

THE GERMAN SETTLEMENT OF ST. LOUIS

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Among historians of various nationalities, whether professional or amateur, there has always existed a tendency to find some new evidence for their contention that their people really discovered this or that land, or influenced its history in some significant way. Many of these determined fact finders are prepared to go through the most ingenious intellectual contortions to make the already established historic facts fit their idea of what the facts should be.

The Germans are no exception. So it is said and believed by many that one German named Tyrker, from the Rhineland, came with Leif Erickson to America in the year 1000. When those early explorers set foot on the southern coast of Massachusetts, Tyrker, the German, got lost. Leif sent out a search party for him, and when they found him, he triumphantly related that he had found some greenery which reminded him of his homeland -- namely, grapes. Leif thereupon named the land Vinland, or Wine-land.¹

Another story is that Abraham Lincoln was of German descent, and that his name was not really Lincoln but Linkhorn.² Still another, and probably the most famous of all the legends, is one I learned in school in Germany; this one has it that in a Congressional committee meeting, German missed becoming the official language of the United States by exactly one vote.

I haven't discovered any such stories or legends of the participation of the Germans in the earliest history and founding of St. Louis. Historians wanting to promote any such stories probably knew that Professor McDermott's exhaustive research on that subject wouldn't have left them a leg to stand on.

Indeed, it is not until the middle 1830's that one can talk of a concentrated German settlement of St. Louis.

The man chiefly responsible for the heavy influx of German immigrants to St. Louis and Missouri was Dr. Gottfried Duden, a wealthy and educated German from the Rhineland. He saw the sad economic and sociological conditions in the homeland to be the direct result of overcrowding and overpopulation. He came to the conclusion that only a well-planned and organized emigration, on a large scale, to the new world would solve

the problem. To gain firsthand experience, Dr. Duden left Germany and arrived in St. Louis on October 23, 1824. He acquired a farm of 270 acres in Warren County, above the Femme Osage River. Duden hired handymen to clear his land, build a farm house and cultivate the soil. A bachelor, he hired a cook to take care of the farm house and his needs. So, being free from the worries of the daily work, he was left sufficient time to explore and study the surrounding countryside, the wild life and the weather conditions, and to spend some weeks in St. Louis. In his letters back home, Duden wrote enthusiastically about the rich soil, the mild climate and the political and economic freedom of the country and its citizens.³

After two and a half years in Missouri, feeling that his mission was accomplished, Duden leased his farm, and on March 12, 1827, left for Germany, where in 1829 he had his letters published in book form at his own expense. The book proved very popular, and saw many editions. All over Germany, the restless and the dissatisfied eagerly read about the paradise of Missouri, and made plans to come to this garden spot of the West.

Once here, many of the newcomers did not see the blessed land with the same eyes as Duden, and they criticized his observations as overly optimistic, careless and not exactly truthful. So wrote the Anzeiger des Westens, first German newspaper in St. Louis, in an editorial of November 27, 1835, after some grouching about the present severe cold, the prolonged snowfalls and the fact that river traffic was again stopped because of ice:

The serious question is raised in one's mind: How could Duden and other writers in such a revolting way pronounce their thoughtless opinion about the present climate, and talk of an Italian sky and climate, when we have to endure in the summertime more than African heat, and in the winter more severe colds than the inhabitants of northern zones?

Another critic cited by the same paper had written in a German publication in Frankfurt that if Duden ever returned to St. Louis he would be hanged on the nearest tree. The Anzeiger's editor added that, although the St. Louis newspaper was not overly friendly toward Duden, surely his life would not be in danger here.

The first organized emigration group which came to the St. Louis area, in 1832, was the "Berlin Society"⁴ -- although hardly anyone in it was from Berlin. It was a curious group at best; all of its members were doctors, bankers, landowners or just plain nobility, who felt that a gentle birth and a good name should be sufficient to demand attention and respect even in their new country. Soon most of them had lost the money they had brought with them, and many ended in misery. Gert Goebel, in his Longer than a Lifetime in Missouri, remarked: "Because many of them left no traces, and others only very unpleasant ones, posterity will lose nothing if their names remain unknown."⁵

After the Berliners came other small emigration groups and individuals, and in 1834, the broken-up remnants of the Giessener Emigration Society arrived in St. Louis.⁶ This group, organized in Germany by Paul Follenius, a freedom loving lawyer, and his friend Friedrich Muench, a parson and philosopher, consisted of 500 emigrants who not only wanted to settle in the new world, but who also had a grand dream of establishing a purely German state here. They had selected Arkansas, which had been represented to them as having the same soil conditions and climate as Spain, as the territory in which to establish their New Germania. But unfavorable reports of an advanced scouting party made them change their plan. Instead, influenced by the Duden report, they selected Missouri.

