

Searching for the “von”: Details on the Elevation of Julius von Haast to the Austrian Nobility

Martin Krenn

Natural History Museum Vienna (Naturhistorisches Museum Wien), Archive for the History of Science (Archiv für Wissenschaftsgeschichte), Burgring 7, A-1010 Vienna, Austria

Email: martin.krenn@nhm-wien.ac.at

The article deals with one aspect of Sir Julius von Haast’s biography in detail: his elevation to the Austrian nobility in 1875. Haast, who by this time had been living in New Zealand for almost 20 years, was knighted by Emperor Franz Joseph, not so much for his outstanding services to the exploration of New Zealand, but more for his outstanding donations of objects to Austria (especially moa skeletons). Henceforth, he was entitled to call himself “von” Haast. Particular attention is paid to the influence of Haast’s colleague and friend Ferdinand von Hochstetter in the historic process of Haast’s ennoblement.

Keywords: Austrian nobility, coat of arms, Ferdinand von Hochstetter, Imperial Order of the Iron Crown, Julius von Haast

Introduction

The German-born geologist Sir Johann Franz Julius von Haast (1822–1887), was highly decorated for his scientific achievements although he had not originally pursued an academic career and probably only attended a few lectures at the University of Bonn (Kirschbaum 2022). After receiving the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Tübingen in 1862¹ (arranged by his friend Ferdinand von Hochstetter) and getting elected as a fellow of the British Royal Society in 1867 (Müllerott 1966; Maling 2017), Haast was awarded various titles of nobility from European countries such as Great Britain and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In fact, he received the Austrian knighthood, which entitled him to call himself “von Haast”, 11 years before being invested with the British knighthood in recognition of his achievements as a New Zealand commissioner for the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in London (Maling 2017).

This biographical detail about Haast – his ennoblement by the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph I (1830–1916) – has been continuously mentioned in research, but so far without going into greater detail (see for instance Gebhardt 1969: 224; Maling 2017). Based on the archival documents in the repository of nobility files [Adelsarchiv] of the Austrian State Archives [Österreichisches Staatsarchiv], the historical process that led to the award of the title of nobility to Haast will be examined more closely. Julius von Haast’s correspondence with his colleague and friend Ferdinand von Hochstetter (1829–1884), prepared by Sascha Nolden, will be of particular importance (Nolden 2013: 164 onwards).

Austrian Nobility in General

The Austrian nobility was a historic status group within the Habsburg Monarchy that was officially abolished in 1919 after the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in November 1918. On 3 April 1919, the Austrian National Assembly decided to abolish the nobility by passing the Law on the Abolition of Nobility [Adelsaufhebungsgesetz].² The last aristocratic status elevation in Austria was when Emil Homan Ritter von Hermiberg (1862–1945), Minister of Public Works, was elevated on 11 November 1918 to the rank of baron (Anon 1959)³ – one day before the new Austrian First Republic was proclaimed in Vienna on 12 November 1918.

In historical perspective, the Austrian nobility – like the nobility of other monarchical European countries (Demel 2005; Hechberger 2010) – arose from the feudal system of the Middle Ages (Hoke 1996: 62–64) and was characterised by great diversity in terms of ranking and linguistic, ethnic and religious affiliations (Winkelbauer 1992; Mat'a 2019). This was reflected in the diversity of the dual monarchy [Doppelmonarchie]. Austrian nobility law was also extremely complex (see for instance Binder-Krieglstein 2000). Therefore, only pertinent aspects of this legislation playing a decisive role in the ennobling of Haast will be discussed here.

First of all, it is important to note that there were significant differences regarding the various ranks of nobility. In general, a distinction was made between higher nobility and lower nobility in the historical Austrian nobility (Frank-Döfering 1989). The Austrian higher nobility was divided into two main ranks: The titles of Prince/Princess (Fürst/Fürstin) and Count/Countess (Graf/Gräfin) were at the top of the aristocratic hierarchy, in contrast to the titles of the lower nobility. Three different levels of titles could be differentiated: Simple nobility – with or without the addition noble of (Edler/Edle von) – followed by Knight (Ritter) and finally the title of Baron/Baroness (Graf/Gräfin). In general, historic research has found that from the sixteenth century onward, the Habsburg policy of ennoblement resulted in quite an “inflation of titles” (Mat'a 2019: 122). Especially those with a “kighthood increasingly became a ‘pool’ of ennobled social climbers”, as Mat'a stated (Mat'a 2019: 123).⁴ Over the centuries, the mounted warriors of the Early Middle Ages became an aristocratic and even social class that could be found in all monarchies of Europe and had already lost its traditional military function in Early Modern History (see for instance Hechberger 2010 or Göttert 2011).

It should be noted that “for newcomers to the aristocracy, only the two lower ranks, and only in exceptional cases the rank of baron, generally came into contention” (Kučera 2012: 52).⁵ This statement applies to the bourgeois newcomer Julius von Haast who was conferred a knighthood and thus placed on the second lowest level of possible aristocratic ranks (see further details below).

It is of special interest at this point, how someone could be ennobled in concrete terms. In principle, a title of nobility could be acquired in two ways: either by transferring an existing title (hereditary transfer) or by conferring a new title of nobility (Binder-Krieglstein 2000: 37–56). In theory, any legally free person in Austria, including women⁶, could apply to be ennobled (Kučera 2012: 53). In addition, there was the possibility for certain groups of people to obtain nobility almost automatically and free of charge based on predefined criteria. These were either long-serving military personnel or the holders of certain Austrian orders. In this context one speaks of a so-called “systematic” nobility (Waldstein-Wartenberg 1964/65: 127f; Binder-Krieglstein 2000: 51f; Županič 2011a: 136ff). Against this background, it is possible to say: “The idea that ennoblement was the result of a decision by the ruler is not entirely wrong, but it certainly does not cover all variants. The Danube monarchy offered a wide range of opportunities to acquire titles” (Županič 2011a: 136).⁷

Specifically, there were the members of four orders that came into consideration for ennoblement:

1. The Austrian Imperial Order of the Iron Crown (Kaiserlicher Orden der Eisernen Krone).
2. The Austrian Imperial Order of Leopold (Kaiserlicher Leopold-Orden).
3. The Military Order of Maria Theresa (Militär-Maria-Theresien-Orden).
4. The Order of Saint Stephen (Königlich-ungarischer Sankt-Stephans-Orden) (Měřička 1974; Ortner and Ludwigstorff 2017; Županič 2021).

By far the most common way of being raised to nobility was to acquire the Imperial Order of the Iron Crown (Županič 2011a: 138; Kučera 2012: 53) as was the case with Haast. A special feature in

Haast's case, however, was that he was not an Austrian national. First of all, a few difficulties had to be surmounted, as discussed in the next section.

The award of one of these four orders made it possible to apply for ennoblement in one of the three lower ranks of nobility, ie to become a nobleman, knight or baron. After such an application, the title of nobility was usually granted without any problems and without a detailed examination procedure (Kučera 2012: 53). The title of nobility was thus the result of an entitlement arising from a specific legal regulation or statute of an order. The ennoblement was therefore not based “on the ruler's decision, but was merely the consequence of an administrative process that was started after the generally known conditions (e.g. acquisition of an order, years of service) by submitting an application to the responsible authorities” (Županič 2011a: 136f).⁸

At the end of the process, the aristocratic title was awarded along with a newly created aristocratic coat of arms (Jäger-Sunstenau 1984; Göbl 1992). In the archive, this process found its way into the so-called nobility files (Adelsarchiv) of the General Administrative Archives (Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv) which is an institutional subunit of the Austrian State Archives (Goldinger 1960; Hutterer and Seitschek 2019: 147–151).⁹ Although there was never a special authority for ennoblement in Austria, there was a stable institutional anchoring of the nobility agenda within the Austrian state administration (Kučera 2012: 55). Officially responsible was the supreme aristocratic authority in the Austrian court chancellery (Österreichische Hofkanzlei) and, in the nineteenth century, the Imperial Royal Ministry of the Interior (k. k. Ministerium des Innern) (Goldinger 1960). However, this institutional turn did not mean a fundamental reorientation in the practice of ennoblement: “The actual process of conferring nobility was basically not affected. The ministry responsible only took over the former position of the court chancellery” (Kučera 2012: 58).¹⁰ The supreme aristocratic authority was not only master of the procedure conferring a title of nobility, but also took responsibility in managing the nobility files (Adelsarchiv). That is the reason why separately filed series of various documents were and are found here, for example on the dismissal of aristocrats, the extinction of noble families, noble family trees, noble orders or noble foundations.

Julius von Haast: How to Become an Austrian Knight

The ennoblement of Julius von Haast was preceded by systematic lobbying by his friend and colleague Ferdinand von Hochstetter with whom he had been close friends since Hochstetter's stay in New Zealand in 1858–1859 (Johnston and Nolden 2011, see also Johnston et al. 2012 as well as Johnston and Nolden 2014). This crucial role played by Hochstetter has already become clear through the more than 1000-page biography of Julius von Haast published in 1948 (Haast 1948, see below), written by Julius' son, Heinrich von Haast (1864–1953). Finally, the letters from Hochstetter to Haast, edited in an exemplary manner (and also translated into English) by Sascha Nolden as part of his doctoral thesis in 2007, are of particular interest (Nolden 2007; see also Nolden 2013). In addition to the documents in the Austrian State Archives, these letters form the central basis for tracing Haast's entry to the Austrian nobility.

In the course of his life, Haast received several high awards from European countries, including the Habsburg monarchy. As early as 1865, Haast was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Imperial Order of Franz Joseph [Kaiserlicher Franz-Joseph-Orden] by the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph (Ortner and Ludwigstorff 2017) (Figs. 1, 2 and 3).

Franz Joseph founded the order in 1849 as a distinction for merits in military and civil matters. Hochstetter praised this in a letter to Haast dated in May 1865 (Fig. 4):



Figure 1. Miniature version of Haast's Order of Franz Joseph, awarded in 1865. Alexander Turnbull Library, Curios-005-013/019



Figure 2. Portrait of Haast wearing the insignia of the Order of Franz Joseph. Alexander Turnbull Library PA2-2514



Figure 3. Miniature version of Haast's Order of the Iron Crown, awarded in 1874. Alexander Turnbull Library, Curios-005-013/019

Victory!

Congratulations! Member of the Order! Congratulations!

You are a Knight of the Order of Francis Joseph and the medal is already on its way to the Austrian Embassy in London for you, and will be forwarded to you by the British Embassy. Sincerest congratulations from me and my wife. The matter has now been successfully achieved and I will allow myself to drink champagne to the health of the decorated one, as Petschler¹¹ is just dining with me. And to your prince! Hip hip Hurrah! (Nolden 2007: 253–257).¹²

Hochstetter had already played a decisive role in the background for this award to Haast. As he had written in March 1865:

The Order of Franz Joseph is secured for you, but a strange coincidence has held up the matter. The first application to the Lord High Chamberlain was intercepted by Fenzl's servant, to whom he had given the letter, as the matter was taking too long for me. I went to the master in chancery, Hofrat Raimond¹³, and found to my surprise that he had not received the document, so it had to be written a second time.

I for my part do not doubt that the matter will be successfully settled, as the Councillor assured me, and so I hope to be able to congratulate you on the Knight of the Order of Francis Joseph by the next mail (Nolden 2007: 251–253).¹⁴

And Hochstetter added meaningfully in this context: “Two friends who stand by one another can do a great deal for each other” (Nolden 2007: 251–253).¹⁵

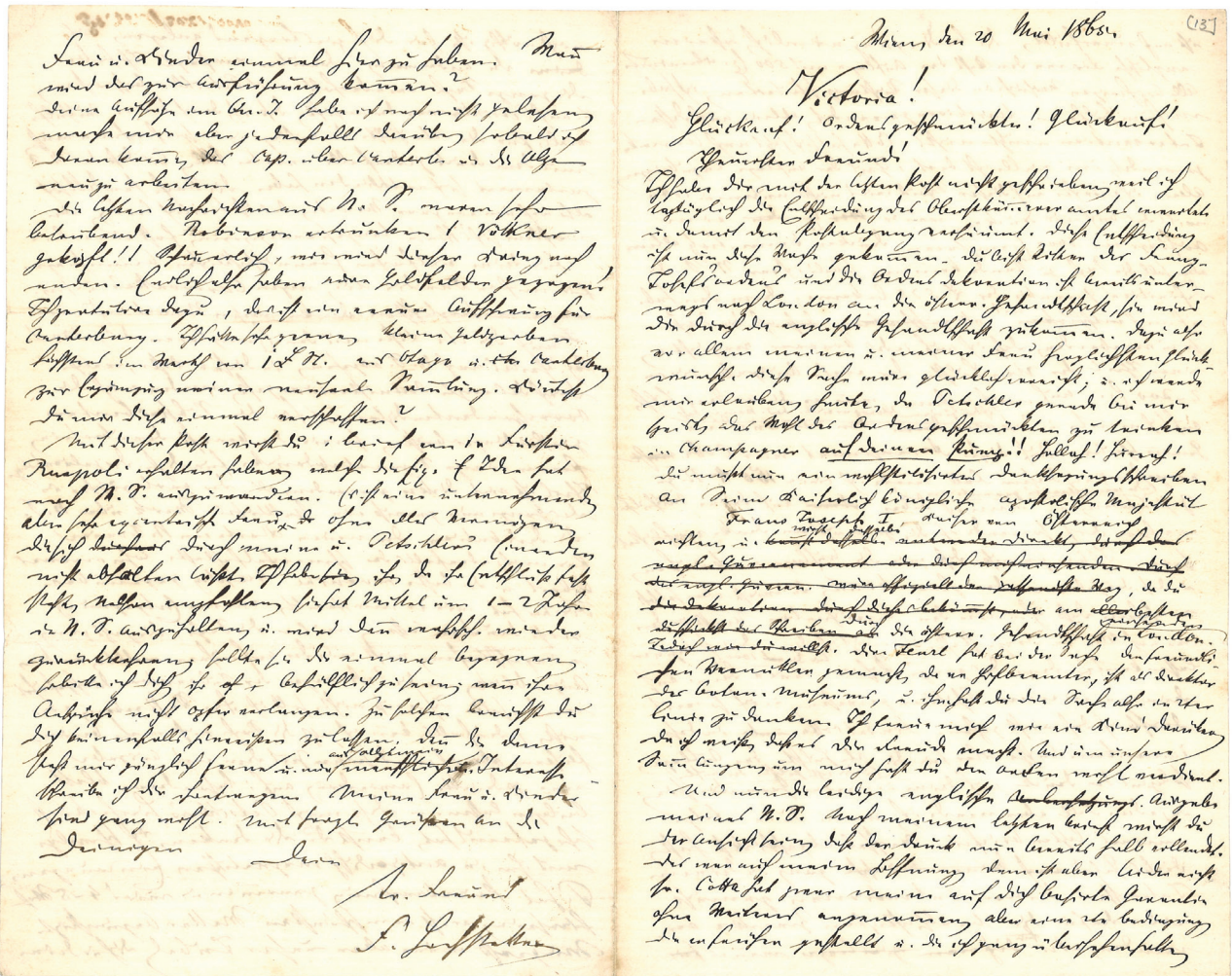


Figure 4. Letter from Ferdinand von Hochstetter to Julius von Haast congratulating him on the award of the Order of Franz Joseph in 1865. Alexander Turnbull Library MS-Papers-0037-183-13

The immediate reason for receiving the order was Haast’s engagement in the geological exploration of New Zealand, especially his consideration of Emperor Franz Joseph in the nomenclature of newly discovered geographical features. In 1865, Haast named a New Zealand glacier after the Austrian Emperor: the Franz Josef Glacier (Kā Roimata ō Hine Hukatere) in Westland National Park – euphorically acclaimed by Hochstetter:

I can only approve of the fact that my friend Haast, no matter how much some German geographers strive against it, followed the custom of the English and Americans, who – everywhere they plant their flag in foreign lands – immortalise the names of their compatriots in the geography of the country (Hochstetter 1868a: 57).¹⁶

Hochstetter saw this as an expression of a genuine “national sentiment” as well as “the righteous pride, honouring a nation, in the names of its eminent men” (Hochstetter 1868a: 58).¹⁷

However, the Franz Joseph Order was not associated with any elevation to nobility, as Hochstetter – obviously in response to Haast’s enquiry – clarified in November 1865:

As far as the knighthood is concerned, you are knight of the Order of Francis Joseph, but there is no nobility attached to this order so you may not call yourself ‘von,’ and one cannot apply for a knighthood on the basis of the Order of Franz Joseph; any step taken by me in this direction

would be futile. The knighthood for you still lies in the future's wheel of fortune. Happy is he, who still has something left to strive and wish for (Nolden 2007: 261–264).¹⁸

From then on, Hochstetter and Haast constantly occupied themselves with the subject of Haast's ennoblement over the following years. Then, in 1873, it seemed the time had come. Heinrich von Haast describes the events of that year in flowery words as follows:

At the time of the Vienna Exhibition of 1873, Haast and Hochstetter had been in correspondence about the possibility of his being knighted by the Emperor Franz Joseph. Haast had sent many contributions to Imperial Institutions ... But Emperors, like other fountains of honour, need some motive power before the fountain plays. Three or four moas in the Imperial Museum would be worth more than a name on a glacier in the New Zealand bush. And so Hochstetter suggested that Haast should dedicate the moa skeletons and collection of New Zealand birds to the Imperial Museum at Vienna (Haast 1948: 775).

Although Haast had submitted New Zealand objects for the Vienna World's Fair held in the Viennese Rotunda in 1873, appropriately under the motto "culture and education" (Pemsel 1989), the basis for his ennoblement can be seen elsewhere – despite the fact that Emperor Franz Joseph himself was astonished by the pair of moa skeletons from the Canterbury Museum (Wolfe 2019). Hochstetter had been excited about moa since the late 1850s (for instance Hochstetter 1862) and closely followed their way into the Museum. In 1868, he reported on the display of six skeletons in Haast's newly founded Canterbury Museum in the meetings of the Geological Survey of Austria and called these moa skeletons absolute "highlights" (Hochstetter 1868b).

It was Hochstetter who proposed, under the impression of the "moa success" at Vienna World's Fair, that Haast should donate moa skeletons to Austria – not least to make his way into Austrian nobility. As Hochstetter wrote on 29 August 1873 (while the Vienna World's Fair was still running): "In regard to the moa skeletons and the bird collection, I stick to my proposal that you should donate them to the imperial museums and I will vigorously represent your interests" (Nolden 2007: 326–328).¹⁹

Following his friend's advice, Haast finally donated moa skeletons to the Austrian Imperial Collections in 1873–1874.²⁰ It is interesting that these skeletons were initially stored in the Viennese Hofburg and were only accessioned and inventoried in 1876, when the Imperial Natural History Museum was officially founded.²¹ Incidentally, Hochstetter could hardly hide his pride in this acquisition; shortly before his death he pointed out that the Natural History Museum in Vienna along with Canterbury Museum in Christchurch, had the world's largest and most complete collection of moa skeletons (Hochstetter 1884).²²

In any case, in 1874 Haast received the Order of the Iron Crown 3rd Class, explicitly for donating these moa skeletons. In the official order letter from the Office of the Count (Obersthofmeisteramt) of 14 March 1874 one reads:

Following the receipt of the most humbly presented application, His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty, with the highest resolution of the 11th of this month, has most graciously deigned to bestow on you the Order of the Iron Crown third class in recognition of your scientific achievements. With the same supreme resolution, His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty approved the acceptance of the three moa skeletons offered from you as a gift to the Imperial Natural History Court Museum. For this valuable enrichment of the intended court collection, the undersigned Imperial-Royal First Obersthofmeister hereby expresses his sincerest thanks (Nolden 2007: 329, footnote 1260).²³

Haast's donation fell into some sort of institutional “transit phase“. Although today's Natural History Museum Vienna was underway by 1874 it was not formally founded until 1876 (Riedl-Dorn 1998). So with the course already set in 1874 Hochstetter actively tried to acquire significant objects such as moa from New Zealand.

For Haast, however, the journey to his aristocratic title did not end there. Generally, entry into the Austrian nobility was automatically associated with the award of the Order of the Iron Crown – as previously described. One problem, however, was that Haast was not an Austrian citizen but regarded as a foreigner, and the admission of a foreigner to the Austrian nobility was only possible in exceptional cases and represented a special favour to the person (Županič 2015). Once again it was Hochstetter who played the decisive role in removing these obstacles. As Hochstetter wrote to Haast in a letter dated 10 November 1874:

Last week I spent a whole morning driving from Pontius to Pilate and have to ask you for patience in this matter, which is not as simple as you imagine. It will happen but be patient. Firstly, I had to have a copy of the imperial decree made and secondly an imperial petition is needed, as you are a foreigner and it is a very rare exception for a foreigner to be elevated to the Austrian knighthood. So I will now have to go to various persons to make this possible, and only once I have the imperial resolution in hand, which on top of this also has to be accompanied by the permission of the English government (the matter first has to go to London), as I believe, if I am not mistaken, that you are now a British subject, as I recall that you wrote to me once that you were now an ‘English subject’. Only when this has been done will I be able to put in the application to the ministry of internal affairs for the raising to knighthood, the cost of which as I found out amounts to 200 gulden for a simple elevation of rank, that is Ritter von Haast, whereas a predicate such as ‘Schlagentweit von Sakunlunski’ costs 175 gulden more. I will put in the royal petition once I know whether I can do so in your name, as the signed letter papers you sent arrived all crinkled and were the wrong format for a royal petition so I could not use them (Nolden 2007: 333–336).²⁴

Finally, on 16 December 1874, Hochstetter spoke personally to Emperor Franz Joseph in the matter of Haast's ennoblement.²⁵ Hochstetter reported on his actions and the occurrences during his audience with Franz Joseph in a letter to Haast on 12 January 1875:

Today I mainly wanted to let you know that I had an audience with His Majesty on 16 December in regard to your knighthood business, and that I submitted a memorandum to His Majesty asking for you, as a foreigner, to be raised to the Austrian knighthood as an exceptional case on the basis of the Order of the Iron Crown (Nolden 2007: 336–338).²⁶

Franz Joseph responded to Hochstetter's proposal saying that Haast would be knighted on the basis of the Order of the Iron Crown: “His Majesty was very gracious and thought that it should be possible” (Nolden 2007: 336–338).²⁷

However, things seemed to drag on a bit longer, not least because Haast needed permission from the British Government to accept a foreign title (Haast 1948: 776). In Austria, Hochstetter was persistent. On 28 January 1875, he had another audience with Franz Joseph. And as part of this meeting, facts were established, as Hochstetter was able to report to Haast on 31 January 1875:

I just want to let you know very briefly that on 28 of January I had another audience with His Majesty, and that the Emperor in his kindly manner personally informed me that he had fulfilled my wish, so that despite the fact that you are a foreigner an exception would be made and you

would be raised to the status of a knight of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, on the basis of your Order of the Iron Crown (Nolden 2007: 338–339).²⁸

Against this background, Hochstetter assured Haast that he “will undertake the next steps for the diploma and coat of arms etc, and by the time you arrive here everything will be sorted out”.²⁹ Finally, he could close relieved, with the assessment: “So this matter has now been assured” (Nolden 2007: 338–339).³⁰

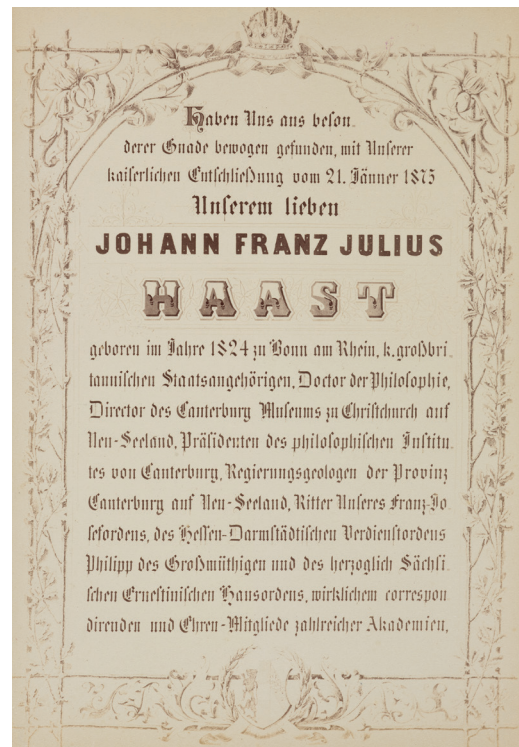
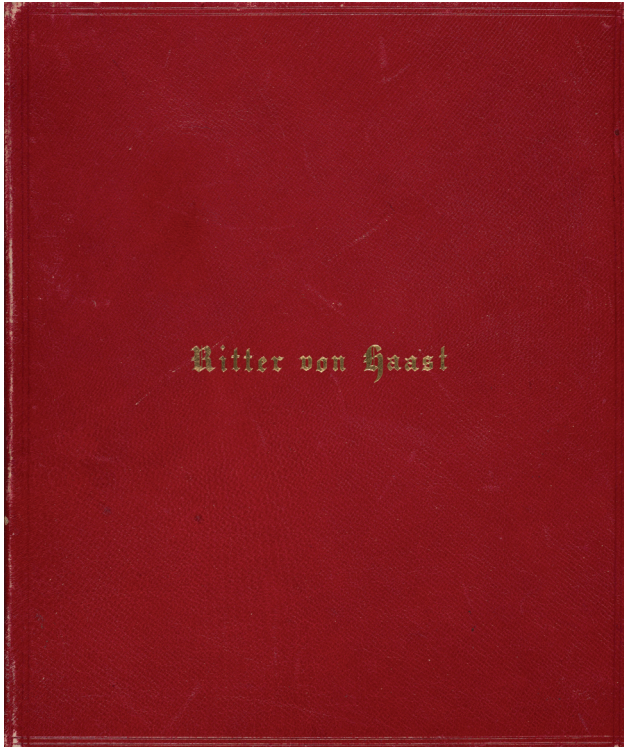


Figure 5. Pages from Julius von Haast’s Austrian diploma of knighthood of 1875. Alexander Turnbull Library MS-Papers-0037-326B

The positive outcome of the process enabled the Austrian nobility authorities to issue the nobility decree and to draw up a coat of arms for Haast (Figs. 5 and 6). In any case, it is crucial at this point that a direct link can be drawn between ennoblement of Haast and his donation of moa skeletons to the Imperial collections in Vienna.

