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Carl Schurz and German-American Newspaper Publishers

When Carl Schurz and his new bride, Margarethe Meyer Schurz, arrived in America in September 1852, their only source of income was her family inheritance, carefully doled out by her brother Adolph Meyer in Hamburg. After almost two years in America with no regular income except for what he earned for articles he wrote for a New York newspaper, Schurz was interested in establishing himself in some type of business to provide for his family. Over the next years he pursued a number of business ventures and careers: a retail musical instrument business in Philadelphia, real estate speculation and farming, notary public and president of an insurance company in Watertown, Wisconsin, lecturer on the Lyceum circuit, and in 1858 lawyer in partnership with Halbert E. Paine in Milwaukee. Of all the lines of work that Schurz tried, he admitted that the Lyceum lecture circuit allowed him “to replenish his exhausted bank account in the shortest possible time.” However, when not lecturing or in government service, Schurz turned to journalism, clearly his favorite line of work.

Already as a student at the University of Bonn, Schurz had demonstrated a talent for writing and speaking. At the age of nineteen he wrote articles for the Bonner Zeitung, a daily newspaper, established by a group of democratic students and citizens and edited by Schurz’s art history professor at the University of Bonn and mentor, Gottfried Kinkel. Every day Schurz had to produce one or two articles, and when Kinkel was elected to the Parliament in Berlin, Schurz took over the editorship of the Bonner Zeitung. It was therefore not surprising that when Carl Schurz immigrated to America that he continued to write articles to supplement his income, and that once he had settled in Watertown, Wisconsin, in 1856, that he was soon involved in the local newspaper business.
Who were the German-American newspapermen with whom Carl Schurz worked, developed life-long friendships, and through whom he found employment when he was not in government service? It is not surprising that many of these newspapermen were fellow Forty-Eighters, who like Schurz were well educated and with whom he had much in common. In the words of Hildegard Binder Johnson, “No profession seems to have been more congenial to the Forty-eighter than journalism.”

The major German-American newspapermen considered here are David Blumenfeld, Emil Rothe, Hermann Lindemann, and Charles J. Palme in Watertown, Wisconsin; Emil Preetorius in St. Louis, Missouri; and Henry Villard in New York City.

When Schurz settled his wife and daughter in Watertown, Wisconsin, in fall of 1856, the city had two newspapers: the Democrat, an English-language newspaper founded by editor D. W. Ballou in 1853, and Der Anzeiger, a German newspaper established in the same year by David Blumenfeld, a Forty-Eighter from Württemberg, Germany, and John Kopp, a pressman with whom Blumenfeld had worked in Schwerin, Germany. Born in the city of Creglingen in Württemberg on February 13, 1828, Blumenfeld attended public schools and at the age of thirteen was sent to Stuttgart to train as a printer. In 1848 he left Stuttgart to work as a journeyman printer in Neuwied, Düsseldorf, and Schwerin. In June 1850 he decided to immigrate to America and settled in Racine, Wisconsin, where he was hired by Kohlmann Brothers to set type for a new German newspaper. However, a year later he moved to Milwaukee to become the office foreman for Moritz Schoeffler’s Banner, the first German newspaper published in Wisconsin on September 7, 1844. In September 1852, Blumenfeld married Nancy Lewensen from Schwerin, Germany, and a year later the couple moved from Milwaukee to Watertown, where they raised seven children. On August 27, 1853, Blumenfeld and his friend John Kopp, who had followed him to Milwaukee and then to Watertown, published the first issue of their German Democratic weekly, Der Anzeiger.

In October of 1857 Emil Rothe, one of the editors of Der Anzeiger, established a second German newspaper in Watertown, Der Weltbürger. Schurz was
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hired to replace Rothe as editor of Der Anzeiger, but his tenure lasted only two weeks because his views differed too greatly from the Democratic owners of the paper, and he was dismissed for being “too Republican” and was replaced by another Forty-Eighter, Joseph Englemann. The following year the newspapers merged as Der Weltbürger und Anzeiger, and in 1859 the name was changed to Der Watertown Weltbürger with Blumenfeld as sole owner and publisher and Rothe as editor for the political section. This arrangement lasted until 1862, when Rothe resigned from the paper to pursue elected office at the state level. Blumenfeld continued to publish Der Weltbürger for over five decades until his death on September 24, 1905, when his son Moritz took over as editor.

Blumenfeld became a prominent member of the Watertown community and served as alderman from the sixth ward on the city Common Council, as a member on the city school board, and as secretary of the local Democratic Committee for over thirty years. As one of Wisconsin’s pioneer journalists he was highly respected for his integrity and fairness, and his Weltbürger was regarded as one of the best German newspapers in Wisconsin and enjoyed a wide circulation in German communities outside of Watertown.

In spite of their differing political loyalties, Schurz and Blumenfeld shared a common interest in the newspaper publishing business and became life-long friends. During what was probably Schurz’s last visit to Watertown in 1872, he and Blumenfeld spent an afternoon reminiscing in the latter’s garden, and Blumenfeld’s son Ralph recalls in his autobiography that he heard Schurz describe the power of the press to his father: “I would rather be head of the New York Herald than president or king or any sort of ruler, for in my opinion the editor of the New York Herald wields greater power with more opportunity and prestige than anyone that I can think of.”