Although this at first cohesive group had already, before its departure, set up a set of rules for the New German Republic, it was split and divided on the voyage before its members arrived in the new country, and many never reached St. Louis. Those who did come as far as St. Louis abandoned their plan to establish a new Germany on the banks of the Missouri, but they resolved to settle as close together as possible, so that at least they could form some predominantly German communities.

Muench, the philosopher, Follenius the lawyer and David Goebel, a professor of mathematics, along with many others who had no experience in agriculture, decided to turn their backs on city life and live the life of a free farmer. They settled in Warren County, not far from Duden's former place.⁷

These academic farmers -- or, as they were called, Latin farmers -- had a tough time, and, despite hard work, many failed. Even the ones who did make a success of farming drifted back to the city after a few years. Goebel left the farm to his son and went to St. Louis to teach mathematics and astronomy;⁸ Follenius leased his farm and came to St. Louis to try his hand as a journalist. In 1844 he founded a newspaper called Die Waage (The Balance); it lasted only three editions, and Follenius returned to his farm, where he died in that same year.⁹ Friedrich Muench made a success of his farm, but he still craved the more intellectual stimulus of the city, and he became quite a prominent contributor to German newspapers, writing under the pen name of "Far West." He also wrote numerous philosophical tracts and a book called The State of Missouri, which was designed to increase the immigration of Germans to the state.¹⁰

The Anzeiger des Westens, the first German newspaper in St. Louis, was first published on the thirty-first of October, 1835, after which it appeared weekly. The first issues of this German-language newspaper give us valuable information about the early German settlers, their concerns and their difficulties in adjusting to living in a new society. Although Muench and Follenius, as originators of the plan for a new German Republic in Missouri, had abandoned their idea, the dream of a Neu Deutschland did not die so easily with others. And so, although the Anzeiger and most

of the other German newspapers which came along later were against a New Germany, they still felt that they had to give news space to the many schemes constantly being advanced for a Teutonic Utopia. So we can read in the Anzeiger for November 13, 1835, the announcements of an especially determined group of Pennsylvania Germans of a plan to build a German republic in Missouri. This group raised such a clamor, and issued so much propaganda, that the Anzeiger complained on the 29th of April, 1836: "There are still families coming from Pennsylvania to St. Louis in the belief that they will find a German state here, despite our communications to the Pennsylvanians that no such thing exists in Missouri." Another group published a 48-point draft for the founding of a German republic based on the principles of freedom and equality. Interestingly enough, the 41st point of the draft made clear that only Germans could become citizens of this state.¹¹ There were many more such ideas which never really amounted to anything, but the pros and cons of these whimsical plans raged through the newspapers for years. In answer to a letter proposing another state plan, the Anzeiger remarked in an editorial: "It seems as if the borders of this great state move farther and farther away, until finally beyond the Rocky Mountains they sink into a quiet ocean of buried hopes and fallen castles in the sky."¹²

Another problem which bothered the Germans of those days, and one to which the Anzeiger des Westens devoted quite some time and space, was the activities of the Missouri Native Association, a branch of the larger National Nativist, or Know-Nothing, movement. In 1838 Wilhelm Weber, a lawyer and a fine journalist who had taken over the editorship of the Anzeiger, wrote to the Native American, the journal of the Nativists, and offered to exchange copies with it -- or, if that was not satisfactory, to purchase a subscription to the Native American. The Anzeiger published a translation of the answer which appeared in the Native American on May 26, 1838: "We do not want to exchange our patriotic, independent paper for your disloyal foreign product. And we won't even let you have a copy for pay, because we want only the support of our own countrymen. Keep your Dutch products, your brazen insubordination, your stupid arrogance, and your mother tongue for the delight of your own worthless riff raff!" When we consider that in January 1838 the Nativists were able to bring up in Congress a proposal that the waiting period for becoming a United States citizen should be raised from five to twenty years,¹³ it is understandable that Germans and other immigrants should have become a bit agitated.

