

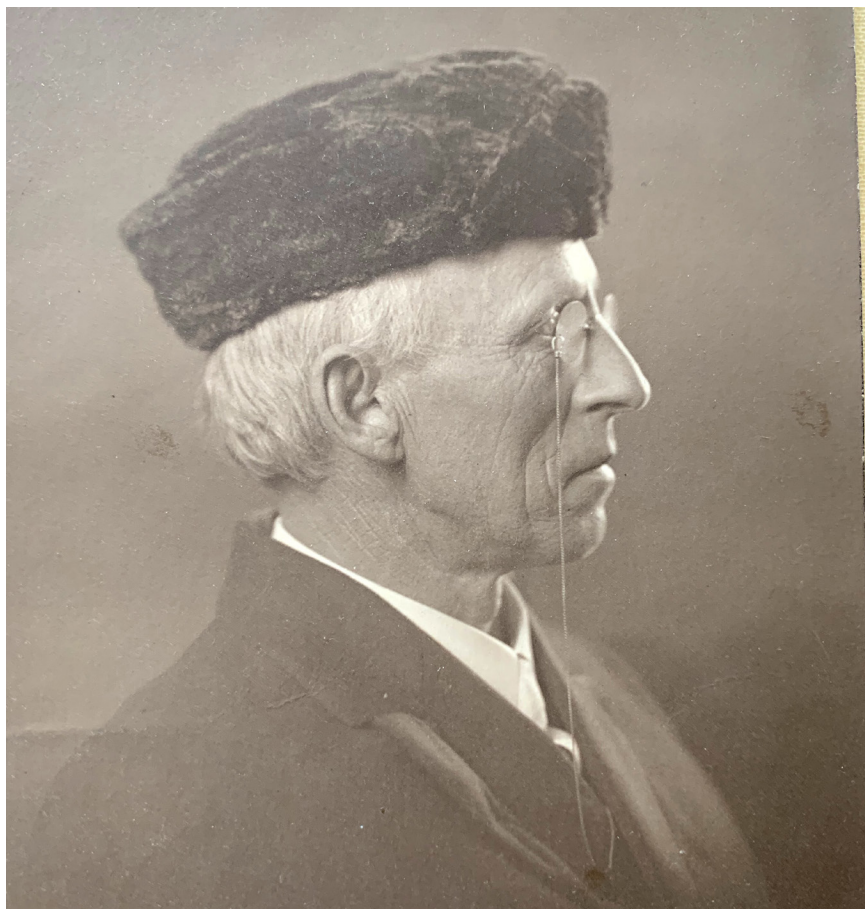
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Albert F. W. Grimm: Wisconsin's Most Prolific German American Author

When the Max Kade Institute at the University of Wisconsin-Madison was founded in 1983, Jürgen Eichhoff, the director, put out a call for German books that people in the community might have stored in their attics. In response to this request, relatives showered me with boxes of German books, in which I discovered a number of novels written in German by Alfred Ira and printed in Antigo, Wisconsin. Research revealed that Alfred Ira was the pen name used by Albert F. W. Grimm, who had served as the pastor of Peace Lutheran Church, in Antigo, Wisconsin, from 1891 to 1922. Except for a few references to Grimm in Lutheran church publications and a few translations of his works in English, there have been no studies of his literary oeuvre. One of the earliest references to Grimm is a partial list of his literary works in *Wisconsin Authors and Their Books, 1836-1975*, compiled by Orrilla T. Blackshear.¹ Robert E. Ward in *A Bio-Bibliography of German-American Writers 1670-1970* provides a list of Grimm's twelve novels and seven collections of short stories, but he gives the incorrect date for Grimm's emigration to the United States.²

Life

Albert F. W. Grimm was born on January 18, 1864, in Petershagen, Kreis Schevelbein, Pomerania, Germany. In 1870 his parents, Wilhelm and Johanna Grimm, decided to emigrate to the United States with their children: Albert who was six years old, Franz who was four, and Fritz who was six months old. They left Hamburg on the ship *Reichstag* and arrived on May 18, 1870, in New York City. Here the family lived for a time while his



Albert F. W. Grimm (Alfred Ira), 1864-1992

father worked to earn enough money to move the family to Wisconsin, then a favorite destination of many German immigrants. While in New York City, young Albert attended public school.³

After arriving in Wisconsin, Albert's parents purchased a farm near Pella, a small town just west of Shawano, Wisconsin. Here Albert was enrolled in the school of the local Lutheran parish. His pastor and teacher soon recognized his abilities and recommended that Grimm study for the ministry, even supporting him financially. In 1881, at the age of seventeen, he enrolled in Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield, Illinois, then known as the practical seminary, because it did not require students to learn Greek and Hebrew. Already as a seminarian Grimm practiced his musical talent by filling in as the director of the Concordia Choir, the seminary's glee club. During his last three years as a seminarian he served as vicar for two years

in Wittenberg, Wisconsin, located in Shawano County, and for a year and a half in Antigo, Wisconsin. In June 1888 he graduated from the seminary and accepted a call to serve the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Ash Grove, Illinois. The same year he married his girlfriend from school days in Pella, Wisconsin, Mathilda Auguste Moldenhauer, with whom he had three sons: William F., Marcus Arnold, and Alfred Ira. In 1891 Grimm accepted a call to Peace Lutheran Church in the small town of Antigo, Wisconsin, the seat of Langlade County, about 45 miles north of Pella, Wisconsin, where his parents had originally settled.⁴ He loved the serenity and natural beauty of Langlade County with its 543 wilderness lakes and spent many hours fishing on these lakes. He built the first cottage on Lady Lake for his family and often used it as retreat for his fellow pastoral colleagues.

Albert Grimm served as pastor of Peace Lutheran Church in Antigo, Wisconsin, for twenty-eight years. During that time the congregation grew to over a thousand members, with a Christian day school of over three hundred students. In addition to his duties at Peace Lutheran, Grimm ministered to mission stations in the surrounding communities, and many of these eventually developed into thriving congregations, including Pickerel, Polar, Deerbrook, Elcho, White Lake, and Gleason, Wisconsin.⁵

Grimm's first publishing venture was a collaboration with Edmund Lutze, the teacher and superintendent of the orphanage in Wittenberg, Wisconsin, the small town where Grimm had served as vicar for two years. With a simple hand press he printed dialogues or recitations in a question-answer format dealing with religious topics, which were to be used to instruct and entertain school children and young people in his congregation. At the same time, he started printing his own arrangements of hymns for church bands. In 1898, Grimm established his own publishing house, the Antigo Publishing Company. His eldest son, William, managed the company until he was called up for military service in 1917. While stationed in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, William died of pneumonia on October 14, 1918, at the age of twenty-nine, most likely as the result of the Spanish flu that was raging among American soldiers at the time. Faced with managing his publishing company and serving as the full-time pastor of Peace Lutheran Church in Antigo, Grimm decided to resign from the active ministry in 1919 for what he hoped would only be a temporary interlude, so that he could take over as manager and editor of the Antigo Publishing Company and eventually be able to return to the pulpit. However, three years later Grimm suffered a major stroke on February 14, 1922, and died on March 12, 1922, at the age of fifty-eight, one month and twenty-four days. He was survived by his wife, two sons, his aged mother, five brothers, and two sisters.⁶ His son Marcus continued to operate the Antigo Publishing Company for a few years after

his father's death at its old location on Seventh Avenue in Antigo. Eventually he moved the company to Summit Lake, Wisconsin, seventeen miles north of Antigo, where it existed for only a few years longer.⁷

Literary Oeuvre

While carrying out his pastoral duties at Peace Lutheran Church and frequently serving as a guest pastor in neighboring churches and mission stations, Grimm was busy writing short stories and novels that focused on congregational life, the experiences of the pastor, and the church's mission work on the frontier, especially in Wisconsin. He also wrote shorter works, such as religious plays, dialogues, and recitations in German and in English. In addition he composed and arranged music, especially for church use, ranging from music for solos, duets, or trios to operettas and pieces for church bands and orchestras.

From 1897 to 1922 Grimm published a total of twelve novels, three of which consist of two volumes, and seven collections of short stories. Grimm's first two novels, the first volume of *Gotthold I. Eine Erzählung aus dem Seelsorgerleben von der Pastorin selbst erzählt* (*Gotthold I: Story of the Life of the Pastor as told by His Wife*), and *Der Prachtjunge* (*The Magnificent Boy*), were published by the Concordia Publishing House in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1897 and probably in 1898, respectively, although *Der Prachtjunge* lists no publication date. The first two novels published by his own company, the Antigo Publishing Company, were *Das Stiefmütterchen. Erzählung aus den Kupferminen am Superiorsee für das christliche Volk* (*The Stepmother: A Story for Christian People from the Copper Mines on Lake Superior*) in 1898 and the second volume of *Gotthold* in 1899. Grimm's last novel, *Ehrwürdens Vereine* (*The Pastor's Church Groups*), was published in 1922, the year he died. This novel provides a humorous account of the social church groups the pastor organized for the youth, women, men, and young unmarried women of his congregation.