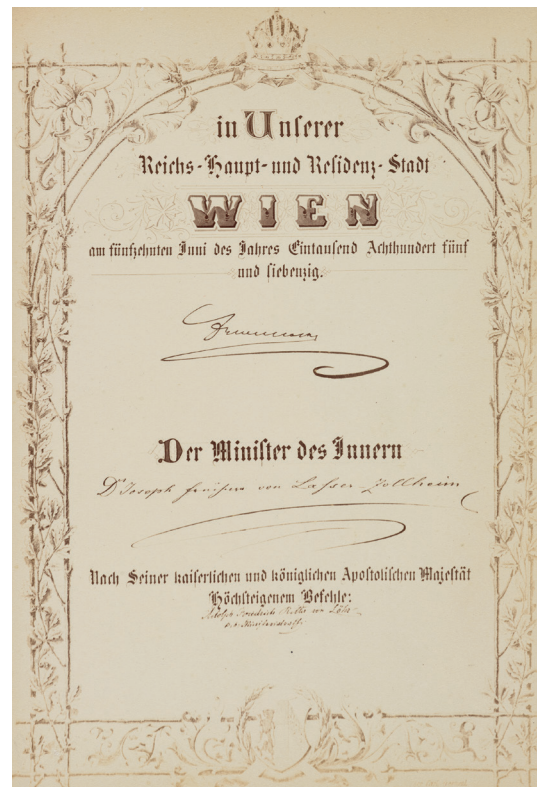
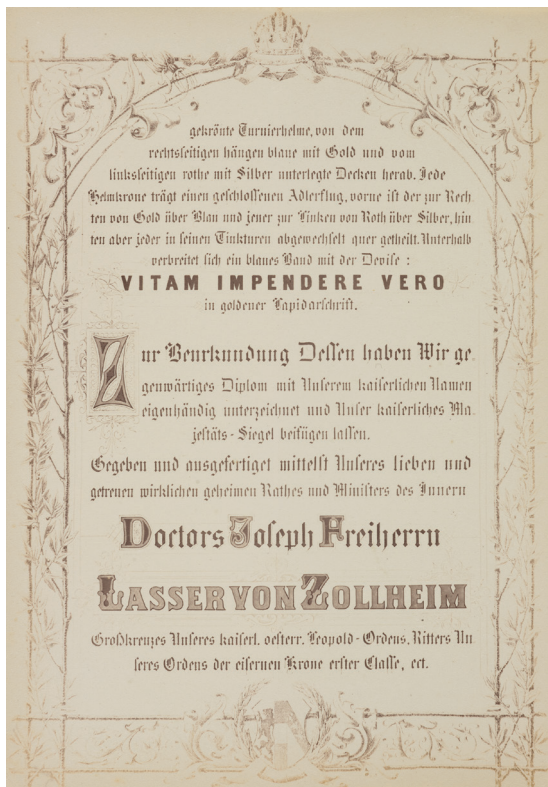
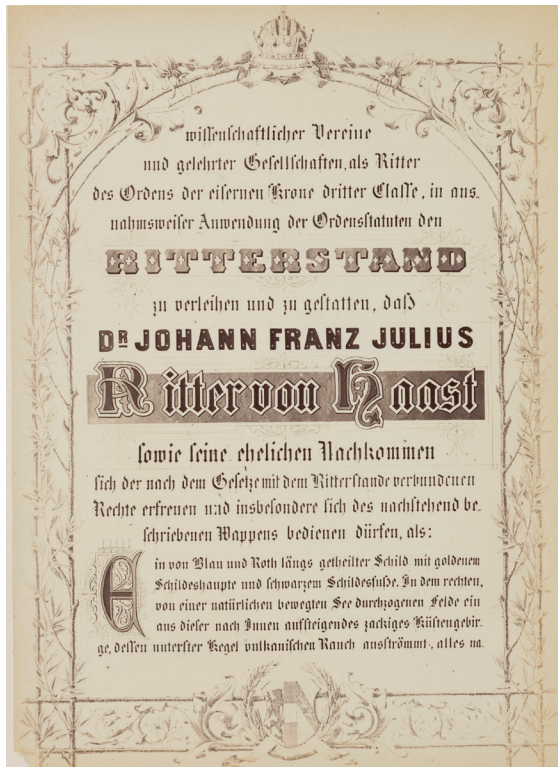


Figure 6. Pages from Julius von Haast’s Austrian diploma of knighthood of 1875. Alexander Turnbull Library MS-Papers-0037-326B

Insignia of Nobility: Haast's Coat of Arms

Each new Austrian knight was assigned his own family coat of arms by the nobility authority in the Ministry of Interior. As before, the authorities also took their time issuing a coat of arms, as Hochstetter complained:

I already wrote to you in my last letter that the knighthood business is now all in order, and in the meantime you have surely received the official notification, and the other day, once the Coat of Arms question was settled, I engaged myself in the matter of getting the diploma made, for which the official tax amounted to 175 and fiscal stamp duty to 5 gulden. Other additional costs were 10 gulden for the design of the coat of arms, and special issuing approximately 20-30 gulden. As the gentlemen in the peerage archive also take months over the painting and writing, the diploma will not be ready in time to send it to you before you leave, so you will therefore be able to receive it in person (Nolden 2007: 339–340).³¹

In July 1875, the process was finally completed, the diploma of knighthood signed and issued. Hochstetter accepted it as Haast's authorised representative and immediately wrote to his friend in New Zealand: "I hasten to notify you of the fact that I just received your completed knighthood diploma yesterday, which I had been expecting every day for months" (Nolden 2007: 340–343).³² Hochstetter was quite satisfied with the design of the diploma: "The diploma is grand and splendidly executed, which will surely astonish you and become an ongoing memento in your family for your children and children's children" (Nolden 2007: 340–343).³³ However, he also had one specific criticism, but this could not dampen his positive overall impression:

I am just not quite satisfied with the description of the coat of arms, for despite my repeated elucidation the restored moa in the right panel of the shield has become 'an extinct wingless kiwi bird in natural colour'; apart from this everything is perfectly in order and correct and you may certainly be proud of this fine diploma, which is of course signed personally by His Majesty. Hereby the matter is now fully accomplished and I hope to your fullest satisfaction (Nolden 2007: 340–343).³⁴

Haast's coat of arms chosen by the heraldic painters of the nobility authority (see also Göbl 2004) deserves a brief discussion; the original description from the nobility authority can be found in the appendix. Especially the shield in the centre, encased on the left and right by blue and red helmets, is of particular interest (Fig. 7). Here, special symbolic items have been drawn that are typical of New Zealand – at least in the eyes of the heraldic painters:

- A black, red-tongued double-headed eagle on yellow ground grows on the shield head. This double-headed eagle was one of the oldest iconic symbols of the Holy Roman Empire, taken over by the Habsburg dynasty in the sixteenth century (Diem 1995: 109 ff).
- In the left blue field there is a wavy tide, in the background an ascending volcanic mountain range and the star constellation known as the Southern Cross.
- To the right of this there is a wingless antediluvian bird (described as a kiwi, but obviously a moa based on the short beak), standing on sandy soil.
- A mine tunnel is marked on the bottom of the shield. Here a miner kneels and works with mallet and iron; in front of him stands a pit light.
- Below spreads a blue band with the motto: "Vitam Impendere Vero" (to stake one's life for the truth) in golden lapidary script.

A short addition at this point; for the great promoter of Haast and tireless booster in the process of Haast’s ennoblement, Ferdinand von Hochstetter, it took until 1884 before he too was elevated to the Austrian nobility. This prompted Hochstetter to comment as early as 1875: “My Hamburg title of nobility is of course a mistake, because in Germany every ‘von’ is turned into a ‘Baron’” (Nolden 2007: 339–340).³⁵ In 1884, shortly before his passing, Hochstetter too was conferred the title of an Austrian knight. In contrast to Haast’s coat of arms, Hochstetter’s coat of arms looked relatively simple and used far fewer motifs (Fig 8). The helmets, however, were more richly decorated.

Summary and Conclusion

In 1875, Haast, who by this time had long been living in New Zealand, was knighted by the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph, less for his outstanding services to the exploration of New Zealand than for his donations of highlight objects to Austria, in particular moa skeletons. The key person in the background was Haast’s close friend since the days spent together in New Zealand, Ferdinand von Hochstetter, who had even spoken personally to the Emperor on the subject of Haast’s ennoblement.