The friendship between Schurz and Emil Rothe dated back to their student days in Germany when they both attended the meeting of the German Students Association in Eisenach in September 1848, where Rothe was elected president of the assembly. At the second meeting of the Association Schurz succeeded him in this position. Both men were well educated, began journalistic careers already as students, and both had to flee Germany because of their involvement in the 1848 Revolution.
Emil Rothe was born on September 23, 1826, in Guhrau, Silesia. His father, a physician, saw to it that Emil received a first-class Gymnasium education in Lissa, Glogau, and Breslau, after which he studied law at the University of Breslau for three years and then spent a semester studying law at the universities in Jena, Heidelberg, and Berlin before returning to Breslau in 1847 to prepare for his state exam. As a student Rothe was an enthusiastic member of the German Students Association and became one of its most eloquent spokesmen. In 1848 Rothe together with fellow students Max Friedländer and Robert Gieseke authored the manifesto of the German Students Association, which they delivered to the National Assembly meeting in Frankfurt am Main. As a correspondent for several newspapers Rothe reported on the German Parliament and was sent to report from France and Italy. When Rothe learned that a warrant for his arrest had been issued because of his participation in the student protests in Berlin and Breslau, he fled to Danzig, where he was able to book passage on a Norwegian ship to Christiania, Norway. From there he sailed to Glasgow, Scotland, and then by English ship to New York, arriving in the spring of 1849. Coming from a well-to-do family, Rothe had sufficient funds to purchase a small farm with a peach orchard in what is now West Hoboken, New Jersey, where he planned to grow vegetables and tobacco in addition to peaches. Since he knew little about farming, he hired a young black man from New York to help him in the fields and allowed him to live in his home. To treat his black hired man as an equal and not as a slave caused his anti-abolitionist neighbors to view him with disdain, and they would have nothing to do with him. After the tobacco had been harvested and dried that fall, Rothe and his hired man started making cigars, but before he could bring his cigars to market on the other side of the Hudson, his servant along with the entire stock of cigars had disappeared and was never seen again. As a result of this financial loss, Rothe was forced to sell his small farm. Since Wisconsin at the time was advertised in the East as a favorite destination for German settlers, Rothe set out for Wisconsin in 1850. After a few months in Milwaukee he settled in Watertown. Here he and his partner, Theodore Bernhard, a Forty-Eighter from Berlin, started the first cigar business in Wisconsin, but
when this venture failed, he turned to farming, the newspaper business, and to reading law. After being admitted to the Wisconsin Bar, he opened a law practice and presented cases not only before the Dodge and Jefferson County courts, but also before the Wisconsin Supreme Court. He held elected positions in Watertown, including alderman, justice of the peace, city attorney, and county supervisor, and served as probate judge and attorney for Jefferson County. In 1860 he was chosen as a delegate from Wisconsin to the national Democratic conventions in Charleston and Baltimore, where he campaigned for the nomination of Stephen A. Douglas as presidential candidate. He left his editorial position at Der Weltbürger to run in the elections of 1862 and 1864 as the Democratic candidate for secretary of state, but lost in both elections.\textsuperscript{13} However, in 1863 he was elected to the Wisconsin Assembly.\textsuperscript{14}

In 1854 Emil Rothe married Johanna Ducassé, the daughter of Charles M. Ducassé, a Forty-Eighter, who had been an architect and surveyor in Darmstadt, Germany, before settling in Watertown, and the couple had five children.\textsuperscript{15} Rothe was one of the few church-going freethinkers of Watertown and was elected to the first church council of the Evangelical German Church of Watertown, which had no synodical affiliation and could appoint either a Lutheran or Reformed pastor.\textsuperscript{16}

In fall 1869 Rothe received an offer to become the chief editor of the Cincinnati \textit{Volksfreund} for a salary of $3000 dollars. On the advice of his friend David Blumenfeld, Rothe accepted the position and left Watertown, which had been his home for seventeen years. After four years in Ohio Rothe returned to the practice of law and became a prominent member of Cincinnati society. He was one of the founders of the Cincinnati German Literary Club and was elected as its first president. Here he was a frequent speaker on topics ranging from history and politics to culture and agriculture. Known for his oratorical skills, Rothe was often called on to speak at civic and social events and was recognized as the foremost spokesperson of Cincinnati’s large German-American community. He died in Cincinnati, Ohio, on April 27, 1895.\textsuperscript{17}

The friendship of Rothe and Schurz, first begun in Germany, continued in Wisconsin. They served together on the Watertown Common Council and were frequent hunting partners. They often clashed when it came to politics, since Rothe’s loyalty to the Democratic Party was as strong as Schurz’s allegiance to the Republicans, and at times it looked as if their political affiliation would end their friendship. Both men were still working to become fluent in English while living in Watertown, but they were soon well known in the Midwest for their oratorical skills, especially when campaigning for their respective parties. They were both abolitionists and railed against nativistic and anti-foreign policies. While Schurz garnered his fair share of unfavorable
coverage in the local Democratic press, with some papers even stooping so low as to spell his name “Shirts,” no attack rankled Schurz as much as the charge made by the Beaver Dam Democrat that he had been able to keep his considerable wealth in Germany, while the assets of his former revolutionary comrades had been confiscated, and that he was a Prussian spy sent to hunt down his former revolutionary friends. Schurz suspected that his friend Emil Rothe was the source of this slander, but when this later proved to be false, the two reconciled.\textsuperscript{18} In 1872, during what was probably Schurz’s last visit to Watertown, Schurz and Rothe traveled together to Watertown to campaign for Horace Greeley. They shared the platform in the Public Square, now Veterans Memorial Park, where they spoke to a crowd of seven to eight thousand people, Schurz for two hours in English about the failures of the Grant administration followed by Rothe in German for a half hour.\textsuperscript{19}

