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Gerwig of Volmarstein

DOI: [10.25716/amad-85364](https://doi.org/10.25716/amad-85364)

Lexikonartikel | Article in a reference book, 2022

Empfohlene Zitierweise | Suggested Citation:

Georg Schrott, Gerwig of Volmarstein, in: Dictionary of Cistercian Saints, hrsg. von Mirko Breitenstein, Jörg Sonntag und Alkuin Schachenmayr, Frankfurt am Main: AMAD, 2022. DOI: [10.25716/amad-85364](https://doi.org/10.25716/amad-85364).



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Gefördert durch

 Deutsche
Forschungsgemeinschaft



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Gerwig of Volmarstein (12th c.)

1. Name variants: G. von Wolmundstein, Gerwicus, Guervicus, Gerwich, Gerwick

2. Places: Volmarstein, Siegburg, Regensburg, Waldsassen, Nordwald

3. Biography: There is no evidence of G.'s historicity. The highly fictional foundation legend of Waldsassen tells that G., descended of a knightly family in Volmarstein at the Ruhr River, went on a knight's journey. He allegedly fatally injured Margrave Diepold III of Vohburg in a tournament. Seized by remorse, he decided to become a monk in Siegburg. Later, he followed his abbot and designated bishop Kuno (in office from 1126) to Regensburg as his advisor. G. then moved to the Nordwald near the town of Eger, where he led a hermit community. One day Diepold, who was hunting in his forests, came upon the hermits. Upon recognizing G., Diepold gave him land to found a monastery. G. went to Clairvaux to ask Bernard for founding monks. Bernard could not spare any, but he gave G. a Cistercian cow. The first monks came from Volkenroda. The story about G. breaks off at this point. There is no evidence of medieval veneration, but Henriquez' 'Menologium Cisterciense' refers to G. as "blessed."

4. Cultus:

a. Relics: –

b. Liturgical commemoration: 5 Oct

c. Patronage: The name G. was regularly given to monks of Waldsassen in the 17th and 18th c. as their name in religion; "Gervica" appears likewise among the nuns as of 1863.

d. Attributes: –

5. Fontes: "Fundatio latinalis" and "Fundatio teutunicalis" (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, MS Clm 1091, fol. 1–7v and 8–20), in: *Fundatio monasterii Waldsassensis*, ed. O. HOLDER-EGGER, MGH.SS 15, 2, 1088–1093; F. KEINZ (ed.), *Die Gründung des Klosters Waldsassen. Altdeutsches Gedicht zur Tirschenreuther Schmeller–Feier*, München 1885.

6. Literature: L. BEER, *Heiligenlegende für alle Tage des Jahres. 2. Jahrgang. Lebensbilder heiliger und gottseliger Personen mit Berücksichtigung der neueren Zeit und unserer deutschen Lande*, Juli – Dezember, Regensburg 1928, 981–984; C. HENRIQUEZ, *Menologium Cisterciense notationibus illustratum*, Antwerp 1630, 337; G. SCHROTT, „Ihr Schutzpatrone des Stiftlandes...“ *Die fünf Waldsassener Seligen und ihre ungewöhnliche Geschichte*, Kallmünz 2017 (with further references); G. SCHROTT, *Die Waldsassener Seligen*, in: *CistC* 127 (2020), 53–62.

7. Illustrations: Fresco cycle painted by Jakob Steinfels in the choir of the former monastery church Waldsassen (shortly before 1700); drawing or aquatint by Philipp Schumacher as illustration for BEER, *Heiligenlegende*, next to p. 984; bronze fountain figure by Engelbert Süß in the city park Schwanenwiese in Waldsassen (1992).

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