Three of Grimm's novels have been adapted and translated into English: *Das Stiefmütterchen, Seile der Liebe. Eine Erzählung aus dem Stadtleben für christliche Jugendvereine* (*Bands of Love: A Tale of City Life for Christian Youth Groups*, 1900), and *Erwürden Nudel. Eine Erzählung von der Herrlichkeit des ewigen Evangeliums* (*Father Noodle: A Narrative of the Glory of the Everlasting Gospel*, 1917). Grimm's third novel, *Das Stiefmütterchen*, was adapted and translated into English by E. F. Engelbert with the title *Stepmuvver: A Tale of the Copper Country* and was published serially in the *Walther League Messenger* over ten issues, beginning in October 1923 and concluding in the July 1924 issue.⁸ Engelbert shortened the novel by about half and reduced the original seventeen chapters to ten. One of characters of the novel, Frau Panwitz speaks

only Low German, and the translator rendered her words into a dialect resembling British Cockney along with an abundance of grammatical errors that are supposed to reflect the mistakes she makes when trying to speak High German. The translator, however, limits Frau Panwitz's discourse to what is necessary for the plot of the novel, thereby also reducing the length of the novel considerably.

The plot of *Stiefmütterchen*, like that of other novels by Grimm, is based on the parable of the prodigal son in the Gospel of Luke 15:11-32, in the New Testament. The main character, Schwocher, the Cliff Mine's superintendent and Frau Panwitz's border, has been living in a mining town in Upper Michigan under an assumed name. One day Schwocher is confronted by memories of the family he left over twenty years ago when his nephew, Otto Seiler, applies to work in the mine. Schwocher's eventual reconciliation with his family is brought about through his nephew's stepmother, whom everyone in the village calls "Stiefmütterchen" or "stepmother" instead of Frau Seiler, and who unlike the evil stepmother of German folklore is a kind and generous woman. The novel's title *Stiefmütterchen* has a double meaning in German: in addition to meaning stepmother, it is the German name of the pansy flower. Grimm reverses the German legend of the pansy by making his heroine a virtuous stepmother, who not only helps Schwocher reunite with his family, but who also brings him back to his faith. On an evening walk Schwocher is drawn to a beautiful flowerbed of pansies, where he runs into Otto's sister Marie and meets her mother. Stiefmütterchen invites him to attend her reading services at the Panwitzes on Sunday and gives him a bouquet of pansies as a parting gift.⁹ The pansies not only remind Schwocher of his mother, but also foreshadow his growing love for Marie.

Since the mining village has no pastor or church, Frau Seiler agrees to instruct the eight Panwitz daughters in Bible history and the catechism and, because there are no church services on Sunday, she invites people into her home and reads them a sermon. Since Stiefmütterchen is holding her next reading service at the Panwitz home and assumes that Schwocher will attend, she selects a sermon that is heavy on the law rather than on the gospel because she considers Schwocher to be hardhearted. She is amazed that the sermon has the opposite effect on Schwocher that she had anticipated, and that it leads him to repent and to want to reconcile with his family. The omniscient author points out to the reader, however, that Stiefmütterchen was not alone in ministering to Schwocher, but that it was the Holy Spirit that assisted her. Grimm does not mention who wrote the sermons Frau Seiler uses in her Sunday readings, but she is sufficiently versed in theology to be able to determine the sermon's message and its possible effect on the listener. When Frau Münch's young daughter dies, it is Stiefmütterchen who prays the Lord's Prayer at the child's burial. For those who might question having a woman

officiate at a funeral, the author reminds the reader of the reality of life on the frontier with the German proverb: "Necessity knows no law [when] the comforting service of a pastor is not available."¹⁰

Women have prominent roles in some of Grimm's novels. This is particularly true in *Stiefmütterchen*, which takes its title from the nickname given to the main female character, Frau Seiler. Since the community is without a pastor, she serves as their spiritual advisor. Her foil in the novel is the down-to-earth, uneducated, but kind Frau Panwitz, who speaks only Low German. In Grimm's first novel *Gotthold*, Frau Gotthold, the pastor's wife, narrates her husband's life story about how he is reunited with his biological father, who had abandoned the family when the son was only a baby and who now lives in the same town, but under an assumed name. In the novel *Seile der Liebe* Frau Schulz mothers the young men and women who live at her boarding house by helping them find employment and live a virtuous life.

Seile der Liebe was the first novel to be adapted in English by Mary E. Ireland as *The Shadow of a Crime* in 1916.¹¹ This novel follows the lives of two young men, Schulz and Stiller, who had just been released from prison after serving three years for robbery, and who, with the help of the Lutheran pastor in a neighboring town, are able to overcome the difficulties of finding work and being forgiven and accepted again by their families and society. Grimm bases the plot and the moral message of this novel on the parable of the prodigal son from Chapter 15 of the Gospel of Luke, and it is the only one of Grimm's novels that is set in a city, no doubt to warn young people of the evils and temptations of city life, namely saloons, dance halls, card-playing, and shady characters and criminals.

In 1918 John T. Mueller, a professor at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, and friend of Grimm's, published an English adaptation of the 1917 novel *Erwürden Nudel. Eine Erzählung von der Herrlichkeit des ewigen Evangeliums* as *Father Noodle: A Narrative of the Glory of the Everlasting Gospel*. Mueller's adaptation, which was published with the author's approval in his own publishing house, follows the basic story line, but changes the names of characters and takes numerous liberties when portraying the action.¹² This is Grimm's only novel in which a Catholic priest plays a major role and not a Lutheran pastor, and already from his name, Father Noodle, it is clear that Grimm is creating a caricature of the main character. Not only does Father Noodle suffer from addiction to good food, wine, and tobacco, but he also exhibits all the characteristics of a self-righteous, hypocritical, and narrow-minded cleric. The exaggeration of Noodle's negative traits to the point of caricature is a basic form of satire, which is reminiscent of religious satirical attacks on orthodox and pietistic Protestant clergy in German dramas and novels of the early Eighteenth Century. The novel also focuses on the

interaction between Catholics and Lutherans in the community, how they view their doctrinal differences, how they deal with interfaith marriages, and how these religious differences affect families and the community.

While generally there was harmony between Lutherans and Catholics in Grimm's novels, tensions between the two denominations did arise from time to time. In *Der Missionsplatz. Eine Erzählung aus der kirchlichen Missionstätigkeit im Staate Wisconsin* (*The Mission Station: The Story of Church Mission Activity in the State of Wisconsin*, 1902) both groups use the local schoolhouse for their services, but their agreement disintegrates when the Lutherans insist that the Catholics remove their confessional from the building. The conflict is resolved when the school board, consisting of two Catholics and one Protestant, votes that the school can no longer be used for religious services, and both groups decide to build their own churches.¹³

The tensions between Lutherans and other Protestant denominations, especially the Methodists, were often greater than those between Lutherans and Catholics. In the novel *Erwürden Noodle*, the laity seems to understand the theological differences between Catholics and Lutherans, but this is not always the case with Methodists. The theological disputes between Lutherans and Methodists go back to the controversies of the period of German Pietism in the Eighteenth Century and the Methodists' insistence on being reborn and on leading a strict and pious life of good works. The Lutheran antipathy to Methodists is on display in the novel *Im Zuckerbusch. Eine Erzählung aus dem Landleben*, (*The Sugar Bush: A Story of Country Life*, 1909) when Bruno Mantel, the new teacher, asks Frau Winkelmann for directions to his lodgings and whether Henkel, the founder of the Methodist church in the village, lives in the same street, she replies in Low German: "Ih, jawoll, abersten er is man bloss ein Minnedist un zählt nich mit." (Ah, yes, he is only a Methodist and doesn't count.).¹⁴ In Chapter Five of *Bilder aus dem Reisepredigerleben* (*Pictures from the Life of a Traveling Preacher*, 1913), the pastor arrives at one of his mission stations only to find his parishioners upset because a German-speaking Methodist minister from Pella, Wisconsin, wanted to become their preacher and informed them that their Lutheran Pastor Ira believes in predestination and is a false prophet.¹⁵ Another reason for the hostility between Lutherans and Methodists was the fact that they were competing for parishioners and were afraid that one group would steal members from the other.

Much of the conflict in the novel *Im Zuckerbusch* has to do with Seemann, the storekeeper and justice of the peace in the village. Seemann is nominally Lutheran and suspect because he underwent a conversion at a Methodist service. He claims that Lutheran sermons fail to stress contrition and conversion sufficiently and is referred to as a "Schwärmer" (religious

fanatic). Conflict also arises between Lutherans in *Der Missionsplatz* when they decide to organize their own congregation, and opposing groups within the congregation call different itinerant pastors. Feuchter, the owner of the hotel and dance hall, does not want a pastor who is against dancing and alcohol and calls Anton Fuchs, who drinks, smokes cigars, plays cards, and goes fishing on Sundays. Feuchter promises two free beers to everyone who comes to hear Fuchs preach, but Fuchs himself misses the church service because he had imbibed too much the night before. It turns out that Fuchs is an imposter and not a real minister, and Feuchter locks his saloon so he does not have to give out free beer. The ministerial candidate of the second group, named Gans, is also forced to leave town when he alienates the parishioners by accusing Max Froehlich, their honorable school teacher, of having an affair.

Grimm published only one of his novels in English, *Dodai* (1921), with the notation on the back of the title page: "Done in English by E. K. Sihler."¹⁶ It is unclear if Grimm first wrote the novel in German and then had Sihler translate it into English, or if Sihler's task was simply to improve the author's English version. However, it does read at times like a translation. The English in this novel is at times poetic and consists of a combination of standard English and the biblical language of the King James translation of the Bible with such archaic verb forms as "knoweth, dwelleth, abideth," pronouns "thee and thou," and adverbs like "thither and whither." However, the author also includes such colloquial forms of English like "thot (thought), tho, altho, and thru." The occasional English misspellings, errors in the formation of past tense verb forms, and the incorrect use of tense suggest that English was not the writer's first language.

Whereas Grimm's novels are normally filled with comical scenes and humorous dialogues, *Dodai* is his most serious work and was written after the death of his oldest son William as "A Booklet of consolation in illness and health, but particularly for those that are sick, that they may turn away from earthly things and set their hearts on things that are above."¹⁷ The main character, Dodai, a twenty-seven-year-old soldier, dies from wounds suffered in battle and is welcomed into heaven by his old pastor, his grandparents, and even by Adam and Eve. The author then chronicles Dodai's new life in Paradise and his encounters with Old Testament prophets and kings, including Moses and King David, the apostles from the New Testament, and church leaders and musicians like Martin Luther, Bach, and Paul Gerhardt.

The novel *Im Zuckerbusch* and the collections of short stories *Aus der alten Kaffeemühle: Geschichten aus der Studentenzeit* (*From the Old Coffee Mill: Stories from My Student Days*, 1911) and *Unter dem Apfelbaum, und drei andere Erzählungen* (*Under the Apple Tree, and Three Other Stories*, 1914) have been scanned and are available online.¹⁸ Students at Concordia Seminary in



Springfield, Illinois, had nicknamed the main building on campus “the old coffee mill,” and Grimm used this sobriquet as the title for his tribute to the director, Professor August Friedrich Crämer, who was well known for his parsimonious habits and for running the seminary on the leanest possible budget. Grimm published his short stories either separately in various German magazines like *Die Abendschule* or *Die Glocke* or in collections like *Sommerfäden: Sonderbare Geschichten für nachdenkliche Leute* (*Summer Spider*

Webs: Droll Stories for Thoughtful People, 1913) or *Unter dem Apfelbaum, Wenn man's gut meint. Gemütlich-humoristische Erzählungen aus dem Gemeindeleben* (*When One Means Well: Cheerful and Humorous Tales of Congregational Life*, 1915), and *Unter Uns: Intime Episoden und Anekdoten aus dem Leben und Wirken der Klerikalen* (*Among Us: Intimate Episodes and Anecdotes of Clerical Life and Work*, 1921). Robert E. Ward estimates that Grimm published over 100 short stories in various German American publications.¹⁹

In addition to novels and short stories, Grimm wrote short pieces in German and English called dialogues and recitations that young people could perform in church or school, or use as light reading for entertainment (*Unterhaltungslektüre*) at home. Grimm wrote some 50 dialogues under the pen name E. J. Freund, but it is possible that he was also the author of other dialogues that have no authorial attribution and no publication or copyright date, which were printed by the Antigo Publishing Company as well. Examples of some of his dialogues are "Schooling Future Housewives and Talking Slang," "Of a Pleasing Disposition," and "Quitting Tobacco." These dialogues and recitations must have been quite popular because many appeared in second and third editions. Some of the recitations were collected in volumes titled *Deutscher Humor: Poesie und Prosa zum Vorlesen and Vortragen aufgeselligen und heiteren Zusammenkünften* (*German Humor: Poetry and Prose For Reading Aloud and Reciting at Happy Social Gatherings*) and *American Humor: Poetic and Prose. For Reading and Speaking at the Schoolroom, the Society Hall, the Social Gathering and all Entertainments, where Genuine Harmless Humor, Clean and Wholesome Fun is desired*.²⁰ Grimm also wrote plays, but, unfortunately, we do not know how many dramas he authored because, like his dialogues and recitations, many of them have not survived. From advertisements we know that he wrote several plays in Low German and Saxon dialect. His plays *The Chiropractor* and *Weihnachten im Felde* (*Christmas on the Battle Field*), copyrighted in 1914 and 1915 respectively, must have been very popular since both were printed in third editions. The first page of *Weihnachten im Felde*, which is set in France in 1870 during the Franco-Prussian War, contains a "performance rights" warning to those who plan to produce the play stating that they must purchase at least eight copies, equal to the number of characters in the play, and that no part of the play may be copied. In 1915 Grimm started publishing the quarterly, *Der Rezensent* (*The Reviewer*), in which new publications were reviewed.

Grimm's works were well known among German-speakers in the Midwest, especially among members of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. In fact, during the first decades of the twentieth century the Antigo Publishing Company was a major source of German story books based on historical characters, religious plays, and dialogues, as well as musical arrangements and compositions.²¹ We do not know how many copies of his literary works were

sold, but many of them were reprinted in second and third editions, attesting to their popularity among German-speaking readers. Over a hundred years ago his novels and collections of short stories were often given as Christmas gifts to young readers in parochial and Sunday schools in Lutheran churches.

Musical Compositions and Arrangements

When and where Grimm acquired the musicological training to arrange and compose music is unclear. He must have started piano and organ lessons as a child and received some elementary musical training in secondary school. In addition to being self-taught and very talented, he undoubtedly studied music theory during his undergraduate studies at the seminary. Since music played such an important role in his personal and professional life, it is understandable that he passed down this love for music to his sons, who became accomplished musicians and band and choral directors in their own right. William and Marcus were organists and accompanied their father on his visits to minister to outlying congregations and missionary stations, where they played the organ for their father's church services. The youngest son, Alfred Ira, was a singer and played the trombone.

Grimm discusses his musical ability in the humorous autobiographical story titled "Der Notnagel" ("The Last Resort") found in the collection of short stories in *Aus der alten Kaffeemühle*. This story, which derives from Grimm's time as a student at the seminary in Springfield, Illinois, recounts how the director of the seminary, Professor Crämer, who had become forgetful and sometimes sang a different melody than what the organist was playing, asked Grimm to serve as his cantor to lead the singing of hymns at a funeral service he was conducting. Grimm, who as a student found the director quite intimidating, notes that Crämer was not impressed by his musical talent, even though Grimm conducted the Concordia Choir and the student band. However, the director was surprised when Grimm was able to lead the singing of hymns without the help of a tuning fork.²²

When Grimm was a pastor in Antigo, he often could not find suitable arrangements of church music for band or orchestra to accompany congregational singing at the outdoor services, which he frequently conducted during the warm summer months behind the church, and he produced his own arrangements of hymns or composed original pieces for the service. The congregation even constructed a band shell behind the church, where choral groups, the church band, and the orchestra could give concerts during the summer.

According to the ethnomusicologist, Philip V. Bohlman, Albert Grimm used music to "broaden the American religious experience" for German-speaking congregations in the Upper Midwest. He exemplified the pioneer

church musician in that he wrote hymns and popular songs, adapted German chorales, arranged music for church and town bands and orchestras, and also published the scores for the various musical parts. Bohlman describes Grimm as a voice in the wilderness whose influence waned rapidly after his death in 1922 because the use of German declined after World War I and because Grimm's music clashed with the musical traditions of German Lutheranism. As Bohlman states:

Grimm's music specifically addressed the conditions of the American settler and the American frontier. He prescribed a way of faith rather than promulgating that of the denominational institution...His musical voice offered an alternative to tradition, but in so doing failed to form itself into tradition.²³

Albert Grimm published his novels and short stories under the pen name of Alfred Ira. It is not known how he came to choose this name, but he apparently liked it: he even gave this name to his third son Alfred Ira Grimm, born on March 2, 1905. As was already noted, Grimm used the pseudonym E. J. Freund for his dialogues, recitations, and plays. However, when these were translated into English, they were often published without the name of the author in second and third printings. He published his musical compositions and arrangements for solo voice and choir under the pen name of E. Stern, but compositions for band and orchestra were usually signed with his own name, A. F. W. Grimm.