Since both the Democrat and Der Weltbürger were Democratic newspapers, Schurz felt Watertown needed a Republican paper, and with a subsidy from the Republican Party he founded the Volkszeitung in 1857 with Hermann von Lindemann as editor and Charles J. Palme as assistant editor. The paper announced that it would be “independent, but not neutral”; that its editorial policy would advocate for self-government with few restrictions, strongly oppose slavery, resist temperance and Puritan Sabbath laws, and condemn financial greed and corruption in government; and that it would remain Republican as long the party adhered to these principles. The Volkszeitung began publication with a unique format with one side written in German by Lindemann and with the other side written in English by Schurz. This arrangement eventually was abandoned, and the paper was written only in German. While the Wisconsin State Journal welcomed the Volkszeitung with enthusiasm as the voice of the Republican Party in a Democratic stronghold, it never became popular with the residents of Watertown and consequently existed only through the presidential election of 1860.\textsuperscript{20}

Before coming to Wisconsin Hermann von Lindemann had been the editor of the Dresden Gazette. Because of his involvement in the 1848 Revolution, he was arrested and condemned to death, but he was able to escape and flee to America. Here he decided to drop the von from his name and eventually settled in Watertown, where he was recognized for his writing ability and was viewed as a protégé of Schurz. Like his mentor, Lindemann soon became involved in Wisconsin politics and served as a presidential elector for Lincoln in 1860, but he arrived in Washington, D.C., a day late and therefore was not able to cast his state’s vote. He left Watertown for Madison to work as an editor for the Staats-Zeitung until it ceased publication in 1861. When the Civil War broke out, Lindemann and Palme received appointments in the State Quartermaster’s Office in Madison, and sometime towards the end of
the war both men moved to St. Louis, Missouri. In 1864 Lindemann was listed as co-editor of the *Westliche Post* in St. Louis with Emil Preetorius, who had just become part owner of the *Post*. However, on April 11, 1865, Lindemann’s name disappeared from the masthead of the paper and was replaced by that of Theodor Plate, who was more involved in the business side of the *Post*. Two years later the name of Carl Schurz replaced that of Plate when Preetorius asked Schurz to join him as co-editor of the *Westliche Post*. After leaving the *Westliche Post* in St. Louis, Lindemann published the *Democrat* in St. Charles, Missouri. He died on November 26, 1871, in Jefferson City, Missouri.

Like Schurz and Lindemann, Charles J. Palme, was also a refugee of the 1848 Revolution and settled in Watertown, Wisconsin, in 1854. When Schurz appointed Palme as the assistant editor of the *Volkszeitung* in 1857, the two men were business partners and advertised their services as notaries public and land agents in the Watertown *Democrat*. When the *Volkszeitung* ceased publication, Palme purchased the Madison *Demokrat* in October of 1860 and made it a Republican paper. However, not long after the election the paper merged with the *Wisconsin Staats-Zeitung*, where Lindemann was an editor. Palme and Lindemann must have moved to St. Louis, Missouri, about the same time after leaving their positions in the Wisconsin Quarter-master’s Office. Palme’s name appeared as a resident in Richard Edwards’ *City Directory of St. Louis* between 1865 and 1869, and his profession was listed as clerk, editor, translator for the city government of St. Louis, and notary public. In 1869 he returned to Wisconsin to become the chief editor of the Milwaukee *Herold*, a German Republican paper, after the death of Bernhard Domschke, who had founded the *Herold* in 1861 with W. W. Coleman. In 1879 Palme resigned the editorship of the *Herold* to accept a position as the superintendent of the Government Paper Factory in Pepperell, Massachusetts, an appointment that he obtained with the help of Schurz. Palme died soon after moving from Wisconsin to Massachusetts on September 8, 1879, at the age of sixty-two.
After Schurz was admitted to the bar in Wisconsin, he became a partner in the law firm of Halbert E. Paine in Milwaukee on January 1, 1859. At the same time Schurz agreed to contribute articles on a regular basis to the radical Republican German weekly in Milwaukee, *Der Atlas*, published by Bernhard Domschke, a Forty-Eighter and pastor from Dresden, who had become a freethinker and one of the leading German Republicans in Wisconsin.26

At the end of the Civil War, Horace Greeley asked Schurz to take over the Washington news bureau of the New York *Tribune* as chief correspondent. Schurz accepted the position on condition that he only be required to stay until the end of the session of Congress in the winter. In his *Reminiscences* Schurz recalled this as his entry into “the journalistic fraternity” and stated that journalism was the profession that he enjoyed the most:

My most agreeable experience consisted in my association with other members of the craft. I found among correspondents of the press a number of gentlemen of uncommon ability and high principle—genuine gentlemen who loved the truth for its own sake, who heartily detested sham and false pretense, and whose sense of honor was the finest. . . . My more or less intimate contact with public men, high and low, was not so uniformly gratifying.27

In spring of 1866 Zachariah Chandler, the radical Republican senator from Michigan, urged Schurz to accept the offer to become the editor in chief of the Detroit *Post*, which was officially established on March 27 of that year and which Chandler hoped would become the voice of the Republican Party in the state. While Schurz would have preferred St. Louis because of the large German population in Missouri, he needed a steady income and the future of the Detroit *Post* looked promising.28