In the year 1837, a unique publishing venture appeared on the St. Louis German scene -- a magazine called Westland,¹⁴ which was written and edited in St. Louis, but printed in Heidelberg. This journal took it upon itself to give the Germans in Europe truthful and knowledgeable information about America and Americans, but, after a few editions, the magazine failed. The soul of the enterprise was a German doctor named Georg

Engelmann, who had come to St. Louis in 1834, and who was destined to attract, in the next 50 years, the attention of scientific circles of the new and the old world.¹⁵ Besides building up a large medical practice, he did important research in botany, geology and meteorology.¹⁶ His work helped to make the St. Louis Botanical Garden one of the finest in the world. In 1835, he started a daily report of temperatures, barometric pressure and precipitation, taking these measurements three times a day for almost fifty years. His observations were used by many government exploring parties, and the government also found his methods helpful when later they set up their own bureau for weather observation. He was very advanced in his medical practice, especially in obstetrics, being the first doctor in St. Louis to use the forceps in difficult deliveries, a method for which he was bitterly criticized. Besides carrying on his large practice and his scientific research, he found time to write extensively for the German newspapers about his travels. He was, moreover, one of the founders of the old Western Academy of Science, in 1843. After a few years this organization was disbanded, but in 1856 it was revived by its original founders, and named, as it still is, the Academy of Science of St. Louis. Dr. Engelmann was its first president.¹⁷

Associated with Dr. Engelmann in his practice was another German, Dr. Adolph Wislizenus. Upon his arrival in St. Louis in 1839, Dr. Wislizenus, an adventurous type, had joined a fur trapping expedition strictly for the purpose of making scientific observations. He reached Oregon on this trip, but had to give up his plan of going on to California because he could find neither a guide nor a companion. When he came back to St. Louis in 1840, he joined Dr. Engelmann, practicing with him for five years before going off again on a scientific exploration to the Southwest and Northern Mexico.¹⁸ This time, he was taken prisoner in Chihuahua, and was held in a remote place in the mountains until the Missouri Volunteers, under Col. Alexander W. Doniphan, came marching along and rescued him. He joined them right away as a military surgeon, and also managed to keep up his scientific observations. While he was with the troops -- who called him "Whistling Jesus" -- they had a bloody encounter with a band of Comanches who had taken some white prisoners. After the skirmish, Dr. Wislizenus found a dead Indian chief whose skull he wanted for his anthropological specimen collection. So he chopped the Indian's head off with a hatchet, and removed the flesh by boiling it for days in a large kettle. While the troops were traveling, this kettle, with its gruesome contents, swung on the wagon pole.¹⁹ After his return to St. Louis, Dr. Wislizenus published his scientific observations, and his report on Northern Mexico became authoritative. With Dr. Engelmann, Wislizenus was a founder of the Academy of Science.

The education of the children of the early German settlers rested mainly with the various parochial schools, especially those of the Lutheran

Church. In February of 1837, with Dr. Engelmann as one of the prime movers, a German school was opened with an enrollment of twenty-two.²⁰ Instruction was to be given in German, and religious education was excluded. One year later the school had sixty pupils, but was in financial straits.²¹ Because of insufficient funds, a full time teacher of English could not be hired, and the school's only teacher, Herr Steines, gave his lessons in the morning in German, and in the afternoon, in English. The first public school in St. Louis was not opened until 1838, and the Germans were reluctant to send their children to it because they wanted to have them instructed in German. They did, however, petition the St. Louis school board to use German as a second language in the public schools, thereby starting a squabble which went on for years and aroused bitter animosities between the native faction, which wanted only English, and the Germans, who wanted their language spoken too. Finally the Germans won out, and in 1864 there were five public schools with German in the curriculum; by 1880 that number had increased to fifty-four.²²

Here it is perhaps appropriate to mention a man who did much to make the St. Louis public school system one of the finest in the country. Frank Louis Soldan, born in Frankfurt in 1842, came to St. Louis in 1863 as principal of a large private school. He held many posts in the local educational field, and in 1895 was elected superintendent of the St. Louis public schools.²³

