

In Memoriam

Otto Hermann Franke (1890-1977)

Our Society has a remarkable record for continuity and permanence for which Otto Franke's active involvement of more than half a century was a typical example. Visiting him a few weeks before his death at the Yearly Meeting Friends home in North Plainfield, New Jersey, where family and friends were preparing a fitting celebration of the 50th anniversary of his marriage to Roberta Felty, he was amused when I reminded him that it was also the golden jubilee of his membership in the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland. On October 12, 1977 Otto Franke died in the Friends Home to which he and his wife had moved in 1975 in order to be closer to the families of their two sons, Robert J. and O. Lehn Franke. His friends in Baltimore gathered on November 13 in Zion Church on City Hall Plaza for a farewell service to the man whose life has left a permanent mark on so many institutions of his adopted city.

Otto Hermann Franke was born in New York City on August 14, 1890. When he was three years old his father returned with him and his two sisters to Bremen, the home of the Franke family. There Otto attended the *Gymnasium* from which he went on to the Technical University of Danzig to study engineering. World War I interrupted his studies. Until the end of 1918 he served in the Bavarian Field Artillery Corps, attaining the rank of lieutenant senior grade in the army reserve. After his discharge he returned at once to school and obtained his engineering degree in 1920.

Early in 1921 he returned to the United States which, though it was the country of his birth, was as unfamiliar a ground to him as to any German-born immigrant. The anti-German frenzy of the war years was only slowly abating and business was suffering from the changeover to a peacetime economy. Jobs were not exactly waiting for a young ex-officer of the Kaiser's army. Otto Franke always remembered gratefully and fondly Henry Landlass, President of the Baltimore *Techniker-Verein* who helped him to land a suitable position as engineer with the Baltimore Car and Foundry Company. Needless to say that the *Techniker-Verein* was also the first German-American organization in which he became active. Ever mindful of the helping hand extended to him then, Otto Franke later on in his life spared neither effort nor time to assist young people in finding employment or scholarships.

As a true son of a Bremen family, he soon felt at home in the port city of Baltimore, and when the opportunity beckoned in 1923 to enter the shipping business, he put his slide rule in the drawer and joined the firm of A. Schumacher & Co., General Agents of the North German Lloyd. Soon after the Lloyd opened its own branch in Baltimore, Otto Franke was

appointed General Agent. Following the outbreak of the war in Europe, the North German Lloyd closed down its Baltimore operations in 1940. From 1941 on Otto Franke resumed his engineering profession (as the German proverb goes, "a trade in hand finds gold in every land"), mainly for the Balmar Corporation and Edw. Renneburg & Sons. For the latter firm he served as a consultant long after his retirement.

The Franke home, gently managed by his wife Roberta, was best known among friends for the music that filled it with joy and life at every occasion. Chamber music was practiced with a passion. Even later on, when the sons were grown, their return home meant always unforgettable concerts by the Franke family quartet. After World War II, by the way, Otto Franke was one of the founders of the Chamber Music Society of Baltimore. The Frankes savored the many cultural opportunities of Baltimore to the fullest. One of Otto's cherished memories was his participation in the gatherings of H.L. Mencken's Saturday Night Club. Most of his other activities, while not lacking in fellowship and the pleasure of personal associations, were devoted to service. During the 1920's he joined the venerable German Society which he served for eight years as treasurer, then vice president and from 1952 on as president. He presided over the 175th anniversary in 1958 at which occasion the German Society adopted the \$50,000 scholarship fund which he had conceived as a new field of service for one of Baltimore's oldest organizations.

Similarly, he devoted much effort to the General German Orphan Home in Catonsville, holding various offices for twenty years. In 1963 he described the 100 year history of the home in *The Report*. Frequently Otto Franke was willing to assume the most burdensome office of treasurer when an organization needed help. For years he administered funds to aid German students at The Johns Hopkins University. When Baltimore was awarded the 30th National Song Festival in 1938, he was urged to act as treasurer for the event. Later he recalled how he had accepted the task with misgivings but despite tremendous sums spent for the *Sängerfest*, Otto Franke could turn over a modest surplus to the free-wheeling singers.

He worked actively to preserve and expand the Julius Hofman Memorial Fund which has done much to promote the teaching of German in Maryland schools. It was this activity, besides his leadership in the German Society, that prompted the German government to honor Otto Franke with its Order of Merit.