Edification Literature

Most of Grimm's literary works fall into the general category of *Erbauungsliteratur* or edification literature. This devotional or character-building literature has a long tradition going back to Middle Ages, to the lives of the saints and of the early church fathers, to mystics like Meister Eckart and Jakob Böhme, and to the devotional books of Johann Arndt's *Wahres Christentum* (1605-10) and *Paradiesgärtlein aller christlichen Tugenden* (1612), and the autobiographical writings of the Pietists of the Eighteenth Century.²⁴ Unlike much devotional literature that consists of prayer books, theological discourses, collections of sermons, religious biographies or autobiographies, including conversion histories, all written with the goal of promoting a pious and virtuous life, Grimm uses imaginative literature or fiction both to entertain and teach moral lessons. He develops these lessons with a generous quantity of subtle humor and insight into human nature without becoming

overly pedantic and preachy. He is a gifted storyteller not only with the ability to generate naturally flowing dialogues for his characters, but also with the talent to portray the foibles of his characters in comical situations along with linguistic humor. Grimm's theological message of forgiveness and love to overcome strife in families, between neighbors, in the church, or in the school tends to be more generic rather than denominational or parochial.

A theme that runs through many of Grimm's novels, either as a major or secondary motif, is the responsibility that parents have to raise their children to become God-fearing, morally responsible adults. This is the major theme in *Der Prachtjunge* (*The Magnificent Boy*), which is Grimm's second novel,



published by Concordia Publishing House in St. Louis, Missouri. In this novel the parents, Herr and Frau Grotemund, are responsible for spoiling their son Wilhelm in spite of all the advice and admonitions of their pastor and the teacher of the parochial school and suffer devastating consequences without reconciling with their son. However, the parents are able to redeem themselves by changing how they raise their younger children, and reconciliation with their neighbors, the Gieses, takes place when the son August Giese asks for the hand in marriage of the Grotemunds' daughter. In the novel *Liebe. Erzählung für das reifere Christenvolk* (*Love. Story for More Mature Christians*, 1903), Gottlieb and Malvina Lehmann take over the parenting of their granddaughter, Lulla, because their daughter Line is married to a lazy and unchurched man. Like the novels *Stiefmütterchen* and *Seile der Liebe*, *Der Prachtjunge* and *Liebe* also take their basic plot from the parable of the prodigal son from Luke 15:11-32. The main difference in the novel *Liebe* is that the main character is not a rebellious son or sons, but a granddaughter, and it is the grandparents, not the parents, who search for her and welcome her home with unconditional love and forgiveness. However, not all families are as fortunate as the Lehmanns to be reunited and reconciled with their wayward child. Frau Schierling's son Eldor, who stole money from her and who then convinced Lulla to run off with him, refuses to help his mother when she is in need and never returns home.

It is the inclusion of a moral lesson or maxim in all of his novels and short stories that distinguishes Grimm's works from the usual historical fiction and that leads to his work being categorized as edification literature. In an article on the dearth of historical fiction based on American Lutheranism, Theodore Graebner singles out Grimm along with his contemporary Hermann H. Zagel (1859-1936) as two of the few authors whose literary works are imbued with Lutheran history, especially of clerical life on the frontier.²⁵ According to A. Ira Grimm, Grimm's youngest son, Graebner, who taught at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, would tell his students that Albert Grimm's writing "would be the only and a very rich source of the history of Lutheranism and of the Missouri Synod in America."²⁶

Hermann Zagel, the son of a Lutheran minister, was born in Columbus, Indiana, and attended Concordia Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He taught in German American schools in Missouri and Illinois and wrote a number of novels about family life on the American prairie, in which the Lutheran church plays a prominent role. In addition to teaching, Zagel wrote numerous articles for the *Abendschule*, a magazine published by the Louis Lange Publishing Company in St. Louis, Missouri, which was also the publisher of his novels.²⁷ Like Grimm, Zagel wrote for a German American audience in a somewhat archaic High German with some Low German and

English words introduced along the way, undoubtedly reflecting the spoken German of his time. Grimm and Zigel both wrote about the role of the pastor, either Lutheran or Evangelical, as a leading figure in German American communities on the frontier. In his two-volume novel *Jack Roostand* (1909-12), Zigel chronicles the life of the young Protestant pastor, Jack Roostand, who feels called to minister to his fellow German Americans on the frontier, where he is often asked to arbitrate disagreements between German Americans in the community and in his church who cannot even understand each other's German dialect because they came from different areas of Germany. Unlike Grimm's novels, however, which incorporate a moral lesson and are devotional in nature, Zigel's novel is basically historical fiction.²⁸

A common element that runs through most of German American literature of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century is life on the frontier. In fact, Sander Gilman sees the frontier as the key to gaining deeper insight and understanding of German American literature of this era, which consists not only of high literature, letters, diaries, and memories, but must also include popular literature.²⁹ For German immigrants life on the frontier was difficult and often dangerous, and they needed not only a strong family unit to be able to survive, but also the mutual support of other members of the community. However, the cultures of immigrants from different countries often clashed on the frontier until they found some form of accommodation. The focus of religious and social life in the German American community was its church and school and the pastor, who, in addition to his role as spiritual counselor and arbitrator of general disputes, often was also the school teacher.

Fraternal organizations or lodges, such as the Freemasons, the Odd Fellows, and Knights of Pythias, were often active in frontier communities before pastors of organized churches arrived to set up mission stations and establish congregations. The purpose of these secret societies was both social and charitable: they not only offered members of the community a place to socialize, but they also provided financial assistance when member families suffered misfortune or fell on hard times. The Freemasons were one of the first of these societies to be active as early as 1861 in the Keweenaw Peninsular region of Upper Michigan, known for its copper mines and the setting for Grimm's *Stiefmütterchen*.³⁰ Conservative Lutherans, especially the Missouri and Wisconsin synods, strongly opposed membership in these fraternal lodges on theological grounds. They considered the teachings and rituals of lodges to be pseudo-religious and to be in conflict with basic Christian doctrines regarding salvation by faith alone and the Trinity. At the same time that the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church's youth magazine, *The Walther League Messenger*, serialized Grimm's *Stiefmütterchen*, it published a regular column

with testimonies by church members explaining why their membership in fraternal lodges was in conflict with their faith and why they left the lodge.³¹

Anti-lodge sentiment comes up in several of Grimm's novels. In the novel *Stiefmütterchen*, Schwocher, the superintendent of the Cliff Mine, discovers that his foreman Harris refuses to hire men to work in the mine unless they agree to become members of his lodge. When Schwocher employs his nephew, Otto Seiler, Harris and Münch, one of the mining crew bosses, work on Otto until he acts against his better judgment, carouses through the night with his new friends, and finally agrees to join the lodge. When Otto neglects his watchman's job to attend his initiation as a new member into the lodge, Schwocher is forced to fire him. Like that of the prodigal son, Otto's life reaches a low point before he decides to ask for forgiveness and to reconcile with his family and Schwocher. In the novel *Der falsche Prophet* (*The False Prophet*, 1905), membership in the lodge becomes a major theme. When Pastor Paulus, who preaches against dancing, going to the theater, and purchasing life insurance, forbids his parishioners to join the local lodge, fifteen members of his church decide to leave his parish. They file a lawsuit against the church for a monetary payout so they can establish their own congregation, which they name Gnadensonne (Sun of Grace). To Pastor Paulus's surprise, the new congregation thrives and even attracts prominent members of the community, while his own congregation continues to lose members. Morgenrot, the pastor of the Gnadensonne congregation, is known for preaching only sermons that his parishioners like to hear, and he is willing to officiate at the burial of a non-member of his congregation who belongs to the local lodge, something Pastor Paulus would never do. When Morgenrot asks his church members for his salary so he can pay for his board, or he requests parishioners to contribute to a building fund so the church can build a parsonage, his members respond with only meager donations. However, they do not hesitate to pay their large lodge dues on time out of fear that their membership will be suspended. Morgenrot is forced to flee town when just before his marriage to the town-beauty, whose wealthy family does not belong to a church and whose father sells life insurance and is a high official in the lodge, it is disclosed that Morgenrot has been engaged to another young woman for almost two years.

Grimm's novels and short stories are unique in the history of German American literature published in this country. They show not only how German immigrants adjusted to life in the New World and the hardships that they faced on the frontier, the setting for most of his works, but they provide the reader also with a picture of family and religious life in these backwoods communities of the Upper Midwest, especially in Lutheran congregations, of the late Nineteenth Century. His stories illustrate the simple country family

life, its customs and superstitions, the everyday disagreements that arise in small communities, where everyone knows each other's business, and they show how these conflicts are resolved in a fair and equitable way.

Grimm based many of the characters in his short stories and novels on real-life people, whom he met through his professional role as a pastor, but he never used their real names. It was said, however, that Grimm's friends could easily recognize the people after whom he had modeled his characters. Many of these German American immigrants, or their descendants were farmers, trades people, shopkeepers, and common laborers, and the few educated people usually were the pastor, the school teacher, and the doctor. City officials and government authorities tended to be English immigrants or their descendants, who had settled in the frontier village before the German immigrants arrived.

Members of minority groups, such as Native Americans and Jews, appear in only a few of Grimm's works. In the novel *Das Sägemühlendorf. Eine Erzählung aus dem Menominee-Aufstande im Staate Wisconsin* (*The Sawmill Village: A Story of the Menominee Uprising in the State of Wisconsin*, 1901, 1907) tensions develop between the Menominee and Stockbridge Indians and the townspeople of the small village. This was caused by Whites stealing wood from the Indian reservations, one of the major sources of income of the Native Americans, poaching deer and fish, and keeping the poll tax. Fearing an attack by the Indians, the villagers request protection from the army, which arrives in time to scare off the Indians, but not before the Indians have set the mill on fire. The soldiers stay to guard the one Indian, a chief, who was taken prisoner by the villagers when he fell into Tante Mille's vegetable cellar and could not get out. When an Englishman, Long Joe, incites a mob to lynch the Indian prisoner, he sets the fort on fire as a diversion, but in so doing also burns down the general store owned by the Yankee Single, whom the Germans have nicknamed "Schlingel" (rascal). Single refuses the help of the German villagers to rescue his store because it is supposedly well insured, and he hopes to be compensated for his loss. However, to his chagrin, Single discovers that his insurance had lapsed a month earlier, and he is now bankrupt. As Single digs through the ashes of his store, he laments: "All gone – all gone – Oh what a fool." To this the author replies with a moral admonition, "So klagt ein Mensch, der seinen Götzen verloren hat. Wer an einen lebendigen Gott glaubt, dem blüht aus Trümmern und Asche wieder neue Hoffnung" ("This is how a person complains who has lost his false god. For whoever believes in a living God, new hope blossoms forth out of ruins and ashes").³²

Grimm introduces his first Jewish member of a German American community, Ikabod, in the novel *Im Zuckerbusch*. Like Shakespeare's Shylock, the literary topos of the avaricious Jewish businessman, Ikabod is accused of

being greedy and ruthless and of charging exorbitant interest. Grimm's second Jewish character appears in the short story "Der Pastor will ein Pferd kaufen" ("The Pastor Wants to Buy a Horse"), found in the collection *Wenn man's gut meint*, and he is simply referred to as "der israelitische Pferdehändler" (Israelite horse dealer) and never by name. The horse dealer tricks the pastor into buying the same horse offered to him by his neighbor, but for considerably more money.

In some of Grimm's novels there are obvious tensions between the German-speaking immigrants and the English settlers who had arrived on the frontier first. Much of the German immigrants' anger is directed against shopkeepers who overcharge for their products and cheat their customers. The townspeople's dislike of the Yankee Single in *Das Sägemühlendorf* is illustrative of the attitude that many German immigrants had of the English members of their community. The German immigrants felt that they were handicapped by their inability to speak English and thus were disadvantaged in business transactions and open to exploitation.

Some of Grimm's novels and stories give readers a glimpse of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan history. For example, *Das Stiefmütterchen* describes life in the copper mines on Lake Superior on the Keweenaw Peninsula of Upper Michigan, and *Das Sägemühlendorf* depicts the events surrounding the uprising of the Menominee Indians in Shawano County, Wisconsin. Northern Wisconsin is also the setting for the mission stations in *Der Missionsplatz* and *Bilder aus dem Reisepredigerleben* and for the novel *Im Zuckerbusch*, whose first sentence states: "Echter Wiskonsinischer Wald" (real Wisconsin forest).

The novel *Der Missionsplatz* is set in a Wisconsin village of 165 mostly German inhabitants, with a store, train station, hotel, English public school, dance hall and saloon, but no church and no doctor. Conflict develops in *The Mission Station* when one group calls an itinerant preacher who opposes dancing and alcohol, while the other faction's candidate does not object to dancing and consuming alcohol. The novel also illustrates the role of folk medicine and superstition in a frontier community without a medical doctor when members have to deal with medical problems. Frau Unruh, the storekeeper's wife, secretly engages Frau Messerschmidt, the neighbor lady, to treat her ulcerated leg with a combination of caustic home remedies which she accompanies with religious rituals and magical incantations. As Frau Unruh cries out in pain, her husband breaks into the room, accosts Frau Messerschmidt, and accuses her of devilry.

In a note to the reader in *Bilder aus dem Reisepredigerleben*, Grimm points out that the twenty-four short stories in this collection are based on his own experiences as a traveling pastor or on those of his colleagues.³³ A few of the stories are much more religious and devotional in nature than his novels and

deal with questions of providential guidance, e.g., “Hatte Gott seine Hand darin?” (“Was God Involved?”) or “Waren es Engel” (“Were They Angels?”).³⁴ Other stories are often humorous and give us not only a good picture of what pastors confronted when carrying out missionary work on the frontier in Northern Wisconsin, but they are also some of the earliest historical accounts of early Lutheran missionary work in the Upper Midwest. There were only forest paths and no mapped roads, which meant that the pastor often got lost, especially in snowstorms. He would have to travel by horse and wagon, sled, or coach, or sometimes ride in the caboose of a freight train to an outlying station and then walk several miles on foot to the log cabin of a farm family, where services for the community would be held and where the pastor would lodge with the family in cramped quarters during his stay. On one such trip the pastor’s sled overturned in a stream when his horse took a wrong turn, and the pastor was soaked to the skin in freezing temperatures. Along the way the pastor might be asked to visit a sick person or officiate at a funeral. And once at his destination he might have to settle theological disputes among parishioners or resolve disagreements as to which side the men and women should sit in church.

Grimm’s Language

Since Grimm was only six years old when his parents immigrated to America, he acquired his formal education in High German in the local parochial school in Wisconsin in the 1870s and during his seminary training in Illinois in the 1880s. At home and in the community the family undoubtedly spoke their native Pomeranian Low German as well as a standard German in which English words and expressions were often substituted.³⁵ During Grimm’s entire pastorate at Peace Lutheran Church in Antigo, Wisconsin, he conducted all services in German.

While Grimm wrote his novels and short stories in High German, but with considerable use of Low German in conversations, he wrote his plays, dialogues, and recitations in both German and English. His English is not always idiomatic, and he was obviously more comfortable writing in German. He published only one of his novels, *Dodai*, in English. Grimm uses language to maintain social distinctions in his novels and short stories: the pastors and teachers all speak High German, and the common people respond either in a less formal and more colloquial form of Standard German or in the Low German of Grimm’s native Pomerania. In *Der Prachtjunge* the Grotmund parents, especially the mother, speak Low German not only with their children, but also with Pastor Engel and the teacher, Herr Werner. When the pastor and his nephew discover the attempted robbery and arson of Lieschen Giese’s home, the night policeman who arrives speaks only English. The

author makes it perfectly clear that Hoopston, the city where the action takes place, has both English- and German-speaking residents.³⁶

Besides *Der Prachtjunge*, Grimm's novels with the most extensive conversations in Low German are *Das Stiefmütterchen*, *Des Pastors Nachlass* (*The Pastor's Estate*, 1900), *Das Sägemühdorf*, *Der Missionsplatz*, and *Im Zuckerbusch*. In *Das Stiefmütterchen* Frau Panwitz speaks almost exclusively Low German, even with her border Schwocher, who replies in High German because he does not know Low German. When Frau Panwitz does speak High German, her German is filled with grammatical errors. In *Des Pastors Nachlass* the pastor speaks in High German in the church board meetings, but the board members, most of whom are farmers, respond only in Low German. Similarly, in *Das Sägemühdorf* the doctor, who bandages the Indian Blind Owl's hand after he is shot by the blacksmith, speaks High German with the village residents, who respond in Low German, but Blind Owl answers in High German. To assist readers who may have difficulty with Low German, Grimm frequently provides the High German equivalent in parentheses of some Low German expressions, e.g., "farig" (fertig), "Awen" (Ofen), "Partüffeln (Kartoffeln)", "Gauds" (Gutes), "rümhulwarken (umgehen)", "dei Sägemöhl" (die Sägemühle), "utäuwen" (ausüben). Grimm supplies the same linguistic assistance with Low German in *Im Zuckerbusch*. In Chapter One, Frau Winkelmann is busy cooking maple syrup and instructs her children to stir the syrup so that it does not overcook while she goes to speak with an approaching stranger who asks for directions: "Gören, kamt her un röhrt (rührt), dat dei Molasses nich äwerkaakt (überkocht)."³⁷ Her first question to the well-dressed stranger is "Sie sind woll ein Hochdeutscher?" (Are you a speaker of High German?), and she tries to speak with him in Standard German, but frequently falls back into Low German. In *Der Missionsplatz* the use of High and Low German clearly determines social status: the common folk all speak Low German, and the educated people, that is, the teacher and traveling pastor, speak High German. On the other hand, Feuchter, the owner of the hotel and saloon, switches between High and Low German: he speaks standard German with his guests and with the pastors and the schoolteacher, but with his seven children and neighbors he communicates only in Low German.