The political life of the early German settlers ran a comparatively quiet course, since they were mainly concerned with business and civic matters. This serene state of affairs changed abruptly with the arrival of the famous "rebels" who fled to America after their unsuccessful revolution in 1848. In the three years following the revolution, almost 35,000 Germans arrived in St. Louis.²⁴ Although these youthful liberals and revolutionary firebrands did receive help and a warm welcome from their already established compatriots, they were not exactly comfortable with them. The stolid life of these earlier immigrants, by now settled Buergers of their country, was not for the newcomers. Pretty soon they began to berate their older predecessors for their lack of commitment to new causes, and a rift developed between the 1830 immigrants and the '48ers, with the latter calling the early Germans "the gray ones," and the gray ones calling the '48ers "the green ones." Until this time, slavery had not been an important issue with the Germans. They did not like it, and so there was hardly a German who kept slaves. But they saw slavery to be an old and established American institution, and did not see it as their duty to work actively for its abolishment. Several of these early Germans wrote in their later memoirs that they and their friends had felt that the Civil War could have been avoided; if the North had waited a few more years, slavery would have gone out by itself.²⁵

Among the '48ers were many radical reformers who, infected by the fever of revolution, couldn't stop rebelling. They wanted to make the world over, starting with the United States, which they wanted to establish as the center of a world of republics. Some promoted the idea that America should annex the decaying states of Europe. Others began to dream and agitate again for the Utopia of a German republic in the West. They chided the gray ones for not abolishing slavery, clericalism and puritanism, and blamed them for not exerting more political influence or establishing a purely German political party.²⁶

Many of the rebels felt they were just biding their time in St. Louis until the revolution in Germany started again. A few couldn't stand the life here, and went back. The early 1850's were a time of acute homesickness for many of the Germans who later became prominent in the life of the city. But with the passage of time, the men who had wanted to change the world changed themselves, and became a valuable addition to their new home. And the rising anti-slavery movement provided ample outlet for those who still wanted to change the world.

Among the '48ers were many brilliant journalists who joined the ranks of the already well-known German newspapers. I have already mentioned the oldest German newspaper in St. Louis, the Anzeiger des Westens, but there were many more, although some did not exert much influence, and some lasted only a few months or a year.

The first in a succession of Tribunes appeared in July 1838 as a campaign paper for the Whigs. Lack of funds forced its suspension after a few months. Editor of this first Tribune was Friedrich Kretschmar, who later became the first German Justice of the Peace in St. Louis. In July 1844 the German Tribune reappeared as a daily (except Monday), but soon changed its name to the Democratic Tribune. Soon after its acquisition by Christian Kribben in 1852, it suspended publication. While it lasted, it served as a worthy rival to the Anzeiger, forcing that erstwhile weekly paper to appear daily.²⁷

All in all, during the '40's and '50's, there were about ten German newspapers in the city, not to mention the many German magazines which had some type of religious affiliation. There were also a few rationalist or anti-clerical weeklies around. One of them, the Anti-Pfaff (the Anti-Priest) was published in 1842²⁸ by Heinrich Koch, a watchmaker, who issued his diatribes against the churches from his apartment on Myrtle Street, "second house from the corner of the Third street toward Fourth street," as he explained in the paper. Another anti-clerical publication, this one a monthly, appeared in 1863 under the title Gottes Freund, printed in bold letters -- and, under that, in smaller type, "The Cleric's Enemy." On the left side of the masthead was the inscription "May Jesus Christ be Praised. Amen," and on the right side, "Hell is paved with the skulls of clerics . . . St. Chrysostom."²⁹

The 1860's and '70's were turbulent years for the German press. In 1866, the evening Volkszeitung was established; in 1868, it was merged with the morning Neue Welt; not long afterward, it was absorbed by the Staatszeitung. In 1874, the Staatszeitung was bought at public auction by Joseph Pulitzer, who published it for one day and then sold its telegraph franchise to the Globe. The next week, a new paper called the Courier was published by a Dr. Mack. After a year, he left the Courier and started a rival paper, the Volksblatt, which succeeded in killing the Courier, but in the struggle also managed to kill itself. Then, in 1875, Dr. Mack started a weekly and Sunday journal, the St. Louis Volksblatt.³⁰