Schurz barely mentioned the year that he spent in Detroit in his *Reminiscences*, undoubtedly because it was not a particularly happy one. In a letter of June 10, 1866, to his brother-in-law, Heinrich Meyer, Schurz described the first major disaster, a fire in the Detroit post office that destroyed two large boxes containing some of the most cherished possessions of Carl and his wife, Margarethe. Among these personal effects were letters that Schurz had written to his wife, detailed diary notes about special events of the last fourteen years, all their pictures, all of Schurz’s manuscripts and notes, prized letters from prominent people, such as Lincoln, his Civil War relics, including the division flag and his sword, and all of his military books as well as most of his political economy and history library.29 As chief editor, Schurz, who was not particularly well suited to daily routines, now had to put in long hours in
the office collecting and writing articles for each edition of the Post and then
shepherding the paper though the printing process, often until late into the
night. Worrisome was also the fact that the fledgling newspaper was losing
money, thus endangering Schurz’s income. Since Margarethe did not tolerate
well the summer heat of Detroit, Schurz sent his wife and children to spend
the summer on their farm in Watertown, Wisconsin, but separation from
his family did not improve his spirits. Since the Post did not have a Sunday
paper, Schurz was able to supplement his income by writing editorials for the
German-language weekly, the Detroit Familien-Blätter, established in 1866
by two German immigrants from Kassel, Conrad and August Marxhausen.30

The spring of 1867 was to deal Schurz two more devastating blows. When the administrator for the estate of the deceased John Jackson, from
whom Schurz had purchased his farm in Watertown, Wisconsin, in 1855,
sued for foreclosure of the mortgage, Schurz was unable to come up with
the necessary funds to pay what he still owed on the mortgage, and the farm
was sold at a sheriff’s sale on Saturday, March 30, 1867. At the same time,
while on a campaign trip to Connecticut, Schurz had to rush home because
his three-year-old daughter, Emilie (Emmy) Savannah Schurz, was seriously
ill, and she died on the same day the Schurzes lost their farm in Wisconsin.
While the loss of their daughter was difficult for both parents, it affected
Margarethe’s health to such an extent that she was hardly able to make the
move to St. Louis, where Carl had accepted a position as editor with the lead-
ing German newspaper, the Westliche Post. Schurz decided to send his wife to
Wiesbaden, Germany, to recuperate, where his two daughters would attend
German schools. While his family remained in Germany for the next two
years, Schurz was able to spend Christmas 1867 with them and remained in
Germany until March. It was during this time that he visited Berlin and was
invited to meet Bismarck.31

On a lecture trip to St. Louis in spring 1867, Schurz had had the good
fortune to meet Emil Preetorius, a fellow Forty-Eighter and editor of the
Westliche Post (later the St. Louis Post). Preetorius felt that Schurz would be
the ideal person to join him as co-editor of the Post since one of the partners,
Theodor Olshausen, also a Forty-Eighter, wanted to retire and sell his interest
in the newspaper.32 The only problem was that Schurz, who had just lost his
farm in Watertown, Wisconsin, was in no position to purchase a share of the
Post. Preetorius and his lawyer, James Taussig, raised $10,000 within twenty-
four hours from twenty wealthy German friends to make it possible for the
financially strapped Schurz to purchase enough shares of the newspaper to
become co-owner. Within two years Schurz was able to repay this loan as well
as pay off some of his old debts. In fact, Schurz kept his financial stake in the
Westliche Post until his death.33
In his *Reminiscences* Schurz described Preetorius as someone who had brought “all the idealism of 1848” to his new home in America, where he had become one of the leaders of the German-born citizens of St. Louis:

He was a man of absolute rectitude and honor and of infinite goodness of heart. His generosity seemed to know no thought of selfish advantage. There was something inspiring in the constant freshness of his enthusiasms for all that was good and great and beautiful, and his wrath at every wrong and meanness. His intense patriotism was that of a man of lofty ideals, and any service he could render to his country, was to him a source of almost childlike joy.\(^\text{34}\)

Although fellow Forty-Eighters, Schurz and Preetorius apparently had not known each other in Germany. Even though they did not always think alike because, as Schurz put it, Preetorius was much more “partisan,” they developed a lifelong friendship. Since his wife and daughters left for Germany shortly after moving to St. Louis, Schurz was invited to live in Preetorius’s apartment.\(^\text{35}\)

Emil Preetorius was born on March 15, 1827, in Alzey, Rhenish-Hesse, Germany, and studied in Heidelberg and Giessen, where he received a doctorate in law.\(^\text{36}\) Forced to flee Germany because of his involvement in the 1848 Revolution, Preetorius came to St. Louis in 1853 and first worked as a leather merchant. Like Schurz he joined the newly formed Republican Party because he believed in abolition and campaigned for Lincoln in 1860. When the Civil War broke out, he organized German regiments to fight in the Civil War, arranged to have supplies shipped to them on the battlefield, and worked to keep Missouri from seceding from the Union. In 1862, at the age of thirty-five, he was elected to the Missouri legislature and founded the newspaper *Die Neue Zeit*. In 1864 Preetorius became part owner of the *Westliche Post*, and later that year *Die Neue Zeit* became the evening edition of the *Westliche Post*, but the following year it ceased publication. In 1865 Preetorius became the chief editor of the *Post*, a position he was to hold for the next four decades. He was well known for his journalistic and oratorical skills and for his lectures on aesthetics, history, and philosophy. Under the leadership of Preetorius and Schurz the *Westliche Post* became not only the most influential newspaper in St. Louis but in the entire state of Missouri for many years. The paper employed a number of talented journalists, such as fellow Forty-Eighters Georg Hillgärtner, who had edited the Illinois *Staatszeitung* and the St. Louis *Anzeiger des Westens*, Hermann Lindemann, and in 1868 a young Joseph Pulitzer, who had been working as a secretary for an im-
migrant aid society established by German-Americans in St. Louis, including Preetorius and Schurz.\textsuperscript{37}