In this period, in any case, elevations to the nobility of commoners like Haast had long since ceased to be a rarity in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In fact, a large number of commoners were raised to the Austrian nobility in the course of the nineteenth century. Between 1792 and 1918, the Habsburg monarchy “in contrast to Prussia or Bavaria, the company pursued a generous policy of nobilisation” (Bruckmüller and Stekl 1995: 178). This feudalisation of the bourgeoisie was not only intended to



Figure 7. The original design of Julius Ritter von Haast’s family coat of arms with the motto *Vitem Impendere Vero*. Austrian State Archives, Vienna



Figure 8. The original design of Ferdinand Ritter von Hochstetter’s family coat of arms with the motto *Mente Corde Manu*. Austrian State Archives, Vienna

honour achievements in the military, administrative, economic, or cultural spheres. It was always also about creating dynastic loyalty (Bruckmüller and Stekl 1995: 178).³⁶ Admission to the nobility took place on the basis of previous orders being bestowed, mostly without major examination of the arguments (Kučera 2012: 53). Statistics on ennoblement between 1848 and 1898 indicate that 65% of new baron titles and 94% of the new titles of knighthood were granted on the basis of an order (Županič 2011b: 107). A new nobility had emerged (Županič 2019).

This inflation of noble titles – Kučera (2012: 53) speaks of a “flooding” (Überflutung) – forced extensive reform in the early 1880s. Around 1884, for example, the articles with regard to automatic ennoblement were abolished for the majority of Austrian orders such as the Imperial Order of Leopold and those of the Imperial Order of the Iron Crown (Županič 2011b: 107). For Ferdinand von Hochstetter it was just possible, since he was knighted in January 1884 as a consequence of receiving the Imperial Order of Leopold. Nevertheless, obtaining a title of nobility generally appeared desirable until the end of the monarchy – in the words of Županič (2016: 551):

*Although the title of nobility had lost much of its former glory in the Austro-Hungarian Empire as a result of its frequent issuance in the second half of the 19th century, it was still a symbol of the nobility, it was still a symbol of social advancement and identification with the monarchy, the emperor and the system of government.*³⁷

The efforts of Hochstetter and Haast to obtain an Austrian title of nobility has to be discussed in this historical background. It therefore was less a personal ambition than the outwardly directed crowning of a scientific career under the general circumstances of a monarchic system (for further discussion see for instance Fasora et al. 2019). This fits especially for the Austro-Hungarian Empire, where the nobility was able to “maintain a dominant position in society and politics” to the very end of the dual monarchy (Vocelka 1988: 542).

Although the Austrian nobility was abolished in 1919, the von Haast family continued to use the name in New Zealand – as did a few other families in the country (and similar to the situation in Germany). Consequently, the biography of Julius von Haast written by his son in 1948 was published under the name of Heinrich von Haast, and this name appears on his death certificate as his formal surname.³⁸

Acknowledgements

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Appendix: Description of Haast’s Coat of Arms³⁹

Wappen-Beschreibung

Ein in die Länge geteilter Schild mit Schildeshaupt- und [Schildes]Fuß. Im rechten blauen Felde eine gewellte Fluth, im Hintergrunde als Küste ein aufsteigendes Vulkangebirge. In dem rechten Winkel mit schrägrechter Achsenstellung das südliche Kreuz, im linken rechten Felde ein flügelloser vorsündflutlicher Vogel, genannt Kivi in natürlicher Farbe einwärtssehend und auf Sandboden stehend. Das Schildeshaupt ist golden, aus der Theilung wächst ein schwarzer rothbezungter Doppeladler hervor. In dem Schildesfuß ist ein Gebirgsdurchschnitt mit verschiedenfarbigen schräglinkslaufenden Schichten dargestellt, in deren mittleren schwarzen Kohlenschichte ein

mit bergmännischer Verschallung und Abzugsgraben in der Mitte versehener Stollen verzeichnet erscheint, in welchen auf dem linken Fuße kniend ein Bergmann nach rechts gewendet mit Schlögel und Eisen arbeitet; vor ihm ein Grubenlicht. Auf dem Hauptrande des Schildes ruhen zwei gekrönte Türmerfahnen, von dem rechtsseitigen hängen blau mit Gold, und vom linken rothe mit Silber unterlegte Decken herab. Jede der Helmkrone trägt einen geschlossenen Adlerflug. Der zur Rechten ist vorne von Gold über Blau hinter in gewechselten Tinkturen quergetheilt. Jene zur Linken vorne von Roth über Silber hinter gewechselten Tinkturen quer getheilt. Unterhalb verbreitet sich ein blaues Band mit der Devise: „Vitam Impendere Vero“ in goldener Lapidarschrift.⁴⁰

Endnotes

- 1 For the original file of the Dean’s Office of the University of Tübingen (“Julius von Haast (1822–1887). Dekanatsakte zur Verleihung der Doktorwürde der Philosophischen Fakultät”) see http://idb.ub.uni-tuebingen.de/opendigi/UAT_131_0012b_9 [accessed 14 July 2022].
- 2 Staatsgesetzblatt Nr. 211/1919: Gesetz vom 3. April 1919 über die Aufhebung des Adels, der weltlichen Ritter- und Damenorden und gewisser Titel und Würden.
- 3 Röhner Z. 2009. Die letzte Standeserhebung der Monarchie. *Archivale des Monats*, 1.2.2009. In: Österreichisches Staatsarchiv: *Archivalien des Monats – 2006 – 2018*. Archiv zur Nachlese aus der Website des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs bis 2018. Available from: https://services.bka.gv.at/oesta/archivalien/Archivalien_des_Monats_2006-2018.pdf [accessed 2 June 2022].
- 4 Original: “der Ritterstand wurde zunehmend zu einem aus nobilitierten Aufsteigern bestehenden ‘Pool’”.
- 5 Original: “für Adelsneulinge in der Regel nur die zwei unteren, in Ausnahmefällen noch der Freiherrenstand, in Betracht kamen”.
- 6 Ennobling of women was no exception in the Habsburg monarchy. A further study in this context – similar to the one already available for the nobilization of Jews (Drewes 2013; Županič 2016) – is still pending.
- 7 Original: “Die Vorstellung, dass die Nobilitierung das Resultat einer Entscheidung des Herrschers war, ist zwar von Möglichkeiten zum Titelerwerb.”
- 8 Original: “nicht aufgrund der Entscheidung des Herrschers, sondern war lediglich die Konsequenz eines Verwaltungsprozesses, der nach der Erfüllung der allgemein bekannten Bedingungen (Erwerb eines Ordens, geleistete Dienstjahre) durch die Antragstellung bei den zuständigen Behörden gestartet wurde”.
- 9 See Österreichisches Staatsarchiv: Archivinformationssystem, Bestandsgruppe Adelsarchiv: <https://www.archivinformationssystem.at/detail.aspx?ID=1698> and Seitschek S. *Forschungstipps Adelsarchiv*. Available from: <https://www.oesta.gv.at/dam/jcr:5ad02a07-5ce2-4dde-98d7-8738414f0b2a/Adelsarchiv.pdf> [accessed 2 June 2022].
- 10 Original: “Der eigentliche Prozess der Adelsverleihung war davon aber grundsätzlich nicht betroffen. Das zuständige Ministerium übernahm nur die frühere Position der Hofkanzlei.”
- 11 Carl Petschler (1820–1882) was a merchant at Vulcan Lane, Auckland, who supported the Novara Expedition in Auckland (Nolden 2007: 172, footnote 821).
- 12 Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-183-13: Ferdinand Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Vienna 20 May 1865; quoted after Nolden (2007: 253–257) Original: “Victoria! Glückauf! Ordensgeschmückter! Glückauf! Du bist Ritter des Franz-Josefsordens und die Ordens Dekoration ist bereits unterwegs nach London an die österr. Gesandtschaft, sie wird Dir durch die englische Gesandtschaft zukommen. Dazu also vor allem meinen u. meiner Frau herzlichsten Glückwunsch. Diese Sache wäre glücklich erreicht; u. ich werde mir erlauben, heute, da Petschler gerade bei mir speist, das Wohl des Ordensgeschmückten zu trinken in Champagner auf Deinen Prinz!! Hollah! Hurrah!”
- 13 Hofrat: an Austrian administrative title that could be translated to “court counsellor”. The title is still extant today within Austrian public service.
- 14 Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-183-12: Ferdinand Hochstetter to Julius

Haast, Vienna 20 March 1865; quoted after Nolden (2007: 251–253). Original: “Der Franz Josefs Orden ist Dir sicher; aber ein eigenthüml. Zufall hat die Sache verzögert. Der erste Antrag an den Oberstkämmerer wurde von dem Diener Fenzel’s [sic], dem er den Brief übergeben, unterschlagen; da mir nun die Sache zu lange dauerte, so gieng ich zum Referenten Hofrathes Raimond, u. hörte zu meinem nicht geringen Erstaunen, daß er das Aktenstück nicht erhalten; so mußte es zum 2tenmal aufgesetzt werden, an einer günstigen Erledigung ist bei mir wie der Hofrath wiederholt versicherte nicht zu zweifeln, u. ich hoffe Dir mit nächstem auch zum Ritter des Franz Josefs Ordens gratuliren zu können.”

- ¹⁵ Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-183-12: Ferdinand Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Vienna 20 March 1865; quoted after Nolden (2007: 251–253). Original: “Zwei Freunde, die gegenseitig füreinander einstehen, können viel füreinander auswirken u. bewirken.”
- ¹⁶ Original: “Ich kann es nur billigen, dass mein Freund Haast bei dieser Namengebung, so sehr auch manche deutsche Geographen dagegen eifern, der Sitte der Engländer und Amerikaner gefolgt ist, welche überall, wo sie in fremden Ländern ihre Fahne aufpflanzen, die Namen ihrer Landsleute auch in der Geographie des Landes verewigen.“
- ¹⁷ Original: “den gerechten, eine Nation nur ehrenden Stolz auf die Namen ihrer hervorragenden Männer“.
- ¹⁸ Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-183-16: Ferdinand Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Vienna 16 November 1865; quoted after Nolden (2007: 261–264). Original: “Was den Ritterstand anbelangt, so bist Du Ritter des Franz Josefs Ordens, aber Adel ist mit diesem Orden nicht verbunden, also ‚von‘ kannst Du Dich nicht schreiben, man kann auch auf Grund des Franz J. Ordens nicht um den Ritterstand einkommen, jeder Schritt in dieser Beziehung von meiner Seite wäre vergeblich. Der Ritterstand liegt für Dich noch im Glücksrad der Zukunft, u. wohl dem, welchem noch etwas zu wünschen u. zu erreichen übrig bleibt.”
- ¹⁹ Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-186-08: Ferdinand Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Ischl 29 August 1873; quoted after

Nolden (2007: 326–328). Original: “*In Betreff der Moa-Skelette u. der Vogelsammlung bleibe ich bei meinem Vorschlag, daß Du dieselben den Kaiserlichen Museen widmest, ich werde gewiß Deine Interessen dabei aufs kräftigste vertreten.*”

- ²⁰ Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-186-08: Ferdinand Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Ischl 29 August 1873; quoted after Nolden 2007: 326–328 and Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers-0037-186-07: Ferdinand Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Vienna 22 June 1874; quoted after Nolden (2007: 329–331).
- ²¹ See explanation of Mathias Harzhauser (Department of Geology and Palaeontology of the Natural History Museum Vienna) who deals with this donation and explains how this donation was reflected in the collections of the Natural History Museum Vienna in recorded presentation from Haast Symposium, 1 May 2022. Available on www.canterburymuseum.com.
- ²² Hochstetter did not forget to mention his and Haast’s efforts in this context (Hochstetter 1884: 281): “However, the museum owes one of the most important acquisitions to my friend and former travel companion in New Zealand, Dr. Julius Ritter von Haast, director of the Christchurch Museum; I mean the magnificent array of skeletons of the extinct giant birds of New Zealand (moa for the natives). [Eine der bedeutendsten Acquisitionen aber verdankt das Museum meinem Freund und früheren Reisebegleiter auf Neuseeland Dr. Julius Ritter von Haast, Director des Museums zu Christchurch; ich meine die grossartige Reihe von Skeletten der ausgestorbenen Riesenvögel Neuseelands (Moa der Eingebornen)]”.
- ²³ Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0171-3-02, Haast family papers: Von Seiner kaiserlichen und königlichen Apostolischen Majestät Obersthofmeisteramte to Julius von Haast, Vienna 14 March 1874; quoted after Nolden (2007: 329, footnote 1260). Original: “Über hierämtlichen allerunterthänigsten Vortrag haben Seine kaiserliche und königliche apostolische Majestät mit allerhöchster Entschließung vom 11. d. M. Ihnen in Anerkennung Ihrer wissenschaftlichen Leistungen den Orden der eisernen Krone III. Klasse al-

lernädigst zu verleihen geruht. [...] Mit derselben allerhöchsten Entschliessung haben Seine kaiserliche und königliche apostolische Majestät die Annahme der von Ihnen dem k.k. naturhistorischen Hofmuseum als Geschenk offerirten drei Moa-Skelete zu genehmigen geruht, für welche werthvolle Bereicherung, der gedachten Hofsammlung, der unterzeichnete k.k. Erste Obersthofmeister Ihnen hiemit den verbindlichsten Dank ausspricht.”