The only German newspapers in St. Louis which maintained a high standard of writing and exerted influence not only in St. Louis, but in Missouri and the nation, were the Anzeiger des Westens and Die Westliche Post. The Anzeiger had as its editor the already-mentioned Wilhelm Weber, who soon after his arrival from Germany in 1833 had become the librarian of the collection of books which was later to form the nucleus for the Mercantile Library.³¹ In 1850, his paper changed hands, and the new owner and editor was Dr. Henry Boernstein, who had already had a remarkable career before coming to St. Louis in 1849. Born in Hamburg in 1805, he studied medicine, did a 5-year stint in the Austrian army, wrote popular plays, and was connected with many literary journals in Vienna. With his wife, he toured the European stage as a star attraction, and in 1842 became manager of the German Opera in Paris. In St. Louis, besides writing and publishing a newspaper which became progressively more aggressive and controversial, he wrote a novel about St. Louis which shocked the natives considerably. He also found time to run a brewery, a hotel and several saloons; he organized a German dramatic society, and became co-owner of the St. Louis Opera House, where such dramas as Faust, Wilhelm Tell and Maria Stuart were performed with Boernstein and his wife in some of the leading roles. At the outset of the Civil War, Boernstein raised a regiment of his German friends, marched with Captain Nathaniel Lyon to Camp Jackson, and later, as a Colonel, led his Germans in battle at Pea Ridge. But the absence of its editor was hard on the Anzeiger, and in 1864 the newspaper expired, after having played a long and distinguished role in the affairs of the Germans of St. Louis.³²

Meanwhile, Die Westliche Post had been established in 1857 by Carl Daenzer,³³ formerly of the Anzeiger. A number of prominent Germans -- among them Dr. Emil Preetorius, Carl Schurz and Ernst Kargau -- soon became associated with the Westliche Post. Republican in its politics, the Post exerted a strong influence among the Germans in behalf of the Union. It continued to prosper for many years, but in 1938 was disbanded in a bankruptcy petition.³⁴

German cultural and social life flourished during the decade before the Civil War. The beginnings of a musical life in St. Louis go back to

1837, when a young German musician named Wilhelm Robyn³⁵ appeared in the city. Appointed teacher of music at St. Louis University in 1838, he played with several instrumental ensembles, and in the following year he organized and led a brass band. In 1845 he was one of the co-founders, and the conductor, of the Polyhymnia, an ensemble which offered the first classical music concerts yet heard in the city. Two more Germans who did much to further the musical life of St. Louis arrived in town almost simultaneously in 1839. One of these was Johann Heinrich Weber, a former court councillor, who brought with him trunk loads of music -- compositions of Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Handel, many of them with full orchestral scores.³⁶ He also brought along a daughter who was an accomplished singer. The other new arrival was Charles Balmer, a pianist, who participated in many musical events and who served as Miss Weber's accompanist. In 1840, Miss Weber and Mr. Balmer were married, and Balmer, with his brother-in-law, Henry Weber, went into the music publishing business; for many years the name Balmer and Weber was recognized as the stamp of quality on sheet music. In 1845, Balmer also established the Oratorio Society for the performance of Handel's Messiah and Haydn's Creation and The Seasons.³⁷

In the winter of 1847/48, when the famous Austrian pianist Heinrich Herz came to St. Louis for a concert, he asked some of the noted local musicians to appear with him on the stage in a performance of Rossini's Wilhelm Tell Overture as arranged for 16 pianos. It was an event St. Louis talked about for a long time.³⁸

Other notable musicians who should be mentioned are the Kunkel brothers, also arrangers and publishers; Clemens Strassberger, founder of the Strassberger Conservatory, and August Waldauer, who established the Beethoven Conservatory, and who was commissioned by General John C. Fremont to organize military bands at the beginning of the Civil War.³⁹ Singing societies too numerous to mention did their part, too, in making St. Louis a musical city.

One of the finest musical treats which St. Louisans ever had the opportunity to enjoy was Habelmann's German Opera Troupe. For almost two years, in the 1870's, this group performed in the Apollo Theater such works as Fidelio, Der Freischuetz, Faust, Tannhaeuser and many more. An observer and lover of opera commented after the demise of the troupe: "Yes, the German Opera failed. What a pity! Our citizens know not what they missed, except the few who went there nightly." After mentioning some memorable performances, he goes on to say that the Opera "was patronized grudgingly by the Germans, liberally by the Jews, and hardly at all by the Americans."⁴⁰

It was a long, hard struggle for the German dramatic theater, which had its first performance in 1842 with Schiller's Die Raeuber, played in the dining room of a boarding house. Later, Boernstein leased the Opera

