothers,
4. The woman's noble deed in contributing to the increase of the Folk,
5. The duties of SS members within the wider SS family.

The SS member then gives a small gift to the mother. It could be an Ancestry Book or a piece of jewelry such as a brooch. In some areas of Germany (Schleswig-Holstein, Köln) every SS Company owns some cradles, which are brought to the house of the newly born. Very needy families get a free layette, and every baby's name is engraved on a cradle.

The child should be given its own Jul Plate on the day of name giving. The Jul Plate will be used on every birthday and for every great celebration in the years to come.

The naming ceremony is brought to a happy end with either a festive meal or a nice chat around the coffee table. Some light music may be played.

The SS Youth Organizations

At the ages of 10 and 14, young Germans take important steps for their future: they make their first promise to the Führer at 10, and swear their first oath of obedience at 14. They also become members of the appropriate political organizations, where they will be educated within the circle of their comrades. These two important days in the lives of the young boys and girls will become annual celebrations for their National Socialist families.

The church chooses these ages for a child's first communion and confirmation. But a great deal of the attention and expectations of the child on these occasions centers upon the new suit, the new dress, the new prayer book, the present from the godparents. The 10-year-old will understand hardly anything of the events at the church, and the 14-year-old will understand not much more.

But the 10-year-old son and daughter of a National Socialist parent will know exactly what is happening to them when, on 19 April, wearing the handsome uniform of the Jungvolk or the Jungmädels, after the singing of a solemn song and listening to the comradesly speech of the Section Leader, they proclaim together with thousands of others in the Reich:

I promise to do my duty in the German Jungvolk / Jungmädels with love and loyalty to the Führer and to our flag, so help me God.

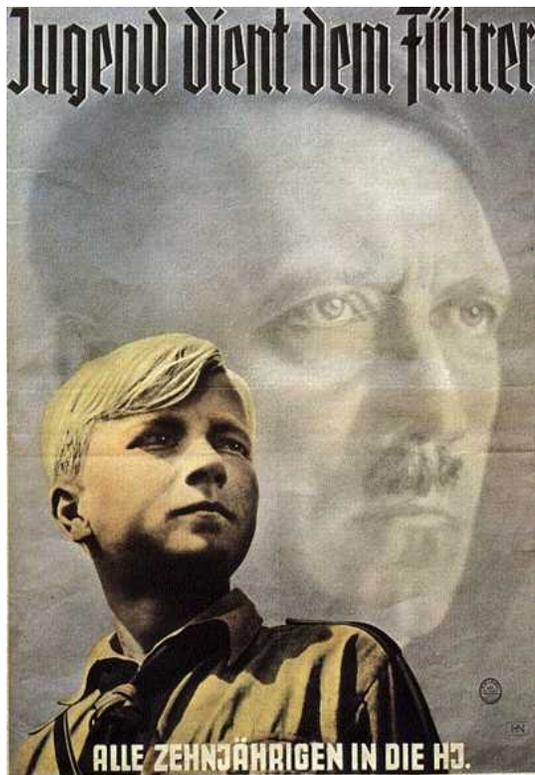
When a boy proclaims these words, he sees a new world light up to which he now belongs, a world of Army drums, trumpets, marching comrades, flags and Leaders. The parents stand by and are happy they were able to give the Führer the best birthday present they could possibly give him, and so thank him for all he has done.

At home the 10-year-old will be the center of the family. He or she will receive a small present: perhaps a picture of the Führer, a book or the neatly written promise just taken. The family meal should be festive, with flowers brightening up the table and with the child's favorite foods. The father will say a few words as a reminder of the importance of this day, which will surely be remembered throughout the child's life, thus providing a sense of direction for the future.

At the age of 14 the boys step up from the Jungvolk into the Hitler-Jugend, and the girls from the Jungmädel into the Bund Deutscher Mädel.



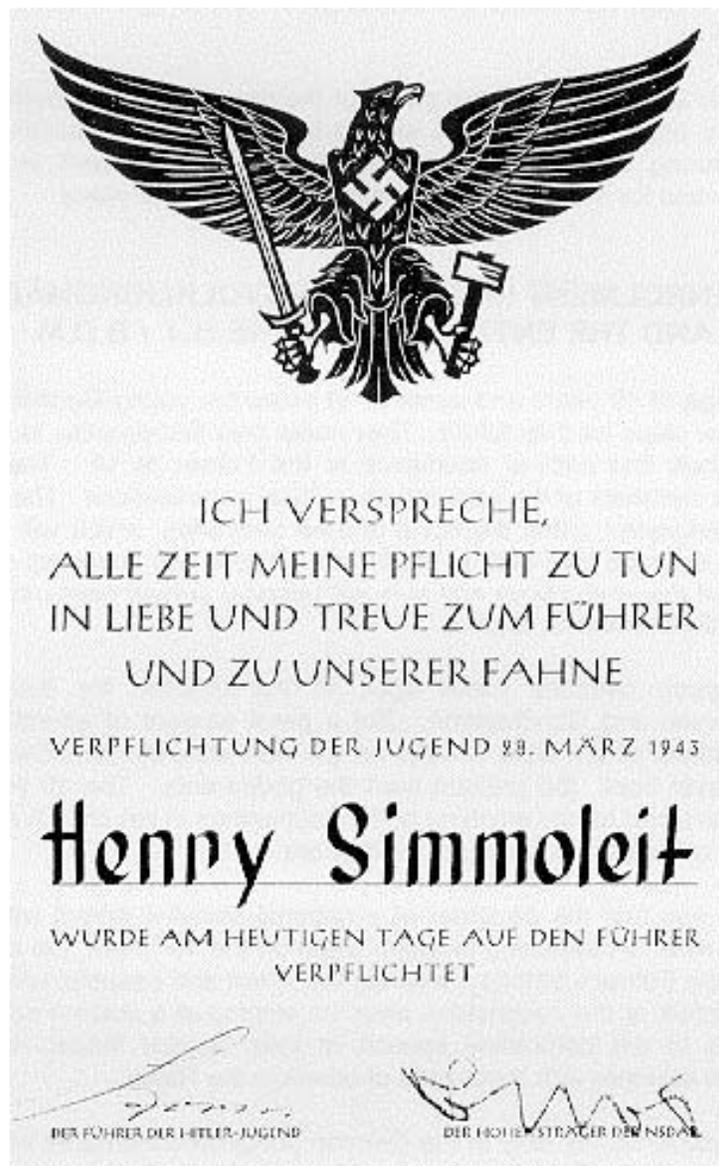
Life turning point: children being inducted into the Hitler-Jugend and Bund Deutscher Mädel



The solemn ceremony takes place on 20 April, the Führer's birthday. The words of the Oath taken are:

I vow to serve the Führer Adolf Hitler truly and selflessly in the Hitler-Jugend / Bund Deutscher Mädel. I vow to work always for the unity and comradeship of German youth. I vow obedience to the Reich Youth Leader and to all the Leaders of the Hitler-Jugend / Bund Deutscher Mädel. I vow to be worthy always of our sacred flag, so help me God.

This solemn promise should be echoed in the way this day is celebrated by the entire family.



The Oath pictured above was taken by Henry Simmoleit upon joining the Hitler-Jugend. The Citation is dated 28 March 1943. Many Oaths were taken around the time of Hitler's birthday.

The Wedding Ceremony and the Wife's Induction into the SS

Since 1875 the law has required that every marriage be acknowledged by the State. Even so, many people see the church ceremony as more important, since until the start of the Second Reich only the church wedding was considered valid. This view has even been encouraged by State officials themselves, who have often performed the civil ceremony in cold, dark and drab rooms, making it a mere formality.

The Third Reich has a different view of marriage: it sees it as the nucleus of the State. People who want to marry are advised and tested for suitability and for genetic health. The State cares for the family, seeks to remove financial obstacles as far as possible, and increasingly stresses the family's importance.