After the Republican victory of 1868 in Missouri, Schurz, although still a relative newcomer to the state, was suggested as a possible candidate for U.S. senator on July 30, 1868, in the La Grange, Missouri, \textit{American} to replace Senator John B. Henderson, who was in disfavor for voting for acquittal in the impeachment trial of President Andrew Johnson. With the support of St. Louis Republicans, especially Preetorius and Colonel Grosvenor, editor of the St. Louis \textit{Democrat}, the leading Republican newspaper of the city, and the Missouri German-Americans, Schurz was nominated by the Republican caucus on the first ballot, after which the nomination was made unanimous.\textsuperscript{38}

With the senatorial election set for January 20, 1869, and with ratification of his senatorship by a joint session of the Missouri Senate and House assured, Schurz wrote to his wife on January 16, 1869, how he hoped to bring his parents to Washington, D.C., “to look upon their son in the highest position which a foreign-born person can reach in this country, and which no German before me has attained!” Schurz concluded his letter with:

You see I am swimming on the crest of the wave. Only one thing was lacking: that you were not there to see my victorious fight and that you cannot be in the capitol when I take my seat in the Senate. Your brilliant eyes would make my triumph doubly sweet. I shall see them in my dreams.\textsuperscript{39}

Schurz was forty-years old when he was sworn in as the new senator from Missouri on March 4, 1869, and according to Fuess “the leading German-American, whose good will was worth cultivating.”\textsuperscript{40} After spending the summer in Switzerland, Margarethe and the daughters returned from Germany in late October of 1869 and traveled directly to the capital, where the Schurzes settled in a house at 139 F Street and soon were part of the Washington social scene.\textsuperscript{41}

In 1876, the year between the end of his senatorial term (1869 to 1875) and the beginning of his tenure as Secretary of the Interior in the Hayes administration (1877 to 1881) tragedy struck the Schurz family. Margarethe and the children returned from Germany shortly after Schurz had returned from abroad to rally the German vote for Rutherford B. Hayes as governor of Ohio. Since Margarethe was not feeling well because of her pregnancy and because she did not want to return to St. Louis, Schurz rented an apartment in New York for the family. On March 5, 1876, Margarethe gave birth to their fifth child and second son, Herbert, but soon experienced complications, and ten days after the birth she died at the age of forty-three, leaving Schurz a widower at the age of forty-seven with four children.\textsuperscript{42}
During his terms of government service Schurz had to limit his journalistic activities because of legislative work and his duties as a cabinet secretary, and because he received a government salary, he was not under pressure to supplement his income by writing articles. Although still on the editorial staff of the *Westliche Post* and part owner of the paper, Schurz had to make an accommodation with the other owners for his frequent absences during these years.\(^{43}\)

When Schurz left government service in 1881, he was only fifty-two and faced a number of questions: how would he support himself, would he return to St. Louis, Missouri, to his former editorial post at the *Westliche Post*, or would he seek employment on the East coast, which would have the added advantage that he could visit the new love of his life, Fanny Chapman, the intelligent thirty-three-year-old daughter of a wealthy judge in Doylestown, Pennsylvania?\(^{44}\)

Schurz’s dilemma was solved when Henry Villard, who had purchased control of the New York *Evening Post* in 1881, asked him to join the *Post’s* new editorial team, and he even transferred a financial interest in the paper to Schurz, hoping to conceal his own ownership of the paper. Schurz was to be editor in chief with full control and in charge of politics and foreign relations. The other members of the editorial team were E. L. Godkin of the *Nation* as associate editor and Horace White, formerly of the Chicago *Tribune*, as president of the company. Both White and Villard had been associated with Schurz in the Liberal Republican movement of 1872. Thus Schurz made the decision to move to New York City, where he would spend the last twenty-five years of his life as a journalist, editor, writer, and lecturer and where he enjoyed an active social life of concerts, operas, and theater.\(^{35}\)

Schurz and Godkin had known each other since 1870 and had corresponded for many years before becoming colleagues at the *Evening Post*. While in the Senate, Schurz had contributed unpaid articles to the *Nation*. Both were skilled editors, but temperamentally unlike: Godkin combative and arrogant and Schurz resolute and self-confident. So from the beginning the two could
not agree on management policies and editorial styles at the *Post*. In 1883, after only two years at the *Evening Post*, Schurz decided to leave the newspaper. Godkin had secretly negotiated with Villard and White for Schurz’s position because he felt that Schurz’s editorial style was too prosaic and not polemic enough, thus leading to the loss of circulation of the *Post*. Villard and White agreed with Godkin, but did not inform Schurz. The breaking point between the two men finally came during the nationwide strike of railway telegraphers. Schurz, along with the *New York Times and Herald*, took a neutral stance toward the strikers, while Godkin, without consulting Schurz, attacked the strikers in the *Nation*, which had become the weekly edition of the *Post*, but which was under Schurz’s editorial control. Sensing that their differences were irreconcilable and irked by the underhanded way that he had been removed as chief editor, Schurz resigned from the *Evening Post* on December 11, 1883.

