

# In Memoriam

FRITZ OTTO EVERS. When the bells of Zion Church rang out the saddening news of the death of Pastor Evers on the 4th of September, 1963, an epoch in German-American life in Baltimore had come to an end. For thirty-four years he had belonged to this bulwark of truly German Lutheran faith in the city and like his few predecessors in this patriarchal office, he was the guiding spirit behind all that Zion stands for. In his closing chapter of *The Maryland Germans*, Dieter Cunz wrote in 1948 about the pastor: "From the day of his arrival in Baltimore he became not only the pastor of Zion Church but also the center of German-American life as a whole in Baltimore." Death came to Pastor Evers just ten days past his seventy-seventh birthday while he was visiting at Ocean City, New Jersey. For all his friends, his sudden departure from their midst came as a shock after he had so gallantly and courageously overcome a severe case of throat cancer with the help of God. After being in and out of hospitals for several years since his retirement from Zion Church in 1952, he had recovered and again served his church when it was deprived of a permanent pastor.

Pastor Evers, the son of an official of the Prussian *Domänenverwaltung*, was born in Berlin on August 25, 1886. He attended the *Askanisches Gymnasium* of Berlin and, after graduating from that institution, attended the Theological Seminary at Kropp, Schleswig, from 1905 to 1908. The seminary at that time prepared young men who expected to follow the ministry in foreign countries. Graduating from the seminary, he arrived in New York on June 18, 1908, and was almost immediately assigned to the pulpit of St. John's Lutheran Church, Englewood, N. J., where he was ordained on July 7, 1908. In 1912 he was appointed immigration missionary pastor for the Lutheran Church at Ellis Island, a post he held until 1914, when World War I brought the influx of German immigrants to a sudden halt.

He then received a call to Old Zion Church in Philadelphia, becoming its sixth pastor in 186 years. Meanwhile, he was active in relief work for children affected by the war. When he visited Germany in 1927 he was received with high honors, being granted a private audience with President von Hindenburg, who thanked him for his activities on behalf of German children. At that time he was chairman of the division on linguistic interests in the Board of American Missions of the United Lutheran Church in America, secretary of the committee on German interests of the church, director of the Seamen's Mission and organizer of the Oratorio Chorus of the Lutheran Church of Philadelphia. The United Lutheran Church greatly benefited from his wise counsel as did innumerable individuals who came to him in distress and were given encouragement and help. His ministerial and philanthropic activities were deepened and enhanced by his knowledge and understanding of the classics in German literature and philosophy.

Pastor Evers accepted a call in October, 1928, to the pastorate of Zion

Church in Baltimore, succeeding the late Rev. Dr. Julius Hofmann, who was pastor of the church for 38 years. He was installed on January 27, 1929. In the pews were the German Ambassador and members of his staff, ranking officials of the State and municipal governments and high officers of the church. Twice Evers was called to serve as chaplain in the Maryland Senate and once in the State House of Delegates. He organized a German-language school at Zion Church and brought it to a high degree of efficiency; the faculty at one time consisted of eight teachers and 150 students were enrolled.

Throughout his life Pastor Evers devoted himself to the spiritual well-being as well as to the cultural interests of the German American community in Philadelphia, Baltimore and beyond. Through his column in the *New Yorker Staats-Zeitung und Herald* he reached countless thousands of Americans of German birth and descent. To his many friends, he was more than a religious leader. He was a friend, adviser, and consultant for both young and old, not only of his own congregation but for many of other denominations who called on him. In the congregational history *Zion in Baltimore* we find an excerpt from the sketch a newspaper reporter wrote about Evers in 1940: "The pastor is a gentle, kindly man with a sweep of long gray hair that distinguishes him in the midst of any company. Alone in his *Sakristei*, in a velvet housecoat, a long cigar in his fingers, he is definitely a part of Zion Church." Pastor Evers will be remembered by many people for many things he did in his long and blessed life. He had his heart in the work of the Julius Hofmann Memorial Fund, a memorial to his predecessor, which was created upon his initiative to further the interest in German instruction in the public schools. He will be remembered by the members of our Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland for his untiring interest in the various projects it has undertaken. His counsel was eagerly listened to and his contribution in collecting historical material and books was of great importance for the activities of the Society. From 1942 until 1955, he served on our Executive Committee. Pastor Evers, in spite of his illness, was instrumental in organizing the Goethe Celebration of January 1950, at which time Zion Church was the host to one of the most impressive demonstrations of cultural values which the German nation had produced. Among the many honors which were bestowed upon him, he cherished most the very meaningful title of "Pastor Emeritus" which his own Zion gave him. In 1961, he was honored for his work in the field of American-German cultural relations by the award of the Carl Schurz Medal of the then Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation of Philadelphia.

Pastor Evers married Miss Louise Micho, whose home was in Kirchhain, in southern Brandenburg. They were engaged before he left Germany for the United States and were married in Englewood, N. J., on October 19, 1908.

The most moving tribute to Pastor Evers was delivered by the former Governor of his adopted State and Mayor of his beloved Baltimore before the German Society of Maryland on the occasion of a special memorial service in May 1964. Pastor Evers had been one of the steadfast supporters of the German Society through many decades. The Honorable Theodore R. McKeldin said of his departed friend, Fritz Otto Evers: "He brought to this city to elements of German culture that our scientific age has too often regarded as incompatible—its profound respect for learning, and its equally profound respect for the non-material.

"The dazzling achievements of German science in the last hundred years have obscured, not only here, but in Germany itself, the brilliance of the philosophy whose beginnings preceded the science and that may out-

last it in the end. For as technology is the application of science, so poetry, music and drama are the outcome of philosophy. In all these fields Germany has been pre-eminent. A symphony and a poem are not material things; but great ones have an immortality that, as the Roman poet Horace discovered centuries before Germany existed, is more lasting than monuments made of bronze.

"It was with these things that Pastor Evers was concerned through a long and active life, two thirds of it spent in the United States and nearly half in Baltimore. It was easy for him to transfer his political allegiance because the realm of the mind and the spirit knows no national boundaries. It wages constant war indeed, but it acknowledges no man as an enemy; its foes are ignorance, superstition, the narrow mind and the hardened heart. Those dark forces it challenges indifferently in every inhabited corner of the globe.

"Pastor Evers fought the good fight among us from 1928 to 1963, thirty-five years, just half the Psalmist's allotted span of a man's life. Moreover, as a spiritual leader of his people, he enlisted them in the same cause. Without doubt it was largely through his influence that Baltimore Germans have been found in every movement that has had for its aim the enlightenment of the mind and the release of the generous impulses of our people—and not only enlisted in the movement, but in many cases leading it.

"It is for this reason that I, who am of a different national origin and of a different religious denomination on my father's side, of the same national origin on my mother's side, but a citizen of this City, consider it not only a duty, but also a high privilege to render tribute to this man. For he brought to us treasure—not such treasure as the ships of Tarshish brought King Solomon, "gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks," but the far more precious treasure of learning linked to faith, treasure that does not bulge our purses, but that vastly enriches our lives."

CLARA ASCHERFELD. In order properly to evaluate the position of Clara Ascherfeld in the music life of Baltimore, it is necessary to review it in the light of the period in which she lived, which was the last decade of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries. It was a time when life in Baltimore was simple and had not yet lost its quiet graciousness, charm, and friendliness. Into this picture Clara Ascherfeld fitted eminently well since the attributes mentioned were also those of her own personality. The link was furthered also through her German ancestry. German at that time was an important element in the cultural life of the city, seen in the two private German schools, the German-English schools of the Public School System, in the varied activities of many German Singing Societies, and in the participation of professional musicians of German descent, in orchestral and solo performances.

When May Evans organized the Peabody Preparatory Department in the early nineties, Miss Ascherfeld was among the first to be appointed to the piano faculty, as a holder of a Peabody Scholarship. At that time she was piano soloist with the Peabody Orchestra, under the direction of Asger Hamerik. For many years later she taught accompanying and ensemble at the Peabody Conservatory and appeared as official accompanist at the well known Friday afternoon recitals with such soloists as Hekking, Gerardi, Powell, Metcalf and many others. These appearances were enlarged by recitals at other halls and in private homes. Conspicuous among the former

was a recital at Lehmann Hall with Fritz Kreisler as soloist, his comment on her playing was: *Sehr Musikalisch*.

Although Miss Ascherfeld appeared as piano soloist at many recitals, playing at least once annually at Lehmann Hall, it was her interest in bringing fine music to the people at large that best fixes her contribution to the music life of her day. Along these lines she travelled through Maryland and the surrounding states as a member of the Peabody Concert Company, and played in many towns which at that time scarcely knew music performances. Her lifetime devotion to the music of Bach (she had lived several years in Lübeck, Germany) caused the name of Bach to appear on practically all her programs. This devotion probably was instilled in her quite early by her mother, who still played Bach when in her nineties. The same appreciation of fine music characterized the choice of other composers on her programs.

Miss Ascherfeld received her earliest musical training from her mother at Havre de Grace, where she was born in 1875. She later studied in Europe under various teachers including Maurice Moskowski. This period was followed by her study at the Peabody Conservatory, under Emanuel Wad. During her entire life she made many friends who were impressed by her constant devotion to the finer aspects of the art of music, her loyalty to all who knew her, her kindness and her unostentatiousness. Innately she possessed a keen musical judgment, but preferred to emphasize the good qualities of a composition or of a performance. In the same way she was a source of constant encouragement to her students, from the many youngsters to the adults in her ensemble classes, and to those who attended the numerous musicals at her home. Her influence continues to live after her death which occurred in 1963 in the lives of very many people, professional musicians, amateurs and laymen. She deserves her own individual niche in the music history of Baltimore and is still remembered warmly by those who had the pleasure of knowing her personally.

OTTOR. ORTMANN

GERHARD H. DIEKE, nuclear physicist and Chairman of the Department of Physics at the Johns Hopkins University died suddenly of a heart attack in August 1965 while visiting in Aberdeen, Scotland. Born in Rheda, Germany, in 1901, he attended the University of Leiden, Holland, and obtained a Ph. D in physics at the University of California in 1926. He came to the Hopkins as an associate professor in 1930 after work at the Institute of Physical and Chemical Research in Tokyo and the University of Groningen in Holland.

He was one of the pioneers in investigating the structure of atoms and molecules by spectroscopic methods and in recent years had extended his work to investigating the structure of solids, including the properties of uranium. His early work in basic physics contributed to the development of the atomic bomb. His recent projects at the Johns Hopkins University included basic work on one of the most exciting new developments in physics, the ruby laser, which produces concentrated high-energy beams of light with a potential for revolutionizing such diverse fields as surgery and communications. Dr. Dieke's interests were varied. He was a member of the Germania Club. He approached his hobbies with the same thoroughness as his work. He was a world authority on certain types of beetles and an amateur archaeologist who studied the Mayan ruins.

OTTO J. FINGER, one of our members of long standing, died on September 11, 1965 in Baltimore at the age of only 61 years. He was a graduate of the Peabody Conservatory of Music. After additional music studies in Germany, Mr. Finger returned to Baltimore and established a studio for teaching voice. For more than twenty years he remained a music teacher and until recently he sang regularly at the First Presbyterian Church and Zion Lutheran Church. Many Baltimoreans remember Mr. Finger best as the co-owner of the Schuler-Thomas Florists on Saratoga Street, a store which had been founded in 1892 by the well-known sculptor Hans Schuler. Members of the various civic and patriotic organizations to which he belonged, laid him to rest on Druid Ridge Cemetery.

LUDWIG HAMMERSCHLAG. The life of Dr. Ludwig Hammerschlag (1887-1965) exemplifies the fate of ever so many exiles of the Hitler regime who, after a successful career in Germany, suddenly found themselves faced with the necessity of beginning a new life in America. It may be stated definitely that Dr. Hammerschlag accomplished this successfully as a teacher and scholar.

Ludwig Hammerschlag was born April 2, 1887, in Leer, Germany. His parents moved to Strassburg in 1893 and in 1900 to Freiburg in Breisgau. He graduated from the Gymnasium in Freiburg in 1906 and then took up the study of law at the Universities of Freiburg, Geneva and Berlin. While still a student he became an active member and also general secretary of the Society for Ethical and Cultural Progress, a post-war idealistic movement founded by the famous internationalist Swiss scholar, August Forel. After the outbreak of the First World War, Hammerschlag served both on the eastern and western fronts. In the course of the short-lived German Republic of 1918-19 he was a member of the soldier's council and also of the Freiburg City Council.

In 1920 Hammerschlag resumed his studies at the Universities of Berlin, Freiburg, and Heidelberg, was awarded a doctoral degree in political science in 1925. In 1927 he was appointed to a high post in the city government of Bremen. However, because of his freely expressed liberal views, he was dismissed from this post when the Nazis came to power in 1933. There followed very difficult years in the course of which he was imprisoned for eight months, but was finally released. With the help of his many loyal friends he managed to leave Germany with his wife and young son just before the outbreak of the Second World War. He arrived in the United States a political exile.

Since there is no field in the United States for men trained in European jurisprudence, Hammerschlag, in his fifties, had to turn to a different career, that of a teacher of German and French. In this capacity he taught in Morris Junior College, Rutgers University, Putnam School in Vermont, and Bordentown Military Academy. In 1946 he became a member of the Foreign Languages Department of the University of Maryland. He reached the rank of assistant professor and served with distinction until he retired at the age of seventy in 1957.

Dr. Hammerschlag liked to think of himself as a Forty-eighter in spirit, one of the idealistic fighters for the German republic of a century ago. With youthful enthusiasm he expressed his views freely as a keen conversationalist and lecturer with a wide background of reading. He advocated social reforms, particularly the improvement of the lot of the underprivileged. In a lighter vein he could quote humorously appropriate lines from various

authors, for example, his favorite Wilhelm Busch. For his students he had a warm interest, often inviting them to his home. He met his colleagues always in a cordial and ever honorable spirit. Members of the Society of the History of the Germans in Maryland will recall his often striking remarks in the discussion period after the lecture.

A. E. ZUCKER

A. J. PRAHL

PAUL F. M. HESSEMER. At the age of 74 years died in York, Pennsylvania, on November 20, 1964, a formerly prominent member of the academic circles in Baltimore, Professor Paul Bessemer. He had left his home in the Govans section of Baltimore in 1963 in order to enter the Griman Convalescent Home in York where he died. Mr. Bessemer was born and educated in Germany, immigrating to the United States in 1923. His initial education in architecture came from the State Institute of Technology in Darmstadt, Germany. He also held a degree from the Technical University of Dresden. Mr. Bessemer made his home in Reading, Pa., where he worked as an industrial architect until the depression. As work dropped off, he was fortunate to be called by the Oberlaender Trust to serve as a curator. In this position, he could place his great personal knowledge of history and art at the disposal of this foundation which was then doing considerable work in Pennsylvania. Teaching assignments at Lehigh University and the Wyomissing Polytechnic Institute followed until he followed a call to Baltimore. Here he taught descriptive geometry at Johns Hopkins University from 1945 until his retirement in 1956. For about ten years he was the treasurer of the Baltimore Goethe Society. Mr. Bessemer was a member of the Baltimore Bibliophiles, and while at the Hopkins, helped establish the Simon Newcomb Astronomical Society for undergraduates.

His retirement from Johns Hopkins still found him active in other fields for several years. He worked as a consultant for an architectural firm in Baltimore and until 1962 was on the staff of the Baltimore County Engineering department. When he died, he was survived by two sons in Pennsylvania and a daughter in Frankfurt. His wife, the former Marie Metzler, died in 1963. After services and cremation in York, his ashes were taken to Germany where he found his final resting place.

LUDWIG O. TEACH. In the program of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's concert of November 4, 1964 featuring as soloist Mr. Rudolf Serkin, pianist, the following note was printed: "Mr. Serkin has graciously consented to dedicate his performance to the memory of Ludwig O. Teach, born April 7, 1895, died October 26, 1964." There were not many in the audience who had known Ludwig Teach and some probably wondered who he was to deserve such recognition. Ludwig O. Teach was a business man and a lover of good music, who had lived in Baltimore since 1925. When a group of young enthusiasts and admirers of Bach's music started meetings in 1929 to play records of his compositions Ludwig Teach was among them. At first once a week and later twice a week these people came together to listen to records and soloists, professionals and amateurs, playing Bach's

music. They called themselves The Bach Club and on July 16, 1930 they offered their first all Bach program at Stieff Hall with Martha Gwinn as pianist. From then on the Bach Club presented more and more concerts every season, starting with the Compinsky Trio and the Philadelphia Musical Fund Ensemble. Ludwig Teach was the guiding spirit of these concerts, offering not only compositions by Bach, but also by other composers like Brahms, Hindemith, Schoenberg and others.

He engaged the artists and provided the publicity. "That the Bach Club is necessary is shown by the encouragement it has received " is printed in one of the first programs. Ludwig Teach was able to bring the famous German violinist Adolf Busch to Baltimore and when he gave his concert in December 1931 before a capacity audience in the Alcazar Hall his program consisted of four compositions by J. S. Bach, two for solo violin, something unheard of in the annals of Baltimore concerts. Other famous artists followed: Harold Samuels, Harold Bauer, Josef Szigeti, Myra Hess etc. The Budapest String Quartet performed frequently, joined by other chamber music groups. Ludwig Teach was most active in the Bach Club until about 1934/35 when his health prevented him from continuing his leading role in its affairs. Others kept the Bach Club going until the beginning of World War II. The artist Willem Wirtz and the musicians Richard Goodman and Hugo Wiesgall were among the most active ones. The latter two started the Chamber Music Society of Baltimore after the war, to continue the musical tradition the Bach Club had established.

Ludwig O. Teach was born in Mannheim, Germany. His name was then spelled Tietsch, which he found the Americans had great difficulty in pronouncing. His father, Paul Tietsch, was a well known actor at the Mannheim Hoftheater and director of the opera department at the Hochschule fuer Musik. His mother was a musician. His parent's large circle of friends, comprising actors, singers, musicians and artists formed the background of his youth and he became imbued early with the love of music and the arts. He fought in World War I, was wounded and it became necessary to amputate one leg above the knee.

In 1921 he came to the United States and stayed with an uncle in St. Louis, where his older brother had been living since before the war. In 1925 he came to Baltimore to work for Marcus and Horkheimer, wool merchants. This firm was changed later to Henry S. Horkheimer and in due course Ludwig Teach became the manager of the business. When Mr. Horkheimer died in 1951 the business was dissolved and Mr. Teach retired in 1952. Due to the amputation of his leg he had to undergo several operations during these years, but they did not relieve his constant suffering which increased with the years. During the last few years of his life he was an invalid. His deep interest in music and musicians continued throughout his life. His particular pride and joy was his collection of original letters of Brahms, Clara Schumann, Liszt and others. His wife, Janet Smith Teach has always shared his great interest in music. She is a member of the Board of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and works very actively in its behalf.

O. H. FRANKE

KARL THAU. After a severe illness which he bore with great patience, Mr. Karl Thau passed away on May 5th, 1965 at the age of 65 years. He was one of the partners of the Thau Manufacturing Company which was founded in 1932. Karl Thau was born in Nürnberg and served his apprenticeship as a tool and die maker in his native town. He attended trade schools and became a *Werkmeister* in his young years. Together with his brother, Henry J. Thau, he came to Baltimore in 1925. Parents, sister and brothers soon followed thereafter and the entire family made Baltimore their home. Besides his successful business career, Karl Thau has left a deep imprint on the German-American community. He was prominent in several societies. Through his energy, his enthusiasm and his talent as an organizer, he soon became a leader among the (then) young Germans who came to Baltimore in the 1920's. When the existing, older German-American societies did not appeal to these newcomers, it was due to his initiative that the *Junge Männerchor* and the *Theaterverein* were founded. Karl Thau was also one of the men with foresight who aroused enough interest among their friends to acquire the old Bryn Mawr School building at the corner of Cathedral and Preston Streets as a center of German *Vereins* activities, since known as the *Deutsches Halts*. After the Second World War he thought that German-American businessmen should have a social club of their own. This idea grew into the Fidelitas Club in 1955. Karl Thau became thoroughly at home in his adopted state of Maryland. He was a boating and yachting enthusiast on the waters of the Chesapeake Bay. He gave freely of his time and energy to start the Baltimore Yacht Club on Middle River which is now one of the leading yacht clubs on the Eastern Seaboard. Karl Thau was also a member of the Germania Lodge No. 160 A. F. and A. M. He is survived by his wife, Sophie K. Nordenholz Thau and a son, Karl E. F. Thau.