Grimm's German tends to be archaic at times, and his dialogues often include English loan words and expressions, undoubtedly reflecting both the increasing use of English as well as the actual language use in the German American community. In the novel *Seile der Liebe* Grimm uses such dated German words as "*der Perron*" (train platform), "*das Kosthaus*" (boarding house), "*despektierlich*" (disrespectful), and "*der Kumpan*" (buddy), and where appropriate he mixes English words and expressions, as well as germanised forms of English words into his dialogues, for example, "*der Saloon, der*

Saloonkeeper, Barroom, Office, boarder, boarden, you bet, Piekruste, Pieteig, sie baken einen extraen, Haar clippen, Bicyclefahren, der Grocer, der Farmer, das Frontzimmer, die Screentür." In his last novel, *Ehrwürden Nudel*, Grimm similarly blends English words into the German narrative where appropriate, for example, "*der Plumber, mein Bosz, gentlemanlike, er hängte den Receiver auf, die Cars honkten, Holz in den Furnace legen.*"

In his recollections from his seminary studies in Springfield, Illinois, in *Aus der alten Kaffeemühle*, Grimm writes about the occasional use of English by his fellow students and the teachers. Among the faculty, Professor Crämer, the director of the seminary, was considered the ultimate authority in the use of English. In the humorous anecdote "Ein hoffungsloser Fall" ("A Hopeless Case"), Grimm, however, relates how the students' respect for Crämer's English suffers a reversal.³⁸ According to Grimm, a student started using the colloquial English expressions "doggone" and "doggonit," and the use of these expressions soon spread on campus, but students were uncertain whether it was a curse word or the simply equivalent of "dummes Zeug" (rubbish, nonsense).³⁹ Coder, one of the immigrant students from Germany who considers himself an expert in English, accuses the student who used the expressions of cursing. Professor Crämer, however, informs the students that "doggone" is not a curse word, but means simply "Rede weiter" ("Keep talking"), also an incorrect translation. Clearly English language skills, even among the seminary faculty, were limited at the time. However, a student organization, the Germaniaverein, met every Saturday evening to help students practice debating in English, which Grimm illustrates with such comical phrases as "I make a Moschen dat we close" ("I make a motion that we adjourn") and "I segen de Moschen" ("I second the motion").⁴⁰

The controversy over the use of idiomatic English during Grimm's student days also illustrates that relations between the immigrant and non-immigrant German American students at Concordia Seminary in Springfield, Illinois, were at times strained, especially when German and American cultures clashed. Similar conflicts, undoubtedly, also existed in the students' German American home communities. In another story from *Aus der alten Kaffeemühle*, "Kaiser Wilhelms Geburtstag" ("Emperor William's Birthday"), Grimm recalls how seminary students who had immigrated from Germany and who usually tended to be older than the American students, requested and received permission to be excused from classes to celebrate the German emperor's birthday, while the non-immigrant German American students were required to attend classes and were not given time off to celebrate Washington's birthday. This led to name-calling and pranks, and when the German students in the cafeteria dared to sing "Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles," the national German anthem, the American students responded

with “My Country ‘Tis of Thee.” When the American students threatened to boycott classes, Crämer, whom the American students suspected of siding with the Germans, relented, and Washington’s birthday became a holiday for all students.⁴¹

The use of the German language in schools and churches declined significantly after World War I and negatively impacted the sales of German publications of the Antigo Publishing Company. German was already under attack a decade before Grimm founded his publishing company, when in 1889 Wisconsin passed the Bennett School Law that required that all children between the ages of seven and fourteen attend school and that all instruction of reading, writing, math, and American history in public and private schools be in English. German Catholics and Lutherans, especially the Missouri and Wisconsin Lutheran Synods, viewed the law not only as an attack on their schools, but on their language and culture and worked for the law’s repeal in 1891. It was the churches and parochial schools that continued to maintain the use of German during the first decades of the twentieth century.⁴² The fact that public schools were no longer using German as the language of instruction is reflected in Grimm’s novel, *Der Prachtjunge*. After the teacher of the local parochial school disciplines Wilhelm Grotmund for misbehaving, his parents decide to send their other children to public school even though they will be taught in English and not German, and they rationalize their decision by asking why German is necessary for success in the world when the children of their English-speaking neighbors have done so well.⁴³ Yet most German Americans viewed the German school as an important means to preserve their language, culture, and religion, even though the farmers usually complained that the school cost too much. Until Grimm resigned from the active ministry in 1919, he had conducted all services at Peace Lutheran Church in Antigo, Wisconsin in German. However, when his successor was installed in July of that year, it was decided to introduce an English service in addition to the regular German services on Sunday.⁴⁴

Because of his use of Low German in some of his writings, Albert Grimm has sometimes been compared with the North German author, Fritz Reuter, who was born in Stavenhagen, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, on November 7, 1810, and died in Eisenach, Germany, on July 12, 1874. Reuter wrote humorous novels that depict the everyday life of farming people in the small villages of Mecklenburg. Although he wrote some of his novels in Standard German, Reuter found that his writings in Plattdeutsch (Low German) had greater success. Reuter is credited with beginning the development of regional literature in German dialect.⁴⁵

There have been numerous attempts over the years to translate Grimm’s works into English. However, most translators agreed that it is impossible to do justice to the passages in vernacular German, especially those in Low

German, when translating them into English and still be able to capture the humor in these works.⁴⁶

Conclusion

Albert F. W. Grimm was one of the most prolific German American writers in the United States, and his literary works constitute one of the few examples of imaginative writing or fiction with a definite didactic purpose that also serves as a rich source of historical information on the early days of Lutheranism on the American frontier, especially of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. Grimm's short stories and novels, based on his experiences as a Lutheran pastor for over three decades, reveal the impact that German settlers had on the social and religious life of America, especially in the Upper Midwest and Wisconsin, and as such they are an important part of American cultural history. Specifically, they provide a picture of the role German settlers played in the development of Wisconsin, of the establishment of mission congregations by traveling pastors and lay leaders, of the way in which church schools maintained religious and ethnic unity, of what everyday life was like in these early rural settlements, and of the important role played by the pastor and school teacher in these pioneer communities.

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Notes

1. Orrilla T. Blackshear, *Wisconsin Authors and Their Books 1836-1975: A Compilation of Wisconsin Authors and Their Books, 1836-1975 Including Titles from Earlier Bibliographies*, Bulletin 7100 (Madison, WI: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1976), 258-59.

2. Robert E. Ward, *A Bio-Bibliography of German-American Writers, 1670-1970* (White Plains, NY: Kraus International Publications, 1985), 105. Ward states that Grimm and his family immigrated to America in 1874, but the correct date is 1870.

3. See obituaries: "The Rev. A. Grimm, Pastor and Author, Died Early Sunday," *The Antigo Daily Journal*, March 13, 1922, p. 1; "Heim: In memoriam," *Der Rezensent: Vierteljährlicher Publikations-Anzeiger*, no. 29 (October, 1922): 1-3; C. D. Giese, "Rev. A. Grimm," *The Lutheran Witness*, 41 (1922): 349; the same obituary in German in *Der Lutheraner*, 78 (1922): 384; and William Grimm, "Biography for Rev. A. Grimm" (unpublished biography by grandson, April 26, 2002). The personal papers of Albert F. W. Grimm are located in the archives of the Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, MO.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. William Grimm, "Biography," 1.

8. Alfred Ira, *Stepmuvver: A Tale of the Copper Country*, trans E. R. Engelbert, in *Walther League Messenger* (October, 1923-July, 1924). Engelbert translates the novel's title *Das*

Stiefmütterchen, the diminutive form in German of “stepmother,” with “*Stepmuvver*,” which is “stepmother” in the English working-class Cockney dialect. The diminutive form in German is also used as a form of endearment, which is the case in Grimm’s novel.

9. In German folklore the large lower pedal of the pansy flower symbolizes the evil stepmother; the two colorful pedals on either side of the large pedal are her two daughters, and the two plain upper pedals are the two poor stepdaughters. However, in Grimm’s novel the stepmother is a loving mother to her stepson and nurses him back to health when he is ill.

10. *Stiefmütterchen*, 218, “Not kennt kein Gebot und der tröstende Dienst eines Pastors war nicht zu haben.”

