

THE COLUMBUS GERMANS

By LA VERN J. RIPPLEY

Delegations of city planners from as far as Montreal in the East and Honolulu in the West have studied the Columbus redevelopment of "German Village." The reclaiming of property in German Village represents the largest private undertaking of its kind in the world. It is an



TYPICAL STREET SCENE IN GERMAN VILLAGE TODAY

attempt to preserve the architecture of some 1600 dwellings and the Old World flavor of the once bustling center of a substantial German population. Today the German Village Society has gained legal sanction with a special commission whose stamp of approval, like that of the director of construction in any German city today, must seal the plans before an owner can alter or remove a single structure. The result is that businesses look distinctly German; the *Konditorei*, *Bäckerei*, and *Village Markt* tastefully intrigue the customer while an Old World Bazaar houses varying shops jutting off a pedestrian's roofed passageway. In the Cafe you can have German *Torten*, breads and pretzels. Not least significant is a German woodcarver's store in which all the wares are hand tooled by the father while the mother sells the art pieces to appreciative gift-seekers.*

* The restoration plans were described in the publication of the National Trust for Historic Preservation by Mrs. William A. Scheurer, "German Village, Columbus, Ohio," *Historic Preservation* XVIII (1966) No. 2, 64-67. A recent article in the Travel Section of the *New York Times* praised the Village both as one of the "handhonest neighborhoods" and "a tourist attraction." See Bill Thomas, "Touch of Old Germany in the Middle of Ohio," *New York Times*, April 21, 1968.

The German flavor is neither accidental nor arbitrary. In the 1800's German homes fronted on such streets as Jäger, Frankfurt, Reinhard and Bismarck, while in 1967 pedestrians still stroll, and children still play on Goethe Street and in Schiller Park. There the majestic statue of the Park's namesake was erected on July 4, 1891, five years after the German societies offered the idea and helped deliver the funds to have the big bronze sculpture cast in Munich. Dedication ceremonies brought out nearly 50,000 people in an impressive parade which displayed various motifs celebrating the life and works of Friedrich Schiller. Addresses were delivered by Henry Olnhausen, Governor James E. Campbell, Mayor George Karb and others. The statue is a gift of the German-Americans to the city of Columbus.¹ At present the "German Village" district is tightly defined for legal control in hopes of preserving the historical atmosphere. Once the German section was simply that territory where Germans settled, according to an 1870 map of the city, the area south of Main Street, bounded on the west by the Columbus Feeder Canal, and on the east by 22nd Street.

Columbus started late, but as Capital City of Ohio it grew fast. Selected purely on the basis of its central geographical location, Columbus soon outstripped Cincinnati and Cleveland in importance, though not in population. Overnight the town of Franklinton (west of the Scioto River) burgeoned into the new city (east of the River) after the signing of an agreement on February 19, 1812 which projected plans for making it the permanent seat of the state government.² In the same year, two Germans were among eighteen men who purchased property in the city's first offering of lots.³ The one, Christian Heyl, first opened a bakery, later served for ten years as Town Treasurer. Working as carpenters on the first Statehouse in 1814 were Gottlieb Lichtenegger and Conrad Heyl.⁴ But despite these few smatterings, it appears that German immigration to Columbus did not pick up until employment possibilities improved. As foreigners, naturally, Germans were not immediately able to infiltrate the ranks of government jobs. By 1831, however, coach service into Columbus tallied thirty per week, permitting capital and personnel to flow readily. In September of the same year, water was turned into the Feeder Canal joining Columbus to the Ohio Canal which linked Cleveland with

¹ *Der Westbote*, July 7, 1891. (Hereafter, *Der Columbus Westbote* will be referred to as WB with the date.) The pedestal for the statue is granite, surmounted by the bronze statue. It was transported across the Atlantic without charge by the North German Lloyd.

² Osman C. Hooper, *History of the City of Columbus* (Columbus, ca. 1920), 27. The *Bibliography of German Culture in America to 1940* by Henry A. Pochmann and Arthur R. Schultz (Madison, Wis., 1953) lists as item 2969, *Express und Westbote. Der Anteil der Deutsch-Amerikaner an dem Wachstum der Stadt Columbus und des Staates Ohio*, Cleveland 1907. Professor Schultz stated in a letter to the author that the entry refers to a pamphlet of thirty pages which he found in the catalog of the New York Public Library. However, the staff of the New York Public Library has been unable to discover the pamphlet nor any information about it. The Library of Congress reported that the item was never listed in the National Union Catalog. A thorough page by page search of the *Columbus Express und Westbote* in the archives of the Ohio Historical Society proved equally fruitless. Unless we receive information from one of our readers we must assume that the pamphlet no longer exists.

³ William A. Taylor, *Centennial History of Columbus and Franklin County* (Chicago-Columbus, 1909), 25. See also Christian Heyl, "Biographische Skizze eines alten Pioniers" *Der Deutsche Pionier*, II (1870-1871), 130-186.

⁴ Alfred E. Lee, *History of the City of Columbus* (New York, 1892), I, 278-279. The Heyl family arrived in Baltimore in 1800, moving later to Columbus. Other German settlers in the early period were: David Deshler (later famous as founder of the great banking family in Columbus), in 1817, the Boeder family in 1820, John Otstot in 1824, George Kraus in 1829, the Studer, Knies, Hunt, Lichtenegger and Eberly families in 1881, Peter Ambos, Benedict Ritter, Otto Zirkel, and the Krumm, Jacobs and Reinhard families in 1832, the Lohrer, Zettler and Hinderer families, Louis Hoster and Leonhard Beck in 1833, the Sieber and Erlenbusch families, Joseph Schneider, Henry Roedter, Fritz Beck, Conrad Heinmiller and the Rickly and Esswein brothers in 1834. Lee reports that after the opening of the Canal, the German immigrants landed by the boatloads. Some of them had the family names: Mochl, Neufang, Machold, Zehnacker, Lauer, Moersch, Schultz, Schweinsberger, Jeusch, Schenck, Mayer, Silbernagel, Luckhaupt, Knopf, Brick, Lindemann, Burckhard, Kreitlein, Schreyer, Becker, Engler, Weitgenannt, Koetz, Miller, Blenkner and Bicke. Lee cites his source in a footnote that he found most of this information in a paper delivered in February 1839 before the Humboldt Society by the Honorable Henry Olnhausen.

Portsmouth, Lake Erie with the Ohio River. As barges ascended to discharge and receive freight, immigrants swelled the population of the Capital City from 1,500 in 1827 to nearly 20,000 a short thirty years later.⁵

Exact information about the early influx of Germans is scarce, yet as early as 1833, the first German newspaper began publication and shortly thereafter, the first Columbus directory included a short historical sketch stating simply that immigrants were pouring in from all quarters and that business kept pace with the population.* A later directory mentions that in 1826, there was a German Lutheran meeting house, with about 1400 members.⁷

The German element contributed substantially to the city's growth. The Southside, and more especially the fifth ward which was all but exclusively German, kept pace with the rest of Columbus on building and population expansion throughout the 19th century. In 1851 more houses were built in the German districts than in any other part, and in 1852 more than half the construction of all Columbus was done in the fifth ward.⁸ By 1853 it was estimated that Germans owned one third of all Columbus property and were expanding into all parts of the city.⁹ Since many sources are quick to repeat that the fifth ward was entirely German, the fifth's population of 5,050 in 1852 could serve as a conservative estimate of the city's German population at that time.¹⁰ The 1848 revolution and economic depression in Germany caused emigration to double within six years. Presumably German arrivals in Columbus reflected that increase. Regardless of the conjecture in some statistical reports, one conclusion can be supported from many compilations. The German population of Columbus was for decades judged to be about one third of the whole.¹¹

Prior to 1848, many of the Columbus Germans had come from the Palatinate. For about ten years thereafter the mainspring was Baden, after which the Palatinate again predominated.¹² After 1854, the local German editors were complaining that the movement westward from Columbus was so great that the local German population diminished for two years before picking up again in 1856.

To some extent, German families only filtered through the city on their way west. California gold and the cheap lands of Wisconsin, Missouri and Texas beckoned to the newcomers. On three different occasions, Germans, flushed with the fever for gold, mobilized for the stampede to Cali-

⁵ Hooper, 184.

⁶ J. P. Armstrong, *Columbus Business Directory for 1843-44*.

⁷ *Lathrop's Columbus Directory* (1862), Section I, Historical Sketch, x.

⁸ *WB.*, Sept. 17, 1852.

⁹ *WB.*, May 6, 1853.

¹⁰ See E. Glover, *Columbus Directory for the Year 1852*, 65.

¹¹ See Margaret Sittler, "The German Element in Columbus Before the Civil War" (unpubl. M. A. Thesis, Ohio State Univ., 1932), 6.

See also the *Census of the United States* as shown in table. The table includes whites only.

	<i>Pop. of Col.</i>	Franklin County Foreign born	Columbus For. born	Columbus German born (incl. Austria and Switzerland)
1840	6,048			
1850	17,882	6,786		
1860	18,554	9,229		
1870	31,274	10,537	7,611	4,196
1880	51,647	11,821	9,071	4,416
1890	88,150	15,184	12,488	7,141
1900	125,560	14,669	12,328	6,780
1910	181,511	18,649	16,285	6,879
1920	237,031	18,177	16,050	5,165
1930	290,664	17,401	15,279	3,390
1940	806,087	13,830	11,927	3,117
1950	375,901	13,750	10,960	2,249
1960	471,816	14,895	11,052	listed as Ger. Stock: 9,887

¹² *WB.*, Jan. 27, June 2, 1854; June 20, 1856.

foria.¹³ Many of them did not wait for exclusively German companies to form, joined instead whatever wagon train was heading west. After the gold rush began, a standard greeting on the South Columbus Streets became, "When are you leaving for California?"¹⁴ Perhaps the most interesting mass movement of Germans westward from Columbus came in 1856. At that time several German families purchased farms in Nebraska and generated so much enthusiasm among their fellow Germans that an expedition thirty-five strong set out for Omaha in April.¹⁵ By November, friends in Columbus received word that the German emigrants had already "betrayed their German Fatherland " in favor of their adopted Mother City (Columbus), calling the new Nebraska settlement "New Columbus."¹⁶ As an obvious tribute to the parent city's German newspaper, main street was called *Westbotenstrasse*.

There was probably a deeper reason for the appellation. Familiar names make new places seem familiar and secure with the net result that a new settlement attracts not only people but also capital. With this in mind, the Northern Pacific Railroad named a city on its line Bismarck, North Dakota, in hopes of luring German capital but got mostly settlers instead.¹⁷ The outcome for the Nebraska Germans was similar—there is no record of capital, but they did manage to entice many German immigrants to leave old Columbus. In the spring of 1857, John Rickly, a Swiss-German (Rickli) led an expedition of sixty Germans from Columbus, Ohio to New Columbus, Nebraska.¹⁸ The 1956 Centennial Booklet of Columbus, Nebraska contains this historical sketch of its founding:

That was the birth of Columbus, Nebraska, so named because the majority of the founders had come from Columbus, Ohio. These 13 men whom history will always remember as the "farsighted and intrepid founders" of Columbus, Nebraska, were: Jacob Louis, Frederick Gottschalk, Charles Reinke, Michael Smith, Jacob Guter, John C. Wolfel, Vincent Kummer, Henry Lusche, Charles Bremer, John Browner, J. Peter Becker, Anthony Voll and John Held.¹⁹

While the major exits from the city made the papers, the everyday lives of those who remained in Ohio are less well chronicled. Mostly the Germans were so taken for granted that historians failed to view the German story separately from the city as a whole. Also, because of language and tradition, the Germans made distinctive contributions only in their numerous organizations. Since these clubs were exclusively German, they functioned only for Germans at least in the beginning. Otherwise the Germans were simply that fraction of the amorphous population in a typical mid-western city which was much more interested in building for its future, than in chronicling the past.

¹³WB., Feb. 2, 1849; Dec. 2, 1851; Sept. 20, 1858.

¹⁴WB., Feb. 2, 1849.

¹⁵WB., Mar. 7, 1856; Mar. 14, 1856; Apr. 25, 1856.

¹⁶WB., Nov. 28, 1856.

¹⁷Richard M. Lunde, "Why Bismarck?" *The American-German Review*, XXVII (1961), 28.

¹⁸WB., Apr. 24, 1857; Nov. 28, 1856; Mrs. John Wolfel is claimed as the first white woman to spend the winter in Columbus, Nebraska. During the same winter, John Rickly was superintendent of a sawmill there. On April 24, 1857, the WB reported that Rickly left Ohio with immigrants for "unsere Namensschwester."

¹⁹Margaret Curry, "Founding of Columbus," *Columbus, Nebraska Centennial* (Columbus, 1956), 9. The booklet contains pictures of the thirteen original settlers including lists of later immigrants from Ohio through 1859. The original group first scouted the territory, then returned to Omaha to found the "Columbus Town Company." John Rickly is said to have joined the Town Company on July 26, 1856 to help plat the townsite. Evidently he returned to Ohio then to lead the larger expedition to Nebraska. See p. 5.

I. THE GERMAN PRESS

In less than a century, Columbus witnessed the appearance of at least thirty-eight German newspapers ranging in scope from conservative to liberal, blantly secular to piously religious, urban to rural, daily to monthly, and in support of opposing philosophies and divergent theologies.¹ The first German-language paper was *Der Emigrant* edited and published by George Kissling, begun in 1833 and discontinued within a year.² A Whig campaign paper, the *Ohio Staats-Zeitung und Volks-Advokat* issued in 1840 in support of Harrison and Tyler, was edited by John S. Wiestling.³ Much confusion surrounds the publication of *Der Ohio Adler*. Perhaps the most reliable information is to be found in Friedrich Fieser's sketch of his journalism career. Accordingly, Valentine Kastner had been publishing the *Lancaster Volksfreund*, sometimes called the *Ohio Volksfreund* in Lancaster, Ohio. Fieser did some translating for Kastner and eventually became editor of the paper. At that time, the *Volksfreund* was a small weekly printed with the Pennsylvania-made old German type that had been used for the Lancaster papers for several decades, and readers complained about the quality of printing. Sometime during 1841 Kastner moved the *Volksfreund* to Columbus and published it again under the name of *Ohio Adler*, on better type than before, but, due to poor management the paper soon folded.⁴

When the *Adler* failed, Jacob Reinhard, a German engineer on the National Road leading to Springfield, went to Cincinnati in the summer of 1842 to invite Friedrich Fieser, then editor of the *Cincinnati Volksblatt*, to return to Columbus and join him in publishing the *Columbus Westbote*. Fieser bought new type materials in Philadelphia and set up a shop on East Main Street between High and Third where the first number of the *Westbote* was issued on October 2, 1843. It continued until August 20, 1918 as the great stalwart of all German publications in Columbus, appear-

¹ See Karl J. R. Arndt and May E. Olson, *German-American Newspapers and Periodicals 1732-1955* (Heidelberg 1961), 472-477.

² Both Lee, I, 440 and Hooper, 183 are in error when they state that Henry Roedter was the editor of *Der Emigrant*. Only two copies of the paper exist and the name of the editor appears on one as George Kissling, on the other as George Kessling. The editor's box gives the information that it was published above the Post Office, opposite the public buildings on High Street. Likewise, see Lucile Clifton, "Beginnings of Literary Culture in Columbus, 1812-1840" (unpubl. diss. Ohio State Univ., 1948), p. 45, who erroneously states that Bryan and Emrie were the publishers of *Der Emigrant*.

³ Arndt-Olson, 476; Hooper, 183. The paper was discontinued after the election was over. See also Alexander J. Schem, *Deutsch-Amerikanisches Conversations-Lexicon* (New York, 1871), III, 852.

⁴ See Lee, I, 440, 471; Hooper, 183. Arndt-Olson mention neither the *Adler* nor the *Volksfreund* as Columbus papers. Carl Wittke, *The German-Language Press in America* (Lexington, Ky., 1957), 49-51, found evidence that the *Adler* was published in Lancaster, Ohio from 1807 until its sale in 1889 when the equipment was moved to Columbus and the paper was renamed. On the early history of the *Ohio Adler* see Klaus Wust in *Reports, Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland XXXII* (1966), 32-34. The *Adler* was not an immigrant newspaper but served the American-born, German-speaking settlers who had poured into Ohio from the western parts of Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. It was Jeffersonian in politics and old-fashioned Pennsylvania-German in outlook and language. According to Fieser's sketch, Kastner was the publisher of the new *Columbus Adler* but he (Fieser) was the editor. "I even wrote a piece of poetry for the first number, in which the eagle was pictured as rising to higher regions. . . . The *Adler* would have been successful had its proprietor rightly understood the problem." Stating that most of the German immigration was then going to Missouri, Fieser determined to follow it and give up German journalism, but landed instead first at the *Louisville Volksbühne* and shortly after came to the assistance of Henry Roedter (editor of the *Volksblatt* who resigned to become Justice of the Peace). Fieser then became editor of the *Cincinnati Volksblatt*, at a time when it was the only German daily in the United States. See Lee, I, 472.

ing first weekly, then semi-weekly, later tri-weekly and then daily.⁵ Together Reinhard and Fieser edited and published the *Westbote* from 1843 to 1884, after which the Westbote Company was formed with Henry A. Reinhard as president (1885-1903).⁶ From 1903 until 1918, the paper was printed by the German-American Publishing and Printing Company with various editors: Leonhard Hirsch (1903-08), Charles F. Gerhold (1910-15) with temporary assistance from others, and finally Gustav Hirsch (1916-1918). The sons of Leonhard Hirsch (Gustav, Ralph and Max) were the chief figures in the German-American Publishing Company. Their company was financially successful and dedicated to the cause of German publications but when America entered the First World War, the owners

Der Westbote.

Schrift und Druckerei von Reinhard & Fieser.

Jahrg. 1.) Columbus, O., Montag, den 2. Oktober, 1843. (No. 1.

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announced on August 17, 1918 that German newspapers were not in the best interests of the country and discontinued their papers.⁷

Before taking over as editor of the *Westbote* in 1903, Leonhard Hirsch had been editing the daily *Columbus Express* (Oct. 1, 1891-1903) which merged with the *Westbote* to become the *Express und Westbote* with varying titles.⁸ Formerly a newspaper editor in Frankfurt, Hirsch had so irritated the Prussian establishment during its military build-up for war with France, that he was forced to flee the country. Arriving in Columbus in 1876, he first became a staff member of the *Westbote* before launching his own paper, *Der Ohio Sonntagsgast* one year later.⁸ By 1891 Hirsch was able to expand into the daily publication of his *Express*, a Republican paper, which continued until the merger, when its political position became Democratic, the viewpoint of the *Westbote*.

A few other German papers appeared at short intervals. First, there

⁵ Arndt-Olson, 477. See also Lee, I, 441 ff. The bound files of the *Columbia Wettbote* (title varies slightly) are preserved at the Ohio Historical Society in Columbus. With very few exceptions the set includes all issues.

⁶ After two years of publication, the *Westbote* moved to Mechanic's Hall, southeast corner of High and Rich. In 1848, the office was moved to the Statesman building on State Street until 1865 when it moved back to Main where the proprietors purchased their own office. The company had for years the contract for the state printing to be done in German. In 1870, the firm erected the Westbote Building as their permanent location at a cost of \$40,000. See Jacob H. Studer, *Columbus, Ohio: Its History, Resources and Progress* (Columbus, 1878), 251.

The joint stock company was formed in 1885, with capital of over \$100,000. The principal stock holders were Jacob Reinhard, Henry A. Reinhard, and William Kemmler, George J. Brand, and Peter Hinterschitt, all of whom had worked for years to make the paper a success. See Lee, I, 441.

Jacob Reinhard was born in Bavaria in 1815, coming with his parents to America in 1833. Besides editing the paper, he was a part time lawyer, and since 1852, was reelected for twenty years to the City Council, for five years serving as president of the Council. He was a lifelong member of the Democratic State Executive Committee and its treasurer. Twice he was nominated and defeated narrowly for Democratic Secretary of State. See Lee, I, 877.

Friedrich Fieser studied in Wolfenbüttel, where he was born in 1814. He arrived in America in 1836. In 1868, with his colleague, Fieser opened a bank under the firm name Reinhard and Co., the business he continued until his death in 1891. A staunch Democrat, Fieser also served for years on the Board of Education, at times as its president. See Lee, I, 471-872, 892-893.

⁸ See Hooper, 184. When the company dissolved, they were located at 274 South Third Street, employed 42 persons and gave each of them a separation pay of one month's salary. At the time, Gustav Hirsch was a major in the Signal Corps, his brothers prominent in the war effort on the home front.

⁸ See Hooper, 184.

⁹ Arndt-Olson, 472, 477. Note also that the *Ohio Sonntagsgast* is listed with the *Express* on p. 472, with the *Westbote* on p. 477 and individually, on p. 475. Concerning the life and death of Leonhard Hirsch, see "In Columbus, Ohio" *Deutsch-Amerikanische Geschichtsblätter*, VIII (1908), 158.

was the *Allgemeine Volkszeitung*, owned and edited by John H. Orf, which began on July 22, 1872 as an independent German weekly, but lasted only a few months.¹⁰ Second, there was the *Volkstribune*, begun about 1851 by George Hessenaur, George Brandt, and John Haisch, which lasted about eighteen months.¹¹ Third, Arndt and Olson list *Die Presse* with only heresy information. It was edited and published by Eli T. Tappan as a Democratic paper beginning in 1847, but it lasted less than two years. It is doubtful that the paper was actually German.¹² Finally, there was the short-lived *Republikanische Presse* established in 1858 as a campaign paper owned by John Siebert and Henry Lindenberg, and edited by Herman Ruess.¹³

Although World War I had put an end to all secular German-language papers in Columbus, as early thereafter as May 1, 1920, the *Columbus Herald* (1920-1932) started out as a tri-weekly, then issued as a weekly (1933-1939) and ended as a semi-weekly (1940-1942), all the while as an independent in politics. Edited by Herman Krause until 1933, and William F. Thiemt (1934-1942), the paper was at first published by the Columbus Printing Co., and later by the Columbus Herald Press Co. In 1940 its circulation had climbed to 5,315." The latter figure might profitably be compared to the maximal circulation reached by the prestigious *Westbote* in 1915 when it ran over 13,000." This figure plummeted to zero with the closing of the *Westbote* and climbed slowly through the twenties and thirties until the U. S. entrance into the Second World War which spelled the end of *Columbus Herald*.

In Columbus there were significant Church publications in German. However, since their primary concern was the dissemination of religious affairs, their impact on the local German community was minimal. The most prominent of these were: *Lutherische Kirchen Zeitung* (1868-1927) published by the faculty of Capital University at first, and later by the Lutheran Book Concern; *Kirchen-Blatt der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode van Iowa* (1858-1955), published in various cities including Columbus; *Der Sendbote des Göttlichen Herzens Jesu* (1874 to date), a Roman Catholic monthly published by the Franciscan Fathers in Columbus and other cities; and the *Ohio Waisenfreund* (1873-1954), also Roman Catholic, a weekly begun at Pomroy, Ohio but moved to Columbus and then to Worthington. It was edited and published by the priests of the Josephinum College.¹⁴

Two religious publishers became prominent for their semi-commercial activity in the German language. One was the Josephinum Press which showed marked success from contracts for printing parish materials in and about the state of Ohio.¹⁵ Far larger was the Lutheran Book Concern, established in Columbus in 1881, which made Columbus the center of Lutheran publications. This establishment was first managed by John L. Trauger, later by Frederick J. Heer who continued as manager until 1907. When Heer resigned from the concern, he started the F. J. Heer Printing Company (still in operation), which became a leading publishing firm in Central Ohio.¹⁸

¹⁰ Arndt-Olson, 472, Studer, 254, Lee, I, 442.

¹¹ Studer, 258, Lee, I, 442.

¹² Arndt-Olson, 478. See Studer, 257. See also William T. Martin, *History of Franklin County* (Columbus, 1858), 66. Martin states that it was called *The Ohio Press* begun as a rival to the *Ohio Statesman*. See also Lee, I, 430, where the paper is grouped with other English papers.

¹³ Studer, 258, Lee, I, 442. There were other fraternal papers and agricultural and garden publications, all of which are given in detail in Arndt-Olson, 472-477.

¹⁴ Arndt-Olson, 478.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 477.

¹⁶ See Arndt-Olson, 473-476.

¹⁷ Hooper, 184.

¹⁸ See "Biographical Sketch of Frederick J. Heer" in Hooper, 436-437. Heer was the son of

The Lutheran Book Concern came under the editorship of A. H. Dornbierer in 1907. Besides publishing the papers mentioned above, the firm printed English-language papers and magazines, almanacs, liturgies, hymnals and generally whatever the synods needed. Beginning modestly, the venture was so successful that by 1892 it had a three-story building on East Main Street, which was quickly outgrown and a new building was added in 1908. Success was so great that assets accumulated allowing the Concern to contribute its profits to the synodical treasury. Also, it was able to establish and increase an endowment for a professorship of German at Capital University.¹⁹ A few directories, almanacs and popular novels were also published by Columbus presses but it is not known whether these religious firms did the printing.²⁰

Despite the significant role played by the German Lutheran publications in Columbus, it was the *Westbote* more than any other organ that served to preserve the cultural heritage of the German immigrant while it eased him into his new Mother tongue and new Father land. It exercised leadership in political areas while it put its clientèle in touch with literature, drama, music, and general progress of his homeland. What can be said generally about the foreign-language press in America can be said eminently about the *Columbus Westbote*, that while it acted as a centralizing force for a time by making its readers conscious of their national origin, it also functioned as a centrifugal power by introducing them to the life of the American community, thus helping them break out of their cultural and social isolation.

The real power behind the *Westbote* was its skilled editor, Friedrich Fieser, who made it a thing to be reckoned with, not only in Ohio but in the whole Middle West.²¹ Fieser's sharpest weapon was a forceful and correct German and he used it meticulously and deftly. There is a conspicuous lack of the hilarious German-American jibberish that sometimes resulted when editors lifted from English papers and reproduced the material word for word in German. One example of the many strange results is the following: " Three cheers for Queen Victoria " appearing in German as " Sie brachten der Königin Victoria drei Stühle," having confused *cheers* with *chairs*.²² Jacob Reinhard, co-editor and publisher of the *Westbote* deserves credit on his own grounds as well as for bringing Fieser to Columbus. At a convention of German newspaper editors in Ohio in 1859 the accomplishments of Fieser and Reinhard were recognized and the two were complimented for their services to the German public.²³

Although political discussion was a major public service, another was the serial novel which generally filled the front page of every issue of the *Westbote*. Other contributions to the community were of a more casual nature, but of equal interest to the historian. When the editors felt bound to intrude on the front-page serial with an inaugural address or a party convention, they offered profuse apologies to wives and daughters. But tactful explanations seldom quieted the feminine audience. Repeatedly

German immigrant parents, and became one of the prominent leaders in the city. Heer held many public offices, including membership on the Board of Trustees of the Ohio Medical College, later incorporated into The Ohio State University. Heer was the only member to become a Trustee of the University.

¹⁹ Willard D. Allbeck, *A Century of Lutherans in Ohio* (Yellow Springs, Ohio, 1966), 286.

²⁰ See Johann Eggers, " Der deutsche Verlagsbuchhandel in den Vereinigten Staaten " *Der deutsche Pioneer*, II (1870-1871), 178-182. Columbus publications are listed on p. 181.

²¹ Throughout its long history the paper sent out delegates to sell subscriptions and collect fees everywhere in Ohio. Usually an announcement appeared in the paper beforehand to certify the roving collector.

²² Friedrich Fieser, " Aus meinen Erinnerungen " *Der deutsche Pioneer*, I (1869), 273-277, 306-310, 836-341. The *Ohio Sonntagsgast*, however, was less perfect, e. g., Aug. 21, 1898, the columnist writes about " Reduzirte Raten " on the Pennsylvania Railroad, and about " Arbeiter Trubel " in the eastern cities.²³

²³WB., Jan. 27, 1859.

they would bombard the editors with letters protesting the violation of front-page purity from politics.

Nevertheless, the German housewife of Columbus liked her role of *Kinder, Küche, Kirche* and a genial atmosphere prevailed. The *Westbote* functioned as a kind of clearing house for community information, serving at once as bulletin board and telephone exchange. The editors boasted that they knew personally almost all of their local subscribers and did not fear sharp criticism. If they were too busy with job contracts, with elections, or when the staff was out during Christmas, they did not hesitate to delay or delete a given issue of the paper.²⁴ When Friedrich Fieser got married, not just the journal staff, but the whole community found cause for general celebrations.²⁵ Certain entries display a kind of refreshing frankness as when the editors denounce women for spending their time following the fads and fashions of the day. Yet, in the next column they recommend that unmarried ladies will find at the German shoestore, attractive white kid and satin slippers at a low price.²⁶

News from Germany always occupied a significant and large section of the *Westbote*. The arrival of ships, immigration statistics, letters from friends and relatives describing travel or living conditions in Germany formed a part of each week's news. Items of local interest, coming from scattered cities in Germany, told of fires, murders, and sinking ships, but rarely of official government policy. The *Westbote*, like German papers in all America, became an agency through which persons could inquire about lost relatives and friends—often tender pleas by a father in search of a son, or a man for his brother, hopefully still alive.

The *Westbote* grew affluent, its scope broadened, and its personal touch got lost in the turmoil of world news and mass production. From an earlier circulation of slightly over a thousand in the 1860's and 1870's, the subscription increased rapidly to over 7,000 by 1900 and shot up to over 12,000 in 1905, leveling off then to an all time high of 13,000 in the peak year of 1915. It can be said of the *Westbote* that it did its job not too little but too well. Integration of the German immigrant into the English-speaking community inevitably spelled doom for the German papers and for the autonomy of the German colony. As the German element slowly dissolved into the majority all about it, the need for its own news organ simply vanished. This meant at first that the paper ceased to be a strictly German publication, and became instead a typical newspaper that happened to be printed in the German language. At the beginning of World War I, the paper took the part of the Fatherland (understandably), later supported the cause of neutrality, and finally in self-defense, clamored for a victory of the Allies against the former Fatherland. The *Westbote's* dying gasp was a patriotic outcry: "We have from this time but one duty to perform, and that an unswerving, unflinching loyalty to the country and the flag of our adoption."²⁷ A more subtle cause of death seems to have been a cancerous multiplication of financial troubles arising from the monetary difficulties of the Jacob Reinhard family. When the publishing firm at first was doing so well, the editors channeled the bulk of their money into a family owned bank. Therefore, when the bank failed, the fiasco took the paper over the side with it.²⁸

²⁴WB., Dec. 28, 1843; Nov. 26, 1847.

²⁵WB., June 27, 1845. Fieser married Louisa Schede.

²⁶WB., Dec. 13, 1844.

²⁷Hooper, 184; WB. Aug. 20, 1918.

²⁸See Hooper, 250. The company was known as the Reinhard Co., and included Jacob Reinhard, Thomas Miller, Joseph Falkenbach and Frederick Fieser. They began business on Dec. 1, 1868 with capital stock of \$20,000. As members retired, or died (Fieser in 1891 and Reinhard in 1892), the company was liquidated.

II. GERMAN ORGANIZATIONS AND CLUBS

That the City of Columbus today is still the scene of German singing societies says something about the vigor and vitality of these societies, while it attests to a genetic past which, if nothing else, has left dominant traces. Germans have traditionally been in love with festivities, and no festival was ever complete or even a festival without music. Second only to the propensity for festivity was a desire for organization. In the case of German immigrants isolated from the natives by language and social traditions, the need for social life among themselves fostered the inborn proclivities to a combination of the tendencies toward festivities and organization. The result was especially the singing society, and to a lesser extent, the other organized clubs—the gymnastic society, the rifle club, the fraternal and charitable groups, and even the guild-like merchant associations—clubs that arose when Germans banded together to make common cause in answer to a genuine need.

Because the German element in Columbus was not substantial before 1840, it is logical that we find no record of special clubs before that time. The earliest organization to appear on the scene was the singing club, *Liederkrantz*, in 1843. Its life was so brief that none of the standard histories of Columbus bother to mention it. However, in November of 1843, a group of German youths, admittedly bored with the long winter evenings, decided "to astonish the natives" with a new kind of excitement.¹ The group at first confined its activities to serenading, but by 1844 when the membership increased, there was a request registered in the German paper for a public concert. A few weeks later the *Liederkrantz* appeared on the Fourth of July program of 1844.² The club remained active the following year when, under the direction of Heinrich Gutmann, the members gave a concert which merited editorial comment and thanks for "serving the worthy cause of preserving German culture in the West."³ As far as is known, however, the *Liederkrantz* faded from the scene after 1845.

Some twenty years later, on August 6, 1866 other singers formed a *Liederkrantz* under the direction of Bernhard Kaiser,⁴ and soon they were able to give public concerts and to buy a piano and furniture. For a long time meetings were held on Wednesday evenings and Sunday afternoons at Hessenauer's Hall, a generally popular assembling place for Germans. Directors who followed Kaiser were Karl Schopelrei, Karl Spohr, Fred Puhlinger, Hermann Eckhardt, John Johanson, Franz Nebenstreit, Theodore H. Schneider, George Brand, Robert Eckhardt, Herman Ebeling and Karl Hoenig.⁵ Generally the society presented two concerts every year, gave an annual masquerade ball (some 60 in all) and an annual banquet.

¹ WB., Nov. 9, 1843.

² WB., June 14; July 12, 1844.

³ WB., Feb. 14; Feb. 28, 1845.

⁴ See Lee, II, 769, and Studer, p. 448. The original members of the *Liederkrantz* were L. Bach, Christ Balz, J. N. Bissontz, George Brand, Franz Fassig, Mathias Fassig, Christian Hertenstein, Bernhard Kaiser, Mich. Lush, George Muhlheim, John Reinhold, Charles Synold, and C. C. Weiss. All were from the Independent German Protestant Church Choir on East Mount Street, whose pastor was the Reverend Christian Heddaus.

⁵ George S. Marshall, *The History of Music in Columbus, Ohio* (Columbus, 1956), 19.

At the masquerade ball they often presented a comic operetta.⁶ After 1870 the *Liederkrantz* belonged to the North American *Sängerbund* and participated in festivals as far distant as St. Louis, Chicago and Buffalo. In 1878, together with their sister organization the *Männerchor*, the *Liederkrantz* organized the Central Ohio *Sängerbund* composed of a large number of German singing societies from all Ohio. With general offices in Balz's Hall on East Main Street, the society remained active with a constant membership of around a hundred.

To a limited extent the *Liederkrantz* entered the field of opera, giving in 1880 *Martha*, in 1889 *A Jolly Friend*, in 1900 *Der blaue Montag*, and in 1916 *Der Dummkopf*. Under the sponsorship of the *Liederkrantz* the First Imperial Marine Band of Germany gave a concert in the Columbus Auditorium on Goodale Street in 1905. A Golden Jubilee Celebration in 1916 seems to have been the society's death rattle, for after that solemn occasion not much activity is reported. It lingered for another ten years until in 1926 it disbanded; most of the members joined the Columbus *Männerchor*.⁷

With its maximal membership now limited to 1,700, the Columbus *Männerchor* is blessed with a waiting list for membership and the promise of a long and vigorous life ahead.⁸ It restricts the number of active singers to 108 and maintains its own hall and offices at 966 South High Street. Having rented halls at various locations throughout three quarters of a century, the members purchased their own property in 1921. Today's vitality goes back well over a century.

The *Männerchor* was founded on October 24, 1848 when John P. Bruck (German immigrant of 1834 and Justice of the Peace in Columbus since 1837, later commissioner of Franklin County) gathered eleven men at his office at 341 South Front Street to organize the society.⁹ After three months the group made its first public appearance in January, 1849 under the direction of Karl Schneider. By April the society was giving concert-balls—more dance than concert it appears—no less than thirty-five in the next decade.¹⁰

In its early years the *Männerchor* went through several depressions,¹¹ but after each survival it grew stronger. Following an unpretentious beginning the society grew in stature, eventually gaining national recognition. In June 1852 the North American *Sängerbund* held its annual meeting in Columbus. Flags decorated the city, banners were presented to the President, Martin Krumm, a procession moved out to Stewart's

⁶ Lee, II, 770.

⁷ Marshall, *The History at Music*, 18-19.

⁸ The Columbus *Männerchor* of today owes its life blood to Mr. Andreas (Andy) Holzapfel, President of the society since 1948. Born in Garitz near Bad Kissingen in Bavaria in 1900, Andy Holzapfel, presently the best known German-American in Columbus, came to the United States in 1930 and joined the *Männerchor* one year later. In 1937 he was elected Chairman of entertainment, and in 1945 Vice-President of the organization. He was also elected President of the Ohio *Singer Bezirk* in 1966 and in 1963, Vice-President of the North American *Singer-Bund*. During his presidency the society opened its gates also to members of non-German origin. However, ninety-five percent of all renditions are still sung in German. Holzapfel's personal work for deepening American-German cultural relations was recognized in 1968 when the Federal Republic of Germany awarded him the Officers Cross of Merit.

Today the *Männerchor* performs semi-officially for city and state functions and for prominent conventions in Columbus. In addition, approximately fourteen concerts are given annually. Mr. Holzapfel also takes the singers on out-of-town visits. These performances have been well received everywhere and have created interest and a renewed appreciation for German song in America.

See Marshall, 5, and Lee, II, 768. The original members were: George Baumüller, W. F. Marks, Andreas Schneider, Philip Cpnrod, George Schneider, Jonas Kissel, Daniel Koenig, Martin Krumm, William Raine Jr., William Siebert, Heinrich Treven, and Friedrich Woll, all native Germans. See also Heinrich A. Rattermann, "Anfänge und Entwicklung der Musik und des Gesanges in den Vereinigten Staaten während der ersten Hälfte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts," *Deutsch-Amerikanische Geschichtsblätter*, XII (1912), 827-380. Rattermann deals with Columbus on p. 367. He states (probably erroneously) that it was Ernst Nothnagel who founded the *Männerchor* in 1848. In 1839 Nothnagel had begun the *Liederkrantz* in Canton, Ohio. Thereafter he came to Columbus where he served as superintendent of the state institution for the blind and became active in many German societies.

¹⁰WB., Apr. 20, 1849, gives a description of a typical ball.

¹¹WB., Sept. 26, 1851; Oct. 21, 1858.

Grove (later City Park, still later Schiller Park) for the festivities, and back to City Hall for the ball. The whole affair prompted editor Fieser to write: "The German songfest is the most effective means of uniting the Germans of America in the close bonds of a common culture! May these festivals, through the enthusiastic participation of every patriotic German, continue to enjoy an ever increasing measure of success, and may their influence become more marked."¹²

The year 1865 witnessed the *Sängerfest* of the North American *Sängerbund*, postponed during the Civil War, and said to have been "the most important musical occasion in the history of the city."¹³ With no festivities for several years, the Germans were thirsting for a sensational meet. With twenty-seven units from cities between New York and St. Louis, the celebration went on four full days, culminating on Sept. 1 with a dirge on the Capitol steps, sung to mourn the sudden death of Governor John Brough, who had died the night before in Cleveland.

Growing gradually from its function as sponsor of picnics and masked balls,¹⁴ the *Männerchor* became more and more a cultural force. During the winter of 1869 it gave a series of concerts at Naughton Hall, which did much to awaken the musical interests of the city. With precisely that intention, the group was reconstituted on May 18, 1868 "to encourage and cultivate a taste for music."¹⁵ Sticking to its purpose, the *Männerchor* in 1871 entered the fields of opera and drama, remaining active until 1901. In 1871, under the direction of Carl Schoppelrei, they staged Lortzing's *Zar und Zimmermann* in the Columbus Opera House with fifty voices and a full orchestra; in 1872, the group presented *Der Freischütz* by Carl Maria von Weber, under Herman Eckhardt; in 1873 there was *Preciosa* also by Weber, a repeat of *Der Freischütz*, and *Der Verschwender* and *Bruder Liederlich*; in 1879 *Der Zopfabschneider*; in 1880 once again *Zar und Zimmermann*; in 1885 Flotow's *Martha*; in 1886 the members performed *Die Tochter der Hottentotte*; in 1889 *Der Waffenschmied* by Lortzing; in 1894 a reprise of *Preciosa*, followed in 1898 by *Dr. Klauss* and *Hans Hucklebein*; these were followed in 1901 by the operetta *Lore vom Schwarzwald*.¹⁶

Before acquiring its own home the *Männerchor* inhabited many dwellings, private homes, the attic of a store, then in 1867 Hettenheimer's Hall, a year later Naughton Hall, and for the next four years in Schröder's Hall. On December 2, 1872 it moved to Germania Hall, which had been erected and leased by J. and L. Zettler on the corner of Main and Fourth Streets. Ten years later the chorus occupied the Wirthwein building on South High."

Since its beginning the Columbus *Männerchor* had assistance from the German women, but an exclusively ladies' chorus was not organized until forty years later. For a while membership was restricted to wives of the male chorus members. In 1931, the Columbus *Damenchor* came into being with regular rehearsals and performances. It shares the same hall, belongs to the same *Sängerbund*, and gives similar concerts while also performing civic and charitable functions.

Although the continuity of another singing society was frequently disrupted, the *Germania Gesang Verein* proudly celebrated its centennial May

¹²WB., June 11, 1852; see Studer, 56-57.

¹³Lee, II, 794.

¹⁴WB., July 81, 1867; Jan. 24, 1861.

¹⁵Lee, II, 769, and Studer, 441.

¹⁶See Marshall, 6-7. From time to time the *Männerchor* also staged comedies. I shall not go into details here since I intend to deal specifically with the German stage in Columbus in a later article.

¹⁷See Lee, II, 768. It is not clear whether the group remained at the Wirthwein until they purchased their own building on South High.

22-29, 1966. Starting on February 26, 1866 as the Columbus *Turnverein* the singing group was not officially constituted until 1882.¹⁸ Detailed information about the society is scarce, and its operations were interrupted repeatedly for World Wars and other reasons. Since 1950, however, the society has had regular rehearsals under the direction of Fritz Saenger.¹⁹ In 1916, the Germania Society became a member of the Central Ohio *Sängerbund* and has attended the song fests of that organization at least four times. On three occasions in 1922, 1923, and 1924, the society sponsored male choruses from Southern Germany, which gave concerts in the old Board of Trade Auditorium.²⁰ In May, 1920 the *Germania Gesangverein* merged with the original *Turnverein* to form the *Germania Turn- und Gesangverein* under the presidency of Paul Mueller who adeptly led the new society for over 25 years.²¹ The society seems to have prospered



GERMANIA CLUBHAUS ON FRONT STREET

during the 1920's because in 1926 the members purchased their own hall at 543 South Front Street, a structure which was substantially enlarged in 1953. The group holds weekly rehearsals and provides social entertainment for its 100 members (thirty in the chorus) and actively aids new German immigrants.²²

Besides the foregoing prominent ones, there were other German singing societies which deserve mentioning. In 1853, the *Concordia*²³ came into being under the direction of an 1848 expellee, Otto Dresel, a man who served repeatedly as national president of the federated German singing societies.²⁴

¹⁸ See Marshall, 72. The first director was Herman Schmidt and later directors included Karl Sehoopelrei, Frank Hebenstreit, J. Frederick, Theodore H. Schneider, Joseph Roesner, Otto Assenheimer, David W. Rohe, and for a long time I. A. Leinheuser.

¹⁹ Souvenir-booklet "Central-Ohio SSngerbezirk feiert das 23ste Bezirks-Sängerfest zu Ehren dea Germania Gesang- und Sportvereins" (Columbus, 1966), 4.

²⁰ See Marshall, 73 for a list of presidents and officers.

²¹ See Souvenir Booklet of Germania, 6. Paul Mueller also established a women's chorus in 1906.

²² *Ibid.*, 4.

²³ *WB.*, Aug. 19, 1858.

²⁴ See A. E. Zucker, *The Forty-Eighters* (New York, 1950), 289-290 for a biography of Otto Dresel. He was born in Detmold and studied law at Jena, came to the U. S. via Baltimore in 1849. He studied American law and practiced in Columbus. In 1861 he became superintendent of schools, later a member of the Ohio Legislature. He organized the Columbus Public Library and was an accomplished violinist.

Nothing is written about the *Concordia* after 1853. The *Caecilien-Verein* made its appearance in 1861 and included both men and women.²⁵ In March 1856, the Beethoven Society was organized "to improve the popular musical taste and to exterminate the Uncled Ned and Oh Susannah sort of music."²⁶ Its Orchestra and choir functioned for at least four years performing programs of Händel, Haydn, Rossini and Beethoven, Directors of the orchestra were H. J. Notnagel, A. Goodman and Karl Spohr while the choir was under the direction of R. D. Dunbar.²⁷ Together with the *Thalia-Verein* the Beethoven Society gave Weber's *Preciosa* at Carpenter's Hall on December 18, 1857.²⁸

The first church choirs to gain distinction in Columbus were the *Sängerchor* of the German Catholic Church (Holy Cross) and later that of the German Independent Protestant Church.²⁹ St. Paul's German Lutheran Church gave concerts of sacred music on many Sunday afternoons.³⁰ In November 1868 the German Catholics organized the *Harmonic Gesang Verein* under the direction of Q. Burkley.³¹

Second only to the *Männerchor* the most prominent cultural force among the Columbus Germans was the drama club, the *Thalia-Verein*. It was initiated on February 20, 1855 and by March 30 had given its first performance.³² In scarcely two months time the club numbered 100 members enabling it to produce a play every two weeks. One-act comedies were the rule and the audience was restricted to members. Later performances were open to outsiders when invited by a member. Significant contributions were made by the *Thalia-Verein* in the 1858-59 season when Friedrich Schiller's birthday was celebrated. The club brought in the Cincinnati Adlersberg Company for a performance of *Die Räuber* on Nov. 2, and *Wilhelm Tell* on Nov. 25, 1858.³³ During 1861 the Apollo Hall in Kanne-macher's Building on South High Street was opened as the official headquarters of the *Thalia-Verein*.³⁴ In that hall, the *Verein* gave a melodramatic play written expressly for the society by Hermann Ruess of Columbus. It was entitled *Fort Sumter: Patriotism and Treachery* and was performed on May 17, 1861.³⁵ During the Civil War there was apparently too much activity and too prevailing a tendency toward military showmanship for drama and dramatic societies to survive.

Of less significance to the German element as a whole were the special interest societies which often expired shortly after birth, or were restricted to German-speaking people from areas not belonging to Germany proper. In this category we have the Swiss *Helvetia Männerchor*, begun in 1889 by the Swiss immigrant, Bernard Buehler. Always geared to themes of an alpine style, the society helped organize Swiss singing societies in 1896 when the Swiss American *Sängerbund* was formