



Border Marking Signs of the Town of Geradstetten

Township signs of Geradstetten, as the one pictured above, are very old. [The original text shows an old drawing of a border marking stone with the above symbol, with the caption: Border marking stone with the township sign of the town of Geradstetten from the Lagerbuch of A. Kieser 1686.] The signs were not connected with heraldic forms and colors, and served mainly as a sign on the border stones showing the town's property. The sign of the town – a capital “M” with a dagger cross on top was first recorded in the *Forstlagerbuch* [Forest Stock Book] of A. Kieser, 1686. The sign itself was already known in the 15th Century as a stone mason's sign in the Neckar Valley region. The sign first appeared locally in the *Border Marking Proceedings of 1776*.

Nothing is definitely known of the meaning of the sign. In the opinion of experts, these signs have evaded modern interpretation. The supposition of J. Seibold, that the “M” refers to the St. Michael Church in Winterbach, could very well be the case. Churches consecrated to this saint are much older than our town.

In the course of the 19th Century the township signs of the communities of the region developed into coats of arms. Since 1845 the sign crops up in the Geradstetten seal, and since 1926 also as the mayoral office seal. By adoption of the colors, it was elevated to an actual coat of arms.

According to the *Coat of Arms Book of the County of Waiblingen of 1970* published by Gönner and Bardua, the coat of arms of Geradstetten is:

In gold background, the black capital letter M with a black dagger cross set upon it. Flag colors: black and yellow.

Mayor Johann Fr. Lederer remarked in the Bordermarking Proceedings of 1776:

As in our marking and counting, the marking or counting stones sometimes lack our township sign, the dagger over M shown here, and often none or almost none are numbered, and one can also not always know how far apart they should stand. Because also that since 1769, that is 7 years ago, no marking stone survey was made...every main stone should be marked, if it is not so already, with the coat of arms and number. The stonemason should chisel these in cleanly and clearly.

After the town reforms [in which Geradstetten was administratively combined with several neighboring towns including Grunbach] the coat of arms was revised, showing now the original Geradstetten cross in combination with the Grunbach post horn.