11. Mary E. Ireland, *The Shadow of a Crime* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1916). Although based on Grimm’s *Seile der Liebe*, Ireland’s adaptation is considerably shorter.

12. Alfred Ira, *Father Noodle: A Narrative of the Glory of the Everlasting Gospel*. Adapted by J. T. Mueller (Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1918).

13. Alfred Ira, *Der Missionsplatz. Eine Erzählung aus der kirchlichen Missionstätigkeit im Staate Wisconsin* (Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1902), 187-210.

14. Alfred Ira, *Im Zuckerbusch. Eine Erzählung aus dem Landleben*, Vol. 1 (Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1909), 8.

15. Alfred Ira, *Bilder aus dem Reisepredigerleben* (Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1913), 35-43.

16. See the back of title page of *Dodai* (Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1921). *Dodai*, which means “beloved,” was one of the judges in the Old Testament (Judges 10:1) and the grandfather of Tola of the tribe of Issachar.

17. *Dodai*, title page.

18. The novel *Im Zuckerbusch* and collection of short stories *Unter dem Apfelbaum* are available through the HathiTrust, and *Aus der alten Kaffeemühle* is accessible through the Internet Archive.

19. Ward, 105; this number seems high and has not been verified.

20. Both books were published by the Antigo Publishing Company, Antigo, WI, but without a date or copyright.

21. A. Ira Grimm, “Synodical Loyalty 1910 Style,” *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, 48, no. 3 (Fall, 1975): 103.

22. Alfred Ira, *Aus der alten Kaffeemühle. Geschichten aus der Studentenzeit* (Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1911), 10-25.

23. Philip V. Bohlman, “Prayer on the Panorama: Music and Individualism in American Religious Experience,” in *Music in American Religious Experience*, ed. Philip V. Bohlman, Edith Blumhofer, and Maria Chow (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 245-46. Bohlman refers to the composer as “Alfred Grimm” instead of “Albert Grimm,” his correct name; this is undoubtedly a confusion with Grimm’s literary pseudonym “Alfred Ira.” For his musical arrangements and compositions, Grimm used the pen name “E. Stern,” but he signed his band and orchestra pieces with “A. F. W. Grimm.”

24. Gero von Wilpert, “Erbauungsliteratur,” in *Sachwörterbuch der Literatur*, 3rd ed. (Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1961), 157; Rosmarie Zeller, “Erbauungsliteratur,” in *Historisches Lexikon der Schweiz*, Version vom 14.12.2006. Online: <https://hls-dhs-dss.ch/de/articles/011510/2006-12-14/>, konsultiert am 25.11.2024. See also Hermann Beck, *Die religiöse Volksliteratur der evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands* (Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Perthes, 1891) for an overview of edification literature from the Reformation to the Eighteenth Century.

25. Theodore Graebner, “The Place of Fiction in the Development of Lutheran Consciousness,” *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, 1, no. 3 (1928): 55-58. Graebner incorrectly refers to Grimm as “Alfred Grimm” instead of “Albert Grimm.”

26. A. Ira Grimm, 103.
27. Hermann Heinrich Zagel was born January 19, 1859, in Columbus, Indiana, and died on January 6, 1936, in Peoria, Illinois. He attended Concordia Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and graduated in 1882 from Addison Teachers College, now known as Concordia University Chicago.
28. Hermann H. Zagel, *Jack Roostand*, 2 vols. (St. Louis, MO: Louis Lange Publishing Company, 1909-12). See also Giles R. Hoyt, "Herman Zagel's *Jack Roostand*: A German-American View of Prairie Life," *Yearbook of German-American Studies*, 38 (2003), 113-18.
29. Sander Gilman, "German? American? Literature? Some Thoughts on the Problem of Question Marks and Hyphens," in *German? American? Literature?*, *New Directions in German Studies*, eds. Winfried Fluck and Werner Sollors (New York: Peter Lang, 2002), 12-15.
30. Lindsay Hiltunen, "Secret Societies of the Copper Country." Michigan Tech Archives Blog, September 1, 2017, <https://blogs.mtu.edu/archives/2017/09/01/secret-societies-of-the-copper-country/>. For a history of Freemasons in Wisconsin, see Jesse D. Chariton, "'Some Ceremony Peculiar to Themselves': The Continuation of a European Masonic Ceremony in Nineteenth-Century Wisconsin," *Yearbook of German-American Studies*, 56 (2021), 21-40.
31. See, for example, Charles Schlueter, "Why I Left the Knights of Pythias," *Walther League Messenger*, 32, no. 9 (April, 1924): 462; Frank E. Vanderwal, "Why I Left the De Molays," 32, no. 10 (May, 1924): 526, 573; John A. Zulauf, "Why I left the Modern Woodmen of America," *Walther League Messenger*, 32, no. 11 (June, 1924): 590; Elizabeth H. Nichols, "Why I left the Degree of Honor Lodge," *Walther League Messenger*, 32, no. 12 (July, 1924): 652.
32. Alfred Ira, *Das Sägemühdorf. Eine Erzählung aus dem Menomoneaufstande im Staate Wisconsin* (Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1907), 279.
33. See Alfred Ira, "An den Leser" in *Bilder aus dem Reisepredigerleben*, at the beginning of the novel.
34. Alfred Ira, *Bilder aus dem Reisepredigerleben*, 82-86, 114-23.
35. For an overview of Pomeranian Low German spoken in Central Wisconsin, see Ryan Dux, "Wisconsin Pomeranian Low German" in *Yearbook of German American Studies*, Supplemental Issue, eds. Mark L. Loudon and William D. Keel, Vol. 6 (2025), 5-36.
36. It is unclear whether Hoopston is a fictional city or if Grimm modeled it after the small town Hoopston, Illinois, which was about two hours from Springfield, Illinois.
37. Alfred Ira, *Im Zuckerbusch*, 5.
38. "Ein hoffungsloser Fall" in *Aus der alten Kaffeemühle*, 80-89.
39. Grimm spells it incorrectly as "Dog on" and "dogonte," see *Aus der alten Kaffeemühle*, 82.
40. *Aus der alten Kaffeemühle*, 83-84.
41. "Kaiser Wilhelms Geburtstag" in *Aus der alten Kaffeemühle*, 62-79.
42. Cora Lee Nollendorfs, "The First World War and the Survival of German Studies: With a Tribute to Alexander R. Hohlfeld," in *Teaching German in America: Prolegomena to a History*, eds. David P. Benseler, Walter F. W. Lohnes, and Valters Nollendorfs (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), 184.
43. Alfred Ira, *Der Prachtjunge* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, n.d.), 17.
44. *Peace Lutheran Church's "Seventy-five Diamond Studded Years,"* (1959), 7.
45. Thomas Sergeant Perry, "Fritz Reuter," *The Atlantic* (January, 1875): 36-41; James Sime, "Fritz Reuter," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 9th ed., XX. *Wikisource*, https://en.wikisource.org/w/index.php?title=Encyclop%C3%A6dia_Britannica,_Ninth_Edition/Volume_XX&oldid=14316848 (accessed November 26, 2024).
46. A. Ira Grimm, 102-09.

Appendix: Works by Albert F. W. Grimm (Alfred Ira), 1864-1922

I. Literary Works in German

Gotthold I. Eine Erzählung aus dem Seelsorgerleben von der Pastorin selbst erzählt. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1897.

Der Prachtjunge. Eine Erzählung aus dem Landleben. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, ca. 1898.

Gotthold II. Aus dem Seelsorgerleben. Von der Pastorin Anna selbst erzählt. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1899.

Das Stiefmütterchen. Erzählung aus den Kupferminen am Superiorsee für das christliche Volk. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1898.

Des Pastors Nachlass. Eine Erzählung aus dem Gemeindeleben für Gemeindeglieder und alle, die es werden wollen. 2. Bände. Illustriert von G. Ruhland. Schön in Leinwand gebunden mit Goldtitel und Marmorschnitt. Wird nur in beiden Bänden abgeben. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1900.

Seile der Liebe. Eine Erzählung aus dem Stadtleben für christliche Jugendvereine. Illustriert von A. O. Leutheusser. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1900.

Das Sägemühlendorf. Eine Erzählung aus dem Menomoneeaufstande in Staate Wisconsin. Illustriert von A. O. Leutheusser. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1901.

Der Missionsplatz. Eine Erzählung aus der kirchlichen Missionstätigkeit im Staate Wisconsin. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1902.

Liebe. Erzählung für das reifere Christenvolk. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1903.

Der falsche Prophet. Eine Erzählung aus dem Pfarramte für alle Amtsbrüder und solche, die am Wohl und Wehe des Reiches Gottes innigen Anteil nehmen. Illustriert von A. O. Leutheusser. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1905.

Das Sägemühlendorf. Eine Erzählung aus dem Menomoneeaufstande im Staate Wisconsin. Rev. ed. Illustriert von A. O. Leutheusser. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1907.

Im Zuckerbusch. Eine Erzählung aus dem Landleben. In zwei Bänden. Illustriert von Prof. A. O. Leutheusser. Wird nur in beiden Bänden abgeben. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1909. (Scan available online through HathiTrust)

Aus der alten Kaffeemühle. Geschichten aus der Studentenzeit. Illustriert mit Federzeichnungen und lichtbildlichen Wiedergaben. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1911. (12 short stories) (Scan available through Internet Archive)

Bilder aus dem Reisepredigerleben. Erzählungen aus der Missionstätigkeit, meistens im Staate

Wisconsin's Most Prolific German American Author

Wisconsin. Mit photographischen Aufnahmen. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1913. (24 short stories)

Sommerfäden. Sonderbare Geschichten für nachdenkliche Leute. Illustriert von O. Lüdike und mit photographischen Aufnahmen versehen. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1913. (14 short stories)

Unter dem Apfelbaum und drei andere Erzählungen aus dem Gemeindeleben. Illustriert von Max Dressler. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1914. (Scan available online through HathiTrust)

Wenn man's gut meint. Gemütlich-humoristische Erzählungen aus dem Gemeindeleben. Illustriert von G. Wind. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1915. (11 short stories)

Erwürden Nudel. Eine Erzählung von der Herrlichkeit des ewigen Evangeliums. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1917.

Dodai. A Booklet of consolation in illness and health, but particularly for those that are sick, that they may turn away from earthly things and set their hearts on things that are above. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1921.

Unter Uns. Intime Episoden und Anekdoten aus dem Leben und Wirken der Klerikalen. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1921.

Ehrwürdens Vereine. Vereinsgeschichten aus dem Gemeindeleben. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1922.

II. Literary Works in English Translation

Father Noodle. A Narrative of the Glory of the Everlasting Gospel. Trans. and adapted, J. T. Mueller. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1918.

Dodai. Trans. K. E. Sihler. Antigo, WI: Antigo Publishing Company, 1921.

The Shadow of a Crime. Based on Alfred Ira's *Seile der Liebe* by Mary E. Ireland. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1916.

Stepmuvver: A Tale of the Copper Country. Trans. E. F. Engelbert.
Walther League Messenger, 32, no. 3-12 (October, 1923—July, 1924).

III. Dramas

A. German

Ehrlich währt am längsten. 12 bis 20 Personen. n.d.

Der Flecktyphus. Dramatisches Spiel für 2 weibliche und 4 männliche Rollen. ca. 1915.

Knutsdoctor Stremel. 9 männliche und 5 weibliche Rollen. n.d.

Die Leinfeuz. 1 weibliche and 8 männliche Rollen. n.d.

Die nirnodzige Raadz. 4 männliche und 4 weibliche Rollen. n.d.

Spiele für Jugendvereine. Für gesellige Abende in der Familie und im Vereinslokal. Zusammengestellt von A. Grimm. n.d.

Weihnachten im Felde. Dramatisches Spiel für 8 männliche Rollen. ca. 1915.

Der Weihnachtsmann (Weihnachtsspiel). Dec. 1, 1918.

B. English

A Bad Mix-Up. ca. 1921.

The Cerebroscope. n.d.

The Chiropractor. ca. 1914.

The German Hunters. ca. 1921.

Grapejuice. ca. 1914.

Hatching the Lucky Egg. 1920.

Honesty is the Best Policy. ca. 1914.

If a Body Meet a Body. ca. 1916.

A Nail in the Floor. n.d.

Painting the Church Red. ca. 1916.

Ruled by Suffragettes. A Play for 15 Female Characters in Two Scenes. ca. 1914.

The Soap Club. 1916.

Wanted A Wife. A Humorous Play for Two Male and Two Female Characters. ca. 1914.

IV. Short Stories

“Geistreich: Eine Humoreske.” *Jahrbuch des Verbandes deutscher Schriftsteller in Amerika.* New York, 1911. 48-55 pp.

“My Rival.” Trans. Hilton C. Oswald. *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, 53, 1 (Spring 1982): 23-28.

Wisconsin's Most Prolific German American Author

"Pastor Stute in Langlade County." Trans. A. Ira Grimm. *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, 51, 4 (Winter 1980): 172-78.

"Die Überraschung." *Die Glocke* (October 15, 1907): 324-28.

V. Articles

"Blumenpflege im Zimmer." *Abendschule-Kalender* (St. Louis, MO: Lange, 1896), 131-48.

VI. Music Collections

62 Melodien der gebräuchlichsten Choräle und Lieder für Blaschöre zusammengestellt von A. Grimm. (ca.1900)

Unterhaltungslieder: eine Sammlung von Solos, Duetten und Chören für weibliche and männliche Stimmen. (ca. 1900)

VII. Works by E. J. Freund (Dialogues, Recitations, Plays)

A. German

Rätselneckerei. No. 1. n.d.

Der arme Knabe. Nützliches Bibelwissen. No. 2. n.d.

Neid bringt Leid. Sonntagsmorgenscene. Der König und der Bauer. No. 3. n.d.

Für die Kleinen. No. 4. n.d.

Humoristische Vorträge in verschiedenen Dialekten. No. 5. n.d.

Deklamationen für größere Kinder. No. 6. n.d.

Ich suche Arbeit für 5 Knaben und 2 Mädchen. Dialoge und Vorträge für Schulfeste. No 31. 1915. 12 pp.

Dialoge und Vorträge für Jugendvereine, No. 33. 16 pp. (incl. poems: "Karl hat Zahnschmerzen," "Vergiß die deutsche Sprache nicht") n.d.

B. English

The Wild Man. No. 1. n.d.

Quenching Tyranny. No. 2. n.d.

An Interrupted Birthday Party. No. 3. n.d.

Stop that Fiddle. No. 4. n.d.

Schooling Future Housewives. Talking Slang. No. 5. n.d. 22 pp.

The Inventor. Hiring a Confidential Clerk. No. 6. n.d.

Barking up the Wrong Tree. No. 7. n.d.

Don't Lose Your Temper. No. 8. n.d.

Of a Pleasing Disposition. No. 9. n.d.

According to the Cook Book. No. 10. n.d.

A Home for the Lady Clerks. No. 11. n.d.

School Examinations. No. 12. n.d.

Bunny, Cunny, Funny. Inquiring for Items of Census. No. 13. n.d.

Choice Humorous Recitations. No. 14. n.d.

Her First Birthday. No. 15. n.d.

That Spot on the Stairs. No. 16. n.d.

If I was President. No. 17. n.d.

A Good Investment. No. 18. n.d.

A Lesson in Geography. No. 19. n.d.

Strike out My Name. No. 20. n.d.

Curing Defective Sight. No. 21. n.d.

Five O'Clock Tea. No. 22. n.d.

Mr. Briggs has got La Grippe. No. 23. n.d.

The Virtue Toilers. No. 24. n.d.

Going to the Poor House. No. 25. n.d.

At the Corner Drug Store. No. 26. n.d.

Wisconsin's Most Prolific German American Author

In the Postoffice. No. 31. n.d. 20 pp.

The Difficult Examination. No. 33. n.d.

The Haunted House. No. 34. n.d. 22 pp.

Blumenstein's Toot Horn. No. 35. n.d.

At the Grocery. Dialog for Six Males and Four Females. Dialogs for Young People's Societies. No. 45. n.d.

The Smart Country School. No. 52. n.d.

A Bad Mix-Up. Dialog for 5 Males. No. 55. 1920.

Hatching the Lucky Egg. No. 56. 1920.

The Soap Club. Dramatical Plays for Young Peoples' Societies. 1916.

VIII. Works by E. Stern

Selections for choir were signed with the *nom de plume* E. Stern. Compositions for band and orchestra were signed with his own name, A. F. W. Grimm.

IX. Unsigned Works Published by Antigo Publishing Company that may be by Alfred Ira

American Humor. Poetic and Prose. For Reading and Speaking at the Schoolroom, the Society Hall, Social Gathering and all Entertainments, where Genuine Harmless Humor, Clean and Wholesome Fun is desired. n.d.

Deutscher Humor: Poesie und Prosa zum Vorlesen und Vortragen auf geselligen Zusammenkünften. n.d. 128 pp.

Geburtstagswünsche für die Geburtstage des Vaters, der Mutter, der Großeltern, des Onkels, der Tante, des Pastors und Lehrers und anderer Personen. n.d.

X. Works by other Authors Published by Antigo Publishing Company

Karpinsky, R. *Lustige Sachen für Mädchen zum Lachen. Vorträge für Jungfrauen.* n.d.

Vonderau, M. I. *Paul und Peter. Eine possierliche Knabengeschichte in Reimen.* Mit 80 Illustrationen von A. O. Leutheusser. n.d.