The two men continued their feud about the strike of the telegraphers in both letters and editorials. Again in financial difficulties, Schurz tried to resume his journalistic career in 1885 by purchasing a controlling interest in the *Boston Post* and by applying for the editorship of the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, but in each instance Godkin stymied the deals by giving the owners an unsolicited negative recommendation of Schurz. Although aware of Godkin’s interference, Schurz did not reopen their dispute, but neither did he try to restore their friendship.46

Henry Villard had arrived in America as a penniless German immigrant, but during his lifetime he made a name for himself as a correspondent, especially during the Civil War, a railroad magnate, and a newspaper publisher. Villard was born to a well-to-do family on April 10, 1835, in Speyer, Bavaria, and was only thirteen years old at the time of the 1848 Revolution, but he always considered himself to be a Forty-Eighter. At an early age Henry rebelled against his conservative father, Gustav Leonhard Hilgard, a judge, and was sent off to military school in the Alsace. Against his father’s wishes he studied poetry at the Polytechnicum in Munich and refused to read law at the University of Würzburg. In 1853, at the age of eighteen and with only twenty dollars in his pocket and not knowing English, he immigrated to America and changed his name from Ferdinand Heinrich Gustav Hilgard to Henry Villard out of fear that his father would have him returned to Germany to serve in the military. After a brief stay in New York City, Villard sought help from relatives in Belleville, Illinois, and while working in Illinois as a recorder of deeds, he mastered English. After a second attempt at studying law and working as a teacher, Villard obtained his first job in the newspaper business as editor of the *Volksblatt* in Racine, Wisconsin, a small weekly that soon went broke. His first major assignment as a journalist came in 1858 when the *New Yorker Staatszeitung* hired him to report on the Lincoln-Douglas debates in
Illinois. Although only twenty-three and inexperienced, Villard learned the trade well from older, more experienced members of the press corps. He was particularly adept at making contacts and gaining the confidence of his interviewees, including Lincoln. It was at this time that he met Horace White, and the two became lifelong friends and business associates. In 1859 he was hired by the Cincinnati *Daily Commercial* to report on the Pikes Peak gold rush in Colorado, where he became acquainted with Horace Greeley, and the two traveled together. After Lincoln’s election, the Associated Press hired Villard to go to Springfield, Illinois, to report on Lincoln and the president-elect’s trip to Washington, D.C. Villard turned down Lincoln’s offer of a captain’s commission in the Union Army to become a war correspondent, and in this role he not only witnessed but also reported on many of the famous battles of the Civil War for the *New York Herald* and later for the *New York Tribune*. With access not only to the generals of the Union Army, but also to President Lincoln, Villard’s war reports were some of the most accurate accounts produced at the time. Villard was one of the first reporters to syndicate his coverage of the Civil War to various newspapers.47

In 1866 Villard married Helen Frances (Fanny) Garrison, the daughter of the abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, and was sent to Germany by the New York *Tribune* to report on the Austro-Prussian War. There he met a group of German investors who complained about their worthless American railroad bonds, and who asked him to represent their interests in the United States. As a result Villard turned from journalism to the business of financing railroads, a field in which he made a fortune. In 1876 Villard became president of the Oregon and California Railroad as well as the Oregon Steamship Company and took over the Kansas Pacific Railroad. In 1881, the year in which he bought the New York *Evening Post*, he purchased the Northern Pacific Railway Company with a loan of $8,000,000, and as president of the company he oversaw the completion of its transcontinental line. However, by 1883 cost overruns forced the railroad into bankruptcy, and Villard was removed as president. Only six years later Villard had recovered financially from his losses and became chairman of the board of directors of Northern Pacific, a position he held until 1893. In 1890 he merged the Edison Lamp Company and the Edison Machine Works to form Edison General Electric and served as president until 1893, when the company was reorganized as the General Electric Company. He died on November 12, 1900, at Dobbs Ferry, New York, and his son Oswald Garrison Villard inherited the *Evening Post* and became its editor.48

Carl Schurz’s last official journalistic job came about in July 1892, when he was asked to write the lead editorials for *Harper’s Weekly*, whose editor, George William Curtis, was ill, but this arrangement was to be kept secret,
and his editorials were unsigned. Schurz continued to contribute editorials to *Harper’s*, usually on topics related to politics and sound finance, even after the death of Curtis, and it was not until five years later that he began to sign his articles. His association with *Harper’s* ended in April 1898, when the political views of the owners as well as the finances of the paper dictated a change in editorial policy from Schurz’s anti-imperialist stance. Schurz had vehemently opposed the war with Spain and the annexations of Hawaii and of the Philippines. Freed from weekly deadlines, the seventy-year-old Schurz could now dedicate himself to his own projects and the many invitations to speak to various groups.  

Schurz often defended the German-language press from what he considered the unfounded criticism that it hindered the process of Americanization by preventing immigrants from learning English and that it promoted un-American ideas and habits that inhibited the development of true American patriotism. After visiting the small German community of Augusta, Missouri, with Preetorius, Schurz wrote to his wife on July 8, 1867, that he observed here as elsewhere in America how the second- and third-generation children even of educated German immigrants differed from their parents once they had come under the influence of Americanism:

> “The mission of Germanism” in America, about which some speak so loudly, can consist in nothing other than a modification of the American spirit, through the German, while the nationalities melt into one.  

As long as there were German-born citizens whose knowledge of English was limited, a German-American press was an important source of information about current events, politics, and local community regulations and deadlines. In addition, the German-American press provided homesick immigrants with poetry and sentimental fiction in German. Schurz resisted the charge that “the use of the German language in this country impedes the development of a healthy American patriotism among the population concerned.” As evidence that this was not the case Schurz pointed to the thousands of young men of German birth who had readily volunteered to serve in the Union Army during the Civil War, especially in the German regiments where hardly a word of English was spoken. While Schurz recommended that immigrants learn English so that they could participate fully in the American political process, this did not mean that they should give up the German language or their ethnic traditions. In fact, Schurz made a strong case for knowing a foreign language: “the knowledge of more than one language tends to widen our mental horizons, to facilitate the acquisition of useful intelligence,
and thus to broaden education.” The preservation of the German language, he felt, had done a great service to America by promoting the German love for music, especially in the form of the German Lied, the German Glee Club, and the German Musical Society.  