²⁴ Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-186-10: Ferdinand Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Vienna 10 November 1874; quoted after Nolden (2007: 333–336). Original: “Ich bin vorige Woche einen ganzen Vormittag von Pontius bis Pilatus gefahren u. muß Dich in dieser Sache, die nicht so leicht ist wie Du Dir vorstellst, um Geduld bitten. Sie wird werden, aber Geduld! Erstens mußte ich mir eine Abschrift des kaiserl. Dekretes verschaffen Zweitens ist ein Majestätsgesuch nothwendig, da Du Ausländer bist; u. Ausländer nur ganz ausnahmsweise in den österreich. Ritterstand erhoben werden. Da muß ich nun noch bei verschiedenen Persönlichkeiten Gänge machen, damit das möglich wird; u. erst mit der kaiserl. Entschließg. in der Hand, die über dieß noch von einer Erlaubniß der englischen Regierung (die Sache muß vorher nach London) begleitet sein muß – ich glaube doch nämlich wenn ich recht bin Du bist jetzt engl. Unterthan; da ich mich erinnere, das Du mir einmal geschrieben, Du seiest nun ‚english subject‘. – Kann ich die Eingabe um Standeserhöhung beim Ministerium des Innern einbringen, deren Kosten sich, wie ich erkundigte sich auf 200fl belaufen für einfache Standeserhöhung d. h. Ritter von Haast, während ein Prädikat wie z. B. Schlagintweit-von Sakunlunski noch 175fl mehr kostet. Das Majestätsgesuch werde ich einreichen, sobald ich weiß, ob ich in Deinem Namen einkommen kann, die übersandten von Dir unterschriebenen Briefpapiere kann ich nicht anwenden, da sie ganz zerknittert ankamen, u. für ein Majestätsgesuch nicht das richtige Format haben.”

²⁵ Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-187-01: Ferdinand Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Vienna 12 January 1875; quoted after Nolden (2007: 336–338).

²⁶ Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-187-01: Ferdinand Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Vienna 12 January 1875; quoted after Nolden (2007: 336–338). Original: “Heute wollte ich Dir hauptsächlich mittheilen, daß ich wegen Deiner Ritterstandsangelegenheit schon am 16 Dez. in Audienz bei Sr Majestät war, u. in einem Promemoria Snr Majestät das Gesuch vorgelegt, Dich als Ausländer ausnahmsweise auf Grund des Eis. Kronordens in den Ritterstand zu erheben.”

²⁷ Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-187-01: Ferdinand Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Vienna 12 January 1875; quoted after Nolden (2007: 336–338). Original: “S. Maj. war sehr gnädig, u. meinte die Sache werde sich wohl machen lassen ...”

²⁸ Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-187-02: Ferdinand von Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Vienna 31 January 1875; quoted after Nolden (2007: 338–339). Original: “Nur in aller Kürze will ich Dir mittheilen, daß ich am 28ten Jan. abermals eine Audienz bei Sr Majestät hatte, u. daß mir der Kaiser in sehr liebenswürdiger Weise selbst mittheilte, daß er meinen Wunsch, daß Du ausnahmsweise als Ausländer in den Ritterstand des österr.- ung. Kaiserstaates erhoben werdest, – auf Grund des eisernen Kronordens – erfüllt habe.”

²⁹ Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-187-02: Ferdinand von Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Vienna 31 January 1875; quoted after Nolden (2007: 338–339). Original: “werde ich die weiteren nöthigen Schritte wegen Diplom, Wappen, etc. thun u. bis Du hierherkommst, ist jedenfalls Alles in Ordnung”.

³⁰ Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-187-02: Ferdinand von Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Vienna 31 January 1875; quoted after Nolden (2007: 338–339). Original: “Also diese Angelegenheit ist jetzt aplomirt.”

³¹ Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-187-03: Ferdinand Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Vienna 21 March 1875; quoted after Nolden (2007: 339–340). Original: “Ich schrieb Dir schon in meinem letzten, daß die Ritterstandsangelegenheit in Ordnung ist, Du hast unterdessen jedenfalls auch die offiz. Zuschrift erhalten, u. dieser Tage, nachdem auch die Wappenfrage erledigt, bin ich um die Ausfertigung des Dip-

loms eingeschritten, dessen offiz. Spesen Taxe 175, Stempel 5fl betragen, Nebenausgaben für Wappenentwurf 10 fl u. besondere Ausstellung 20-30 fl circa. Da sich die Herrn im Adelsarchiv mit Schreiben u. Malen auch noch Monate Zeit lassen, so wird das Diplom wahrscheinlich nicht fertig werden, um es Dir noch vor Deiner Abreise zuschicken zu können, Du kannst es dann selbst in Empfang nehmen.”

- ³² Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-187-04: Ferdinand Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Vienna 25 July 1875; quoted after Nolden (2007: 340–343). Original: “Da mir nun gestern endlich Dein fertiges Ritterstandsdiplom, das ich seit Monaten täglich erwartet habe, zugekommen ist, so beeile ich mich Dir dieß zu notifiziren.”
- ³³ Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-187-04: Ferdinand Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Vienna 25 July 1875; quoted after Nolden (2007: 340–343). Original: “Das Diplom ist ein Prachtstück, von glänzender Ausführung, das Dich gewiß überraschen wird, u. ein bleibendes Andenken in Deiner Familie für Kinder u. Kindes-Kinder bilden wird.”
- ³⁴ Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-187-04: Ferdinand Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Vienna 25 July 1875; quoted after Nolden (2007: 340–343). Original: “Nur mit der Wappenerklärung bin ich nicht ganz einverstanden; trotz meiner wiederholten Erläuterungen ist der restaurierte Moa im rechten Wappenfelde zu einem ausgestorbenen flügellosen Kiwi-Vogel ‘in natürlicher Farbe’ gemacht worden, sonst ist aber Alles in vollständiger Ordnung u. Richtigkeit u. Du darfst wahrhaft stolz sein auf das prachtvolle Diplom, das natürlich von Sr Maj. eigenhändig unterschrieben. Damit wäre nun Diese Angelegenheit vollständig, u. wie ich

hoffe ganz nach Deinem Wunsche erledigt.”

- ³⁵ Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers -0037-187-04: Ferdinand Hochstetter to Julius Haast, Vienna 25 July 1875; quoted after Nolden (2007: 339–340). Original: “Mein Hamburger Freiherrntitel ist natürlich nur mistake, weil man ja in Deutschland aus jedem ‚von‘ einen Baron macht.”
- ³⁶ Original: “betrieb im Gegensatz zu Preußen oder Bayern eine überaus großzügige Nobilitierungspolitik”.
- ³⁷ Original: “Obwohl der Adelstitel infolge seiner häufigen Erteilung in der 2. Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts in Österreich-Ungarn einen großen Teil seines ehemaligen Glanzes eingebüßt hatte, war er noch immer Symbol des gesellschaftlichen Aufstiegs und der Identifizierung mit der Monarchie, dem Kaiser und dem Regierungssystem.”
- ³⁸ Comment from Simon Nathan, 7 June 2022.
- ³⁹ Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv, Adelsarchiv, Hofadelsakten, Allgemeine Reihe, Karton 328, Nr. 328.21, Haast, Johann Franz Julius: Wappenbeschreibung, unfol. For a first translation see Haast (1948: 777–778).
- ⁴⁰ A slightly different description of the coat of arms can also be found in Haast’s diploma of knighthood: Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv, Adelsarchiv, Hofadelsakten, Allgemeine Reihe, Karton 328, Nr. 328.21, Haast, Johann Franz Julius: Ritterstandsdiplom für Julius von Haast (Konzept), unfol. See the diploma in Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers-0037-326B: Ritterstandsdiplom für Julius von Haast; quoted after Nolden (2007: 341, footnote 1289).

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