# Barbara Dahl
## A 16th Century Style Toy Doll

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## Documentation Overview

Barbara is a reproduction of a German toy doll (*puppe*) made in the 16th century style. The doll is made of sturdy wood as it is intended as a plaything, rather than of another period material which would make it more of a fashion doll. Barbara features jointed arms so she get in and out of clothing, as paintings depict little girls holding clothed dolls. Her period style clothing is made from scraps of leftover cloth, as would have been typical of a toy. This doll, as made, is intended for a well-to-do girl of about 6-9 who lived in Germany and who was learning how to dress for her station.



A German 16th century doll:
Detail from Foemina Mediocris conditionis in Silesia[1]



My reproduction doll:
Wood Doll with Articulated Arms

# Extant Doll

In December 2013, I found a black and white photograph of a small doll[2] from the first half of the 16th century. I was captivated by her and set out to learn how to make my own doll. She is 21 cm. high (8.5 inches) and made of lindenholz (limewood). Color, high resolution images of her are in the Germanischen Nationalmuseum Nürnberg[3]. According to The Story of German Doll Making (Krombholz)[4], the doll was found in a Rhine River castle behind some wood paneling and is the earliest documented Thuringian wooden doll. Other extant dolls exist from the tail end of the 16th century (notably Pandora), but they are considered fashion dolls, which were intended for adults to display fashions of the times (and later were given to children to play with). I wanted to make a doll that was for play from the start!





High resolution color images of Thuringian Doll[1]





Original black & white photo I worked from (from bildindex[3])

# Dolls in Paintings

Several different dolls have been painted with young girls in 16th century paintings. Some may simply have been painted wood, but others appear to be wearing fabric clothing (based on the drape of the painted garments). Most of the dolls appear to be easily held in a small hand, so not too large nor too small.

Detail of Isabella from the painting of Archduke Charles, the later Holy Roman Emperor Charles V., with his sisters Eleonore and Isabella (1501-1525)
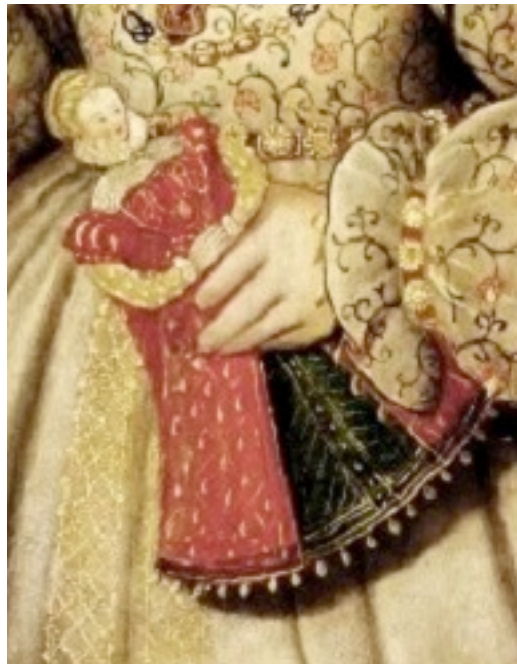
Detail from Charity (1530) by Lucas Cranach

Detail from Charity (1534) by Lucas Cranach

Detail from the A portrait of Girl by Isaac Claesz van Swanenburgh (1581)

Detail from the Portrait of Archduchess Catherine Renata of Austria (1577)

Detail from the Portrait of Lady Arabella Stuart (1577)

# Doll Style

Wooden dolls in this time period come in four styles: stocke (stump) doll without arms or legs, a stocke with immovable arms and no legs, a stocke with movable arms, and a fully limbed doll.

I chose to make a stocke doll with movable arms because, as a little girl, I would have wanted my doll to be able to put her clothing on and off. I specifically decided not to create articulated legs because I felt it was easier to hold her without them (good for little hands) and because I could not find an extant example of a fully articulated doll (though it is clear to me they were being made at this time by the woodcuts and by references to the dollmaker trade in Nuremberg[5]).

Below are images of each type of wood doll known to exist in the 16th century.
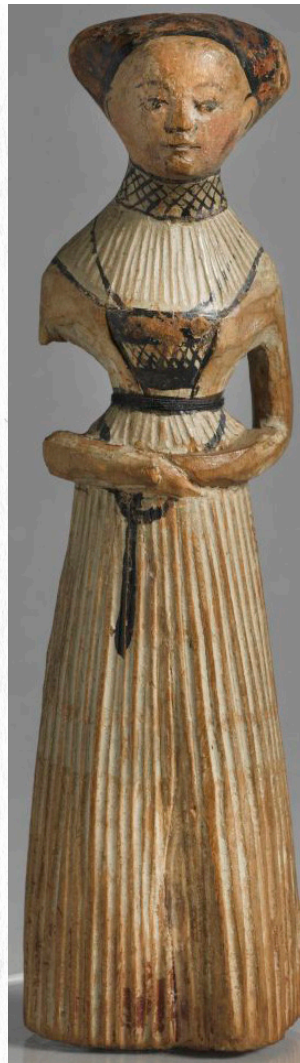


Detail of dollmaker woodcut[5]



Detail of dollmaker woodcut[6]



Stocke (stump) doll (1600)

Stocke with arms[2] (1530)

Stocke with movable arms from 1500s (artist rendition)

Articulated doll from 17th century

# Doll Materials

Dolls were made of many things in this period, including rags, wood, bone, clay, wire, and lead. I chose to make Barbara from wood because I felt it would be the most sturdy and longest lasting of the period-appropriate materials. To do this, I carved a piece of limewood, the same wood from which is made the earliest known wooden doll from 1530[2]. The doll was carved completely by hand with period-appropriate tools (and NO sandpaper). Her body is carved smooth (as she'll have separate cloth garments), but I carved an elaborate, large braid atop her head in the style of the day (so she'll look good in her hats). The wood was sealed with hide glue, a period practice. Barbara's face was painted with homemade oil paints in lamp black and iron oxide. Barbara's clothing is made of linen, wool, and silk thread.

Progress photos of my wood carving over the course of three months

# Doll Clothing

Barbara wears a proper German ladies apparel, consisting of the following garments:

*Hemd* (smock): This is a linen pleated smock with gold stem stitch and seam insertion, all in the period style.

*Unterrock* (kirtle): A black linen kirtle with rolled pleats.

*Schaub* (over gown): A red wool front-opening gown with set-in sleeves.

*Wulsthaube* (headscarf): A simple rectangle of linen, wrapped around her head.

*Tellerbarret* (hat): A red wool hat with slashes.

I have plans to make her more outfits, too! I've included a pattern sheet in this documentation for reference.

# Doll Name

As soon as the doll began to emerge from the wood, she became imbued with something extra and she immediately had a name: Barbara. Not only is Barbara a period 16th century German name (i.e., Barbara Schellenberger, Barbara Schedlin, Barbara of Brandenburg-Ansbach-Kulmbach), but for what else is "Barbie" a nickname?

Barbara's last name was suggested by Mistress Katharina Runzin Zirkles (Katrine de Saint Bruic). Dahl is a German surname in use in the 16th century.

And thus we have Barbara Dahl!

# Summary

Time: First half of the 16th century
Place: Central Germany
Style: Stump Doll Carving with Articulated Arms and Cloth Garments

Material: Limewood (Basswood), Linen, Wool
Method: Hand carving with knives, gouges, and other period-appropriate tools, as well as period-appropriate finishing materials (hide glue and linseed oil paint), and hand sewing

Complexity of the item: High
Number and variety of items: Six (doll, hemd, untertock, schaube, haube, tellerbarrett)
Surface decorations: Incised carving, paint
Variety of materials required: Six (wood, hide glue, oil paint, wool, linen, silk thread)
Variety of techniques used: Seven (sawing, carving, scraping, drilling, gluing, painting, sewing)
Difficulty of techniques: Moderate to High
Functionality of Moving Parts: They move!
Extant gone to ensure authenticity: High

# References

1. Weigel, Jost Amman für Hans. SCHLESIEN / SILESIA: Foemina Mediocris conditionis in Silesia. Ein Handtwercksfraw in der Schlesien. 1577.

2. Wood Doll (1530). http://www.bildindex.de/bilder/mi07816a06a.jpg (black and white image in the Bildindex database)

3. Wood Doll (1530). Germanischen Nationalmuseum Nürnberg. PI.O.2993. http://objektkatalog.gnm.de/objekt/Pl.O.2993 (color, high resolution images)

4.  Krombholz, Mary Gorham. The Story of German Doll Making: 1530-2000. Grantsville, MD: Hobby House Press

5. Schwarz , Helmut. "History of the Nuremberg Toy Trade and Industry." 2003. http://www.musee-du-jouet.fr/europe/nurembergang.doc

**Additional Reading:**

Bernt, Walther. Altes Werkzeug. Munich: Callwey. (Depicts 16th century tools with a focus on Nuremburg tools. Contains pictures of 16th century tools from the collection of Elector Augustus of Saxony.)

Clauß Schach makes wooden dolls and boxes (woodcut). Mendel Hausbuch (Amb. 317b.2, fol. 10v), 1558. http://www.nuernberger-hausbuecher.de/75-Amb-2-317b-10-v/data

Baxandall, Michael. *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany*. Yale University Press

Dorge, Valerie, and F. Carey Howlett, eds. 1998. Painted Wood: History and Conservation. Los Angeles, CA: Getty Conservation Institute. http://hdl.handle.net/10020/gci_pubs/paintedwood

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Mackenstein, Hans Richard, and Theodore Crom. Sixteenth Century Nurmberg Tools. Chronical of the Early American Industries Association 54, no. 2 (June 2001), 81-85

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