Although Schurz had possessed only a rudimentary knowledge of English when he arrived in the United States in 1852, he quickly mastered the language of his new homeland so well that by 1858 in letters to his friend and mentor Gottfried Kinkel, he could boast that he found English in some respects easier than German and that he was now more popular among the Americans than among the Germans because he spoke English better than most Americans and had a better knowledge of European affairs. Yet German continued to be spoken in his home, he corresponded regularly with family and friends in German, and he even wrote the first volume of his Reminiscences in German because, as he explained, “that I might describe things that happened in Germany, among Germans, and under German conditions, with greater ease, freedom, and fullness of expression if I used the German language as a medium.”

Schurz was not the only German American who advocated for the preservation of the German language and culture. Under Emil Preetorius and William Stengel, a fellow Forty-Eighter who became Preetorius’s assistant when Hermann Lindemann left in 1865, the Westliche Post published numerous editorials urging the continued use of the German language in homes and schools. In 1871 Preetorius, Carl Dänzer, a Forty-Eighter and founder of the Westliche Post in 1857, along with other German-Americans of St. Louis, funded a German Department at the Mercantile Library in St. Louis. On August 20–23, 1886, Schurz and Preetorius attended a Journalistic and Editorial Convention in Milwaukee of some sixty editors and journalists of German-American newspapers and thirty delegates from around the United States. The participants elected Preetorius as the president of the convention and Franz Sigel as the president of the association. The purpose of the meeting was to form a national organization that would support German-American newspapers by providing staff, setting ethical publishing standards, and promoting the preservation of the German language and culture through the study of German in schools. This association, however, did not last long as it became clear that as Forty-Eighters aged and died that the “cultural flowering of German communities in the United States” would cease.

Schurz summarized his thoughts about the use of the German language by German-Americans in an address on January 9, 1897, at a banquet for the fiftieth anniversary of the Deutscher Liederkranz, one of the leading German choral societies of New York City. In his speech, entitled “Die deutsche Mut-
Towards the end of his life Carl Schurz completed two volumes and half of the third volume of *The Reminiscences of Carl Schurz*, 3 vols. (New York: The McClure Company, 1907–08), which were published posthumously by his children. Volume 1 covers the years from his birth in 1829 to his arrival with his wife in the United States in 1852. Volume 2 deals with their first ten years in America, including the move to Wisconsin. Schurz was only able to bring Volume 3 up to the Grant administration before his death. At the request of his children, Frederic Bancroft, a close friend of Schurz, and William A. Dunning, a professor at Columbia University, added a concluding section consisting of seven chapters that detail his career in the U.S. Senate and professional work after leaving government service. Although proficient in English, Schurz wrote the first volume in German because he felt he could best express his experiences in Germany in German. Volume 1 was then translated into English by Eleonora Kinnicutt. The German version of the *Reminiscences* was published as *Lebenserinnerungen*, 3 vols. (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1907, 1912). Volume 2 of this edition incorporates the first part of Volume 3 of the *Reminiscences* written by Schurz; and Volume 3 of the *Lebenserinnerungen*, published five years after the first two volumes appeared, contains 187 letters selected by his daughter, Agathe Schurz, and a history of Schurz’s political career, “Carl Schurz’ politische Laufbahn: 1869–1906,” by Bancroft and Dunning that was translated into German by Max Blau. See Schurz, *Reminiscences*, 2:104. For an overview of the years that Carl Schurz and his wife lived in Watertown, Wisconsin, see William E. Petig, “Carl and Margarethe Schurz: Their Years in Watertown, Wisconsin,” *Yearbook of German-American Studies* 51 (2016): 28–81.


2 John Kopp, born in Augsburg, Germany, and trained as a printer, died in Watertown, Wisconsin, in December 1876; see C. Hugo Jacobi, “Reminiscences of Early Day in Watertown,” Weltbürger, May 5, 1923 (in German), Watertown Daily Times, February 1, 1924, p. 28; originally these articles were printed serially.

3 Before coming to America in 1842 Moritz Schoeffler had worked as a foreman in the famous Cotta Publishing House in Stuttgart. After working in New York City for two years, he moved to Milwaukee in 1844. Here he became a prominent Democrat, held various elected positions, and was the only German delegate to the state constitutional convention


5 Chester Verne Easum, The Americanization of Carl Schurz (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1929), 133; Wallman, 24. The Weltbürger continued to be published until 1932; however, after 1900 circulation began to decline when German immigration slowed and the children of German-born immigrants, who were no longer proficient in German, turned to English-language newspapers like the Watertown Daily Times, first published November 23, 1895. For a review of the newspapers in Watertown, Wisconsin, see Elmer C. Kiessling, Watertown Remembered (Milwaukee, WI: Franklin Publishers Inc., 1976), 170–74.


7 Theodore Bernhard, a graduate of the University of Berlin and director of a German private school in Watertown, represented the city in the state legislature in 1856. He was named the first principal of the Watertown High School with supervision of the entire city school system. As the organizer of the school system in Watertown, he introduced the first free textbook system in Wisconsin; see William F. Whyte, “Chronicles of Early Watertown,” The Wisconsin Magazine of History, 4 (1920–22): 291.


15 Burgheim, 562; Wallman, 28.

16 The Evangelical German Church of Watertown was founded in 1847 and for almost 120 years members refused to join any synod or other church body. It was later renamed St. Luke’s in 1909, and only in 1966 did the congregation vote to join the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.