House, on Market between Fifth and Sixth Streets, and made it into one of the city's earliest first-rate theaters. A pro-Confederate city police administration which wanted to show the Union-sympathizing Germans who was boss raided a Sunday performance at the Opera House on April 14, 1861, and thereby put an end to the German theater.⁴¹

I don't think I have to go too deeply into the role the Germans played in the Civil War. We are all familiar with the march on Camp Jackson by German militiamen who had trained for the day at their gymnastic societies; the exploits of General Franz Sigel, before the War a mathematics teacher at a private German school here; and the careers of such German-American officers as Peter Osterhaus, who joined the Union army as a private and came out as a major general with thirty-four battles to his credit.⁴²

During all the years of the German immigrations, during the Civil War, and even afterwards, an invasion of the part of the city known as "French Town" had been taking place. Gradually, the boulangerie was replaced by the Baeckerei, the charcuterie by the Metzgerei, and the cafe or wine shop by the Bierstube. Although the Germans were not the first to start a brewery in St. Louis, they made up for lost time by practically taking over this industry. Fine beers were made, and served, by Uhrig, Schnaider and Tony Faust, who operated some of the city's most famous beer gardens. It was Adam Lemp, who came in 1838,⁴³ who was the first in St. Louis to brew the type of beer known as Lager. Later, there was Eberhard Anheuser, who purchased the small Bavarian Brewery and then had the good luck to acquire as a son-in-law the redoubtable Adolphus Busch.⁴⁴ The results are well known.

Many other Germans who came with not much money but a good supply of skill, imagination and capacity for hard work became prominent in the business world of St. Louis and the nation. Henry Timken, famous both as inventor and manufacturer, came to St. Louis in 1835, apprenticing himself to a wagonmaker. He established his own small carriage factory on Fourth Street near Morgan, and rapidly expanded the enterprise. During the Civil War the business was interrupted by Timken's service in the army, and by a large fire which destroyed his factory in 1864. Timken built a new factory on St. Charles Street, and became known as the inventor of the Timken carriage spring. Later he invented many more devices, chief among them the Timken roller bearing, which made him world-famous.⁴⁵

Adolphus Boeckeler, a carpenter and builder, came in 1840, and worked at his trade until he had accumulated enough capital to buy a small sawmill at Second and Wright Streets. The plant was driven by horse power, and as Boeckeler's resources increased, he managed to acquire steam power for the mill. In 1844, he and an associate established another mill at Stillwater, Minnesota, rafting the lumber down the Mississippi to

St. Louis for sale. It took from six to eight weeks to get the lumber from the mill to the market. Shortly after 1860, Boeckeler chartered the Steamer Grey Eagle, and brought down the river the first raft of lumber ever towed by a steamboat -- thereby reducing the time required for transporting the lumber to two weeks. Eventually he acquired three steamers which were kept busy plying the Mississippi between the northern timber region and St. Louis.⁴⁶

The famous Meyer Brothers Drug Company was established by two brothers who arrived in America in 1847, and came to St. Louis in 1865 to establish a drug distribution center for the whole United States.⁴⁷ Many more well known enterprises which grew from the small beginnings of their immigrant founders can be named -- for example, the Mallinckrodt Chemical Company, the Niedringhaus brothers' Granite City Steel Company and the Luyties Pharmacal Company.

Among the distinguished public servants of St. Louis's earlier days we find many dedicated Germans. One of these was a highly trained engineer named Henry Kayser, who came with his brother and sister in 1833. After he had worked for the U.S. Government for five years, helping to build dikes and levees for the Mississippi River, he became the first city engineer of St. Louis, in which capacity he planned most of the city's water works and sewage system. His successors as City Engineer were also Germans -- Franz Hassendeubel, Ferdinand Bischoff and Karl Pfeifer.⁴⁸

Another eminent German engineer was Henry Flad, who, as a member of the Mississippi River Commission, improved the system then in use for dredging the river. When Captain James B. Eads undertook the building of his famous bridge across the Mississippi at St. Louis, he took Flad on as his chief assistant.⁴⁹ Julius Pitzman, another German active in the engineering field, was one of the top land surveyors and mapmakers in the country. His maps of St. Louis and St. Louis County are some of the most accurate ever published, and Pitzman's Records are known to all property owners.⁵⁰ Gottlieb M. Kern, a German gardener working in St. Louis and recognized as one of the best landscape gardeners then in the United States, laid out plans in the early 1870's for Forest Park; he had earlier landscaped the smaller Lafayette Park on the city's south side.⁵¹

The first German-born Mayor of St. Louis was Henry Overstolz, who, elected in 1876, was in office at the time of the momentous city-county separation.⁵² Among the officers of the law, too, were many German immigrants. Friedrich Kretschmar served as the first German Justice of the Peace for 15 years, and then for eleven years was Clerk of the Criminal Court. Christian Kribben, a Lieutenant in Doniphan's expedition, and later an esteemed lawyer and member of the Missouri State Legislature, served one term as Speaker of the House.⁵³

Gabriel Woerner arrived in St. Louis in 1837, and in 1841 went to Springfield, Missouri, to clerk in a small store. In 1848 he went back to

Germany to observe the Revolution as a correspondent for one German and one English-language newspaper. In 1850 he returned to St. Louis to become an editor on the Tribune. In 1852, having decided he didn't like newspaper work, he left to study law. He was admitted to the bar in 1855, made Clerk of the Board of Aldermen in '56, served as city attorney in '57 and '58, and in 1863 was elected president of the City Council. In 1862, and again in 1866, he was elected State Senator, and, in 1870, he was chosen Judge of Probate by a large majority over his two opponents. He was twice again elected to this office. In addition to all this, Judge Woerner produced several novels and one successful play.⁵⁴

Another judge not quite so eminent as Gabriel Woerner, Judge Christian Doerner Wolff, will probably be best remembered for the unique feat of having served on one occasion not only as judge, but also as prosecuting attorney when that official failed to show up, and, further, as lawyer for the defense when it was learned that the defendant had no counsel. The trial, which took place June 20, 1870, in the St. Louis Court of Criminal Correction with Judge Wolff playing his triple role, ended in freedom for the defendant.⁵⁵

I have tried to give you some idea of what these Germans were like who came in the early days of St. Louis's history. They entered wholeheartedly into the life of their adopted country, and expressed themselves freely, with the result that they were sometimes considered a bit forward, a bit hard-headed and a bit difficult. Even the eminent Carl Schurz was asked the familiar question, "If you don't like it here, why don't you go back where you came from?" But Carl Schurz and his fellow immigrants stayed, and their contribution to the cultural, educational, economic and public life of their new fatherland has been great.

Anheuser-Busch, St. Louis

Footnotes:

¹ Georg von Bosse, Das Deutsche Element in den Vereinigten Staaten (Stuttgart, 1908), 5, 6.

² Ibid., 255.

³ Gottfried Duden, Bericht ueber eine Reise nach den Westlichen Staaten Nordamerika's (Eberfeld, 1829), 1, 2.

⁴ Gert Goebel, Laenger als ein Menschenleben in Missouri (St. Louis, 1877), 7.

⁵ Ibid., 7.

⁶ Ibid., 9.

⁷ Julius T. Muench, A Sketch of the Life and Work of Friedrich Muench, Missouri Historical Collections, Vol. 3

⁸ Bosse, Das Deutsche Element, 203.

- ⁹ Friedrich Schnake, "Geschichte der deutschen Bevoelkerung," Der Deutsche Pionier, III (December, 1871), 304.
- ¹⁰ Muench, Life and Work of Friedrich Muench.
- ¹¹ Anzeiger des Westens, April 22, 1837.
- ¹² Ibid., February 12, 1836..
- ¹³ Ibid., February 24, 1838.
- ¹⁴ Schnake, "Geschichte der deutschen Bevoelkerung," Der Deutsche Pionier, III (October, 1871), 233.
- ¹⁵ J. Thomas Scharf, History of St. Louis (Philadelphia, 1883), 1524.
- ¹⁶ Walter B. Stevens, St. Louis, the Fourth City (St. Louis, 1911), 647.
- ¹⁷ Stevens, St. Louis, 648.
- ¹⁸ Ibid., 648.
- ¹⁹ William Clark Kennerly, Persimmon Hill (Norman, Okla., 1948), 203.
- ²⁰ Anzeiger des Westens, February 6, 1837.
- ²¹ Ibid., February 10, 1838.
- ²² Scharf, History of St. Louis, 852.
- ²³ Floyd C. Shoemaker, ed., Missouri -- Day by Day (Columbia, Mo., 1943), Vol. II, 267.
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- ²⁷ Scharf, History of St. Louis, 934-35.
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