All these changes should now be noticeable at a wedding in the Registry Office. In some cases, local authorities have even made a lovely room available for the ceremony. In time, State officials in smart uniforms will perform the ceremony in accord with the edicts of the Reichsführer-SS.

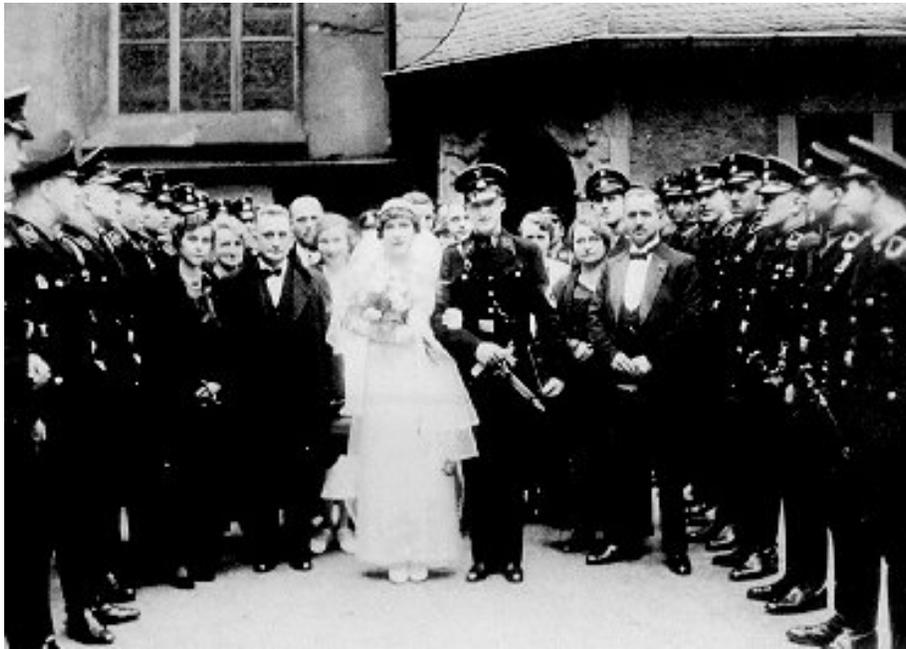
Meanwhile, the wedding of an SS Man may be officiated by any high ranking SS official. The exchange of rings should follow the wedding vows.



This photo shows the wedding hall in the small town of Thalheim, near Wels. The words of the Führer adorn the wall:

Die Familie ist die kleinste, aber wertvollste Einheit im Aufbau des ganzen Staatsgefüges.

The family is the smallest but most important unit in building the whole state structure.



The groom holds his SS Dagger as well as a Wedding edition of *Mein Kampf* that was given to the couple during the ceremony. The bride's dress should be festive but the veil and bridal wreath pictured here are oriental traditions and should be avoided.



The couple should be joined as man and wife in the Registry Ceremony. The *SS-Eheweihe*, or 'marriage blessing service', pictured above from Wewelsburg Castle in 1935, smacks too much of meaningless church rituals and should be avoided.

The wedding meal should occur in the home of the newly wed couple if at all possible. The tables should be adorned with greenery and flowers, with special attention to the places of the bride and groom. Various groups connected to the SS can help with cooking, music, decorations, and so on. These groups include the Hitler-Jugend, Bund Deutscher Mädel and NS-Frauenschaft.

It is now, at the meal, that the wife is accepted into the SS. A close SS friend should sit opposite the couple. Just before the meal starts or at the beginning of it he addresses the couple on the value and regard the State and the SS have for the family and the importance of the preservation of the Folk. He should talk about the SS motto *Meine Ehre heißt Treue*, 'My Honor Is Loyalty', which now becomes the motto for the woman too. He should point out that as long as the couple adheres to the laws of the SS and performs their duty, the SS will protect them.

The speaker then accepts the woman into the ranks of the SS and hands the couple a small gift, perhaps a book or a picture. He also gives them a wooden plate bearing bread and salt, and two earthenware mugs. These gifts shall remind them to hold to a simple and clean style of life.

The closer the friendship between speaker and couple, the more meaningful his speech. He witnessed the growth of the relationship and the love between bride and groom, as well as the occasional disagreements, resolved quickly in true SS fashion. He also helped them grow closer.

The words of the speaker should end with a *Sieg Heil* for the Führer and for the newly weds. The remainder of the feast should be happy and if possible end with dancing.



In 1933, 50 National Socialist couples were married at the Church of Lazarus in Berlin

The Funeral Rites

This most solemn of our celebrations has to be the most carefully planned. It is the duty of the SS Unit Leader to see that everything runs smoothly. He may choose his best SS Men to ensure it.

First, the Unit Leader will visit the wife or parents of his SS comrade to see how he can help. He will do his best to alleviate their pain and feelings of helplessness, assisting the family in a manly way.

At the same time, he starts preparations for the funeral, which is far more straightforward now that all the complications that used to arise from the need for a church burial were swept aside by a Decree of the Interior Minister in 1939.

The lying in state will happen either in the home of the deceased, his work place, the SS meeting place or the cemetery. In all but the last case, the coffin should stand in the middle of the room, draped with the SS Flag and bearing the Dagger and cap of the deceased. Six SS Men in uniform, wearing steel helmets and white gloves, provide the Guard of Honor.

The room is decorated with flowers and greenery by the SS Man's comrades. The simple green fir wreath, sign of ever renewing life, should display the SS Runes on its ribbon and be placed on the coffin as a greeting from the deceased's SS Unit and from the Reichsführer-SS.

The family should be given private time to say good-bye before the public ceremony, which is to be followed by the walk to the graveyard. The coffin should be transported on an open, flat cart, so that the SS Flag can be seen from afar. Horses should not be dressed in black, but the cart should be decorated with greenery.

The six pall bearers walk beside the cart. The SS musicians and the SS Unit walk in front of the coffin, the family members and close friends behind it. Other people may follow, and all wreaths are transported on a separate cart.

At the graveside the coffin is put in full view. Only one piece of music should be played, after which the Unit Commander says a few heartfelt words about the life of the deceased and his sense of duty and commitment to the SS, his family and his work. The mourners are reminded that he has returned to his ancestors and will live on in his children and in the Order of the SS.

Then the Unit Commander takes the SS Man's Dagger, the blade of which bears the SS motto *Meine Ehre heißt Treue*, from the coffin and exchanges it with the Dagger of a relative or close SS comrade, as a sign of the continuation of the SS through struggle and duty.

The SS pall bearers now lower the coffin slowly into the grave to the sound of a drum roll and a volley from the Honor Guard. The Honor Guard should not stand too near the grave, as wives and mothers are upset by the loud noise of gunfire.

After the coffin has been lowered, the relatives and close friends may step forward to throw flowers into the grave. Then the SS comrades will start to fill up the grave in solemn silence. When finished, the SS Men form a ring around the grave and sing the SS Song of Loyalty. It is especially important that this final part of the ceremony be flawless.



The funerals of the wives of SS Men are essentially the same apart from the exchange of Daggers. It is the duty of the Unit Commander to support his men in any way possible in the event of a funeral of a wife or a child.

On all these sad and solemn occasions the strength, unity and comradeship of the SS will be the greatest comfort to the grieving SS Man, helping him in time to overcome his grief and sorrow.

The Oath of the SS Man

It is fitting to conclude this summary of the celebrations in the life of the SS family with the Oath of the SS Man:

Ich schwöre Dir, Adolf Hitler, als Führer und Kanzler des Reiches Treue und Tapferkeit. Ich gelobe Dir und den von Dir bestimmten Vorgesetzten Gehorsam bis in den Tod, so wahr mir Gott helfe.

I swear to you, Adolf Hitler, as Führer and Chancellor of the Reich, loyalty and courage. I vow to you and to my superiors chosen by you obedience to the death, so help me God.