19 Wallman, 86-91; Whyte, 300.

20 Easum, 158–61. See also Claude M. Fuess, Carl Schurz: Reformer (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1932), 54; Trefousse, 65; Wallman, 25–26; Würtke, German Language Press, 98-99. According to Heinrich A. Rattermann, 235, Schurz published and edited a weekly newspaper called the Watertown Post under the Republican banner in 1856 in opposition to Rothe’s Der Weltbürger, and this claim is repeated by Karl J. R. Arndt and May E. Olson, The German Language Press of the Americas, Vol. 1, History and Bibliography 1732–1968: United States of America, 3rd ed. (Munich: Verlag Dokumentation, 1976), 1:707–9. However, this is not possible since Schurz was in Europe with his family until June 1856 and then was involved in moving his wife and daughter from Philadelphia to their new home in Watertown in August of that year. Additionally, Rothe did not establish Der Weltbürger until 1857, the same year that Schurz founded and began publishing the Watertown Volkszeitung. Rattermann is also mistaken when he writes that in 1866 Schurz took the Post from Watertown to his new position as editor of the Detroit Post. According to Donald E. Oehlert’s Guide to Wisconsin Newspapers 1883-1957 (Madison, WI: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1958), the Volkszeitung was published from August 1857 to January 1861; apparently there are no extant copies of the Volkszeitung.


22 Easum, 155; the advertisement appeared in the Watertown Democrat of March 5, 1857.

23 Annotated Catalogue of Newspaper Files in the Library of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 452.

24 See Richard Edwards, ed., Edwards Annual Directory to the Inhabitants, Institutions, Incorporated Companies, Manufacturing Establishments, Business, Business Firms, etc., etc., in the City of St. Louis for 1865 (St. Louis, MO: Richard Edwards, 1864–72) and Edwards’ City Directories for 1866 and 1869.

initials are reversed, and he is listed with the title “Dr.” See also the History of Jefferson County, 413–14.

26 Easum, 172, 233–34; Trefousse, 72–73; Wittke, German-Language Press, 98; Bruncken, 195–201. Domschke edited the first German Republican paper in Milwaukee, the Korsar, which appeared on October 7, 1854.


32 Theodor Olshausen, was born on June 19, 1802, in Glückstadt, Schleswig-Holstein, and studied law in Kiel and Jena. He was forced to immigrate to the United States in 1851 because of his participation in the 1848 Revolution. After editing the Davenport, Iowa, Demokrat, he became an editor of the Westliche Post in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1857. He became a prominent member of the Missouri Republican Party, and during the Civil War he helped to keep Missouri in the Union. After the war he returned to his native Germany and died in Hamburg on March 31, 1869. See Johnson, 65; Lawrence S. Thompson and Frank X. Braun, “The Forty-Eighters in Politics,” 151; Zucker, 323; all chapters in Zucker, ed., The Forty-Eighters: Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848.

33 Schafer, Schurz, 189; Trefousse, 162–63.


35 Schurz, Reminiscences, 3:257; Trefousse, 163.

36 Pretorius insisted that his name be spelled with double “ee” as it had been for 500 years and not “ae” as a branch of the family in Prussia spelled it; see note 1 in Saalberg, 103.


38 Schurz, Reminiscences, 3:295–301; Trefousse, 170–74; Fuess, 150–53.


40 Fuess, 155; Schafer, Schurz, 190; Trefousse, 174–75.

41 Trefousse, 176.


43 Trefousse, 197.

44 Trefousse, 249, 253, 257, 273. Schurz probably met Fanny Chapman in winter 1879–80 through Judge Henry Adams, a neighbor of Fanny’s sister in Massachusetts. Collections of their extensive correspondence are available in the Carl Schurz papers in the Library of Congress; in the Hogue collection of Schurz papers at Indiana University, Bloomington, IN; and
in the Schurz papers at the University of Münster, which have been digitized and are available online.


46 Armstrong, 16-29; according to Armstrong, the biographers of Schurz have ignored the long-term friendship of Godkin and Schurz; in addition both families as well as the Villards suppressed the details of the feud between Godkin and Schurz at the Post. See also Trefousse, 257–60; Fuess, 278–80; Allan Nevins, The Evening Post: A Century of Journalism (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1922), 455–56; see Chapter 20 for the Villard purchase of the Evening Post and Schurz as editor in chief. Nevins provides a review of some of Schurz's editorials in the Post, pp. 448–56.


48 Jo Anne Smith, 338–40. See also vol. 2 of Villard, Memoirs.


50 Schafer, Intimate Letters, 381–83.

51 Schurz, Reminiscences, 3:257–62; see also Fuess, 333.

52 Schurz, Intimate Letters, 182–86; see the letters of February 15 and 23, 1858, to Gottfried Kinkel.

53 Schurz, Reminiscences, 1:4; see also note 1.

54 Saalberg, 109. Carl Dänzer, born June 15, 1818, in Odenheim, Baden, Germany, fled to Switzerland after the 1848 Revolution and then to the U.S. in 1854. He settled in St. Louis, where he joined the Republican Party and became the associate editor of the Anzeiger des Westens and then founded the Westliche Post. After selling the Post he reestablished the Anzeiger and ran it until 1898, when he returned to Germany; see Johnson, 65; Thompson and Braun, 129; Zucker, 285; in Zucker, ed., The Forty-Eighters: Political Refugees of the German Revolution of 1848.


It means that we should adopt the best traits of American character and join them to the best traits of German character. By so doing we shall make the most valuable contribution to the American nation, to American civilization. As Americans we ought to acquire the language of the country, but we must not lose our German mothertongue [sic].