There would be much more to cite—such as joining with William Kurlmeyer in 1932 to found the local Goethe Society. He was ever ready to work with other men of vision to make things possible. Our Society was probably the most fortunate of all groups he was associated with because Otto Franke assumed its leadership when he was free from the pressures of everyday work. After eight years as chairman of the Executive Committee from 1954 until 1962, he was our president from 1962 to 1967. He continued his active participation in the Executive Committee until he moved to New Jersey.

He was one of us for so long that it is hard to conceive that Otto Franke is no longer among us. Differences in age or background never kept him from wholeheartedly collaborating on projects which he considered worthwhile. At times, when even the slightest dissonance seemed to appear, it was the musician Otto Franke who patiently went through the same movement again, made adjustments—until it sounded right. The organizations in Baltimore to whom he lent his heart and hand are thriving. What better legacy could any man leave behind?

KLAUS WUST

Taylor Starck (1889-1974)

On May 30, 1974 Professor Taylor Starck died in Hyannis, Massachusetts, at the age of 84. Evelyn Scherabon Firchow of the University of Minnesota wrote then in *The German Quarterly*: "With him passes yet another member of that rapidly vanishing generation of German-Americans who were rooted equally deeply in both cultures and languages." A Memorial Minute adopted by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences of Harvard University on November 18, 1975 paid tribute to the man Taylor Starck was for those who worked with him: "An outgoing and friendly personality, a delight in music and literature, in writing letters and in experimenting with cookery, an inexhaustible enthusiasm for scholarship, combined with deep pleasure in teaching."

Professor Starck was a member of our Society for well over thirty years. His ties with Baltimore were manifold. There were personal friendships, memories of his student days and his continued loyalty to The Johns Hopkins. He liked to comment on various articles in *The Report*. During a visit to Cambridge in 1965 the editor of *The Report* asked Professor Starck to provide a little more information on his career than could be gathered from *Who's Who in America*. On July 27, 1965 he wrote a long letter from Cape Cod and enclosed "a full report of my life, certainly too full and I hope it is not *unbescheiden*." Upon reading it again after his death, the Executive Committee agreed that its publication would be the appropriate means of honoring the memory of one of our most prominent members. Taylor Starck's letter, though written when he was still full of plans and projects, conveys somewhat the feeling that his Harvard colleagues sensed and expressed so aptly in their Memorial Minute: "In his last months, he moved slowly about his house on Bowdoin Street, ordering the correspondence of a full lifetime; cheerfully, courageously, and, one may surmise, with a great sense of accomplishment, and of fulfillment as a man and a scholar."

AUTOBIOGRAPHY FOR KLAUS WUST

Born, Oct. 15, 1889 in Independence, Missouri. Early schooling in parochial and public schools in Atchison, Kansas; Dayton, Kentucky; Kansas City, Mo. Graduated from Westport High School, Kansas City, in June, 1906.

My father, "evangelischer Pastor " came to the USA in May, 1851, and spent his entire life, first teaching in Louisville, Ky., and then founding and developing congregations in various cities of Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas and Dayton, Kentucky, until his retirement in April, 1899. He died in Kansas City, April 6, 1905 at the age of 77.

My mother's father C.F.A. Kaessmann, was also a Lutheran clergyman. He was a 48er. He was born in 1824 in Satterhausen near Göttingen, was a student of theology at Göttingen until he became involved in the student protests at Göttingen and had to flee to Bremen, where he taught in the school of my great-grandfather Lampe, a theologian and mathematician. He then went to Middle America as a correspondent for the "Weser

Zeitung" and then to Canada as a clergyman in Ontario where my mother was brought up. Then to the USA, first at Springfield Illinois and then Baltimore, where he was for many years the pastor of Dreieinigkeitskirche on Broadway. He died in 1895. He was a good friend of Carl Schurz and like Schurz an active publisher.

I still have many relatives from father's and mother's side scattered all over the U.S., still one cousin in Baltimore.

After a year in the southern Kansas oilfields I went to Baltimore in 1907; a year in the Deichmann School (Edward Deichmann was one of the best teachers I ever had.) Then from 1908 at the Johns Hopkins University (AB 1911, Ph.D. 1916). I was at first in the sciences, chemistry and geology and was briefly on the U.S. Geological Survey in Wyoming, and began my graduate work in German in September, 1911. That is when I first met Kurrelmeyer who eventually became one of my closest friends.

In June 1914 I went to Germany as the Ottendorfer Fellow of New York University, at the time the best fellowship in German in this country, from June to October I traveled in England, France, Switzerland, Austria and Germany. I was in Munich when the war broke out; studied at Berlin throughout that winter, worked also as a translator for the "Zentralstelle für Auslandsdienst", translating all the propaganda material distributed by that office in the U.S.A.

In August, 1915 I returned to America, taught at Smith College from 1915 to June 1918. Then in the U.S. Army until January 1919, entirely in the Personnel Office at Camp Dix. I had been found unfit for active service, chiefly because of flat feet. Was to have been sent over to Europe as Captain in the Intelligence Corps, but armistice finished my army career.

I went to New York University as acting assistant professor of German for a semester. Then taught Spanish at N.Y.U. in the Summer School and went to Madrid in September as teacher and secretary in the Junta Para Ampliación de Estudios. While there, in the spring of 1920, I was appointed Instructor in German at Harvard and stayed there for the rest of my active career, declining many offers from other institutions.

I began giving graduate courses in Germanic Philology in 1922 and in 1925, on the retirement of H.C.G. von Jagemann, who was one of the earliest Ph.D.'s of the Johns Hopkins, I took over all of his work. In 1927, as Assistant Professor I was appointed Chairman of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at Harvard, remaining in that post until a year's leave of absence from 1932-33. From 1935 on I again was in charge of all the graduate work and was Chairman again from January, 1938 until my poor health obliged me to resign from the chairmanship in 1952. This was partly because from March, 1952 I was in charge of the arrangements for the meeting of the Modern Language Association of America, held in December of that year and had many other commitments, chairman of half a dozen committees and Editor of the Publications of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

On August first, 1953, I had a long threatened coronary attack. I was able to resume my lectures in mid-October of that year and continued then to my retirement from active service at Harvard on Sept. first, 1956.—In the meantime my wife had died, also of heart trouble in January, 1954. Our only daughter had married and was living in Holland.—I went almost immediately as Visiting Professor (Fulbright appointment) to the University of Leiden, where I gave the first courses in Germanic Philology ever to have been held at Leiden.—In December, 1956 I had been elected

President of the Modern Language Association of America and had to return in the early summer as the meeting of the association was to be held in Madison, Wisc. in September instead of the usual date in December after Christmas.

I spent the winter in Cambridge and embarked in April 1958 for my first appointment as Visiting Professor of Germanic Philology at the University of Saarbrücken where I stayed until the fall of 1958. Back in Cambridge for that winter, I had intended to continue on my research but Saarbrücken recalled me and in 1959 I was again there from April until late August. Then I was recalled to active service at Harvard from September to January 1960, as my professorship had not yet been filled. About February first 1960 I started on a long lecture tour that took me through the South, North Carolina, Alabama, Florida, then Missouri, Kansas, Texas, Los Angeles, Berkeley, and Seattle.—Then I was called back to Germany for lectures at a number of universities, returning the end of November, 1960. Then only a brief time in Cambridge before I went to the Hopkins in 1961 as visiting professor.—Then in the fall to the Southern Illinois University to survey the situation in Modern Languages. Then an entire winter in Germany for research work and lectures. In the early spring another lecture trip here and again to Germany for research, a trip that was interrupted by poor health in July; a partial winter at home, apparently recovered and then a broken hip that put me in the hospital from Feb. to May, 1964.—I am fully recovered now apparently ready for another ten years of research. I intend to go back to Europe *in* April 1966 for another bout. I postponed the planned trip of this April because I was not yet mobile enough.

Honors? They are modest. Aside from earned degrees, I have an honorary A.M. from Harvard University (various fellowships, of course). An honorary Dr. Phil, from the University of Saarbrücken; Knight of the Order of the North Star of Sweden; Goldene Medaille des Goethe Instituts of München; Grosskreuz of the Bonn Government's Verdienstordens; Korrespondierendes Mitglied der Akademie für Sprache und Literatur (Sitz in Darmstadt), the successor of the old Berlin Akademie für Literatur; Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; Fellow of the Mediaeval Academy of America and for many years an active member of their Executive Committee and Stile Clerk, one of the principal offices; and many minor positions with the Modern Language Association and the Linguistic Society of America that I helped to found nearly 40 years ago; member of the Executive Committee of the Internationale Vereinigung der Germanisten, that I also helped found in the years from 1951 to 1955 when we finally established it at a meeting in Rome in September, 1955.

I have lectured at many universities in Europe: Berlin, Hamburg, Göttingen, Marburg, Münster, Erlangen, München, Heidelberg, Copenhagen, Reykjavik, Frankfurt, Giessen and before other groups in Karlsruhe, Mannheim, Darmstadt, Ulm, Bremen, Kassel, Hannover, Nürnberg, Augsburg, Stuttgart.—

That's all I can remember.

CHARLES WILLIAM SCHNEIDEREITH. Born into a family of Baltimore printers on October 13, 1886, Charles William Schneidereith was destined to spend more than seventy of his ninety-year lifetime in helping friends and business associates communicate effectively through the use of the printed word. More than that—"Bill," as he was known to his friends; "Mr. Will," as he was respectfully addressed by employees and many business associates—influenced the lives of several generations of Baltimoreans through his personal and business activities. When he was born to Louis Charles and Amelia Peters Schneidereith, he must have had a slight mixture of printer's ink in his veins, having come from such a printing lineage. He was called Charles William, but actually named for his grandfather, Karl Wilhelm Schneidereith, who had left the city of Elbing in East Prussia, to establish a printing business in Baltimore in 1849.

Bill Schneidereith was educated at Knapp's Academy and the Baltimore public schools. He graduated from Baltimore City College in the class of 1905. Friendships made in those school days continued for life and five members of the class of 1905 met regularly for reunions through their seventy-first reunion in the Spring of 1976. At age 12, young Bill had his own case of type. He knew how to select the proper letters, set type in a printer's composing "stick," and arrange material in columns for printing purposes. In later years he recollected that one of his earliest accomplishments was done on the back porch of the family's South Paca Street home with a case of 10 point type his father brought home from the plant. He performed his first type composition chore which was to hand set a current newspaper report on a successful United States military action of July 9, 1898 in the Spanish-American War.

In later life, Bill Schneidereith had vivid recollections of the Baltimore fire of February, 1904. This fire destroyed much of commercial Baltimore, and came within a half block of the Schneidereith printing plant. A few weeks before Bill graduated from Baltimore City College, his Uncle Bernard was suffocated in a house fire. Bernard was the youngest of the three sons of the founder of the business, and C. William, as the only male grandchild of the firm's founder, was recruited into the business in the spring of 1905.

Bill Schneidereith entered the printing business when it was evolving from hand set type to mechanical type setting; and from carved wood cuts for illustrations to electrotypes which assured clear reproduction of illustrations. He was an advocate of the new techniques, and studied the new high speed presses which were being developed to take advantage of modern printing technology. In 1921, C.W. Schneidereith and Sons purchased a building next to the print shop. Bill and his father designed a totally new and modern printing plant. Unfortunately, Louis Schneidereith died before the new plant was completed, so in 1922, at age 36, C. William Schneidereith became the executive officer of a modern, completely mechanized printing company. He was a leader both in the State and the national Printing Industries of America. He developed training and educational programs which are still used in the printing industry. He also took a leading role in developing printing training courses in the Baltimore Public Schools, and was a leader in developing the curriculum for the Mergenthaler School of Printing in the Baltimore public school system. Recognition of C. William Schneidereith's leadership in developing training

programs for printers and professional standards for executives in the printing industry continues through the C. William Schneidereith scholarships provided to young executives in the printing business by the Printing Industries of Maryland.

He succeeded his father as a member of the Board of Directors of the German Children's Home in 1920, and continued to serve on this Board throughout his life. He headed the membership committee, and many other activities of this institution, and was actively involved in a building fund drive for the German Children's Home at the time of his death. He was active in Rotary, and was president of the Rotary Club of Baltimore in 1934. Recognized as one of Baltimore's most informed persons, so far as books and printing are concerned, Bill Schneidereith became one of the seven founders of the Baltimore Bibliophiles in 1954.

In 1968, C. William Schneidereith turned over the management of the firm to his son, C. William Schneidereith, Jr., the fourth generation of Baltimore Schneidereiths. As had been true a half century before, the printing industry was going through another evolution from letterpress to lithography. C. William Schneidereith and his son planned a totally new type of printing plant which opened in Southwest Baltimore in 1971.

For well over half a century he was a member of our Society and served on the executive Committee in the 1920's. He also belonged to the German Society of Maryland. Charles William Schneidereith died on September 3, 1976 at the age of 89, survived by his wife, the former Louise McComas; a daughter, Amelia Louise Schneidereith Pierson; a son, C. William Schneidereith, Jr; and seven grandchildren.

WILLIAM T. SNYDER

OTTO SCHOENRICH. On February 8, 1977 our long-term member, Otto Schoenrich, died in his native city of Baltimore at the age of 100. Born in 1876, he was the son of Carl Otto Schoenrich who emigrated to Baltimore after serving for several years as an officer in the Austrian army. The father taught German and other languages in Baltimore public and private schools for over fifty years. From 1912 until 1929 he was a member of the Executive Committee and then a Vice President of the Society for the History of Germans in Maryland. His son Otto also had a lifelong interest in history. In 1904 he contributed an article on the Welsers in Venezuela to *The Report*. Otto Schoenrich graduated from City College in 1894, and from the University of Maryland School of Law in 1897. After admission to the Maryland bar, he obtained a doctorate in civil law from the University of Havana and was admitted to the bar of Cuba.

For seven years he served as a United States district judge in Puerto Rico, and he participated in the financial rehabilitation of the Dominican Republic. He also took part in a commission to draft new laws for Cuba and was president of a claims commission on Nicaragua, as well as a special commissioner to Santo Domingo. In 1949 he was elected president of the Pan-American Society of the United States. Among the Latin American governments that had decorated him were those of Brazil, Venezuela and the Dominican Republic.

In 1916, Mr. Schoenrich joined the New York law firm of Curtis, Mallet-Prevost, Colt & Mosely and was a senior partner when he retired at the age of 89. After his retirement Mr. Schoenrich returned to Baltimore.

LEONARD A. A. SIEMS. A native Baltimorean, Leonard Siems died on March 6, 1978 after a short illness. He was 82 years old. After attending Johns Hopkins University, Siems obtained specialized training in banking. He began his banking career in 1916 with the local branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond. From 1923 until 1942 he worked in Washington for the Federal Reserve system, becoming chief examiner for its field organization. In 1964, he retired as senior vice president and director of the Maryland National Bank. He had been associated with that bank or its predecessors since joining the Fidelity Trust Company in 1943. He retired in 1973 as vice chairman of the Suburban Trust Company, a post which he had held since 1970 when the national City Bank was merged into it. He had been chairman of the board of the latter bank since 1968.

He was named city treasurer in 1962 after serving for 12 years on the city's Civil Service Commission, including one year as its president.

Leonard Siems was a member of the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland for over thirty years. He also belonged to the German Society and was active in numerous civic organizations. He served as treasurer and as a member of the board of the Lutheran Hospital and worshipped with his family at the First English Lutheran Church. During World War I Siems joined the Navy and later became president of the Baltimore Council of the Navy League. He is survived by his wife, the former Marie Wakeman, a son, Leonard A. Siems, and two grandsons.

HENRY J. THAU. On June 17, 1976 died at his home in Hamilton the former president of the German Society and active member of our Society, at the age of 73. Thau was a native of Nürnberg. He came to Baltimore after World War I and worked for several years for the Black and Decker Manufacturing Company. In 1932, with his father and his brothers Eduard and Karl, he established The Thau Manufacturing Company, a tool and die and production machine shop. The firm outgrew several locations until it reached its present Fullerton plant. It has supplied private industry, the military and nuclear installations throughout the United States. Henry Thau was very active in German-American organizations. For many years he was a director of the German Society, a member of the Germania Lodge, the Fidelitas Club, Deutsche Geselligkeit und above all a promoter of Baltimore Kickers, the German soccer club. Thau, who maintained a 37-foot cabin cruiser at the Baltimore Yacht Club, was a past commander to the Sue Island Yacht Club and, at the time of his death, was on the boards of the Baltimore Yacht Club and Baltimore Yacht Club Holding Corporation. Long interest in nautical safety, Mr. Thau served for five years as rear commander of the United States Power Squadron, heading the Seamanship Course Committee which revamped the entire course taught to boatsmen.

