

## The Meaning of the Name Eisenbeiß

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The origin of the meaning of the name Eisenbeiß is uncertain. The first half of the name, Eisen, means 'iron'. The second half, beiß, could be a variation of the word 'beißen' which is a verb meaning 'to bite'. The direct translation provides a word combination that is quite unusual.

While some people have speculated that the first Eisenbeiß had quite the grip with his mouth, other speculation is that the first Eisenbeiß was a blacksmith who made the metal portions of bridles for horses' mouths (iron bit vs. iron bite). Another thought is that this name refers to the vise that a blacksmith uses.

The discovery of a coat of arms that shows knights with swords in their mouths provides another interesting possibility. Biting a sword made of iron ... "iron bite"!

A tombstone in Nürnberg has two knights, one standing on the shoulders of the other, holding swords in their mouths (biting iron).

### Clarifications

The ending of the name Eisenbeiß cannot be properly spelled in English, as the German language has an additional letter of the alphabet called the 'es zet' ... ß. This letter is a combination of the old German handwritten letter 's' and the old handwritten letter 'z'.

The 'es zet' pushes these two letters together. The word 'es' means 's' in German and the word 'zet' means 'z' in German.

The handwritten German alphabet depicts a two 's' characters. The first 's' is the long 's'. The second is called a 'schloss s'. Per Ray Eisenbeis (a:3.1.5.3.7-4.8.2.1.3-7), all words should end with an ß or a 'schloss s', never an 's'. Schloss means lock.

This explains why there is an ß at the end of our name. The website listed at the beginning of this doc provides the old handwritten German alphabet.

Many years ago, a decision was made replace the 'es zet' with the letters 'ss'. This is unfortunate, as the letters 'sz' are a more accurate replacement. See the "Old German Handwriting" section later in this book.

This confusion has resulted in a variety of spellings of the name Eisenbeiß. Today the name can be found spelled Eisenbeiß, Eisenbeisz, Eisenbeiss, Eisenbeis, Eisenbise, Eisenbies, Icenbice, Isenbice, Eisenbeiser, Eysenbeiß, and Eysenbey, and Эйзенбейс (in Russia).

An additional peculiarity of the German language is the use of the 'umlaut'. This consists of double dots located above vowels that change the pronunciation of the vowel ... ä, ï, ö, and ü. The standard for converting these characters, when a limited character set is used, is to follow the character with the letter 'e'. ä = ae, ï = ie, ö = oe, and ü = ue.

While both adoptions and illegitimate births are found in modern times, they also occurred regularly throughout the past couple of centuries. Rather than trying to sort who fathered a child, this document identifies who reared the child and served as the parents.

All people who carried the name Eisenbeiß are listed regardless of their bloodlines, for they also carried the Eisenbeiß family values that they acquired from their parents.

To maintain authenticity, old letters and written stories have been reproduced exactly as received, including spelling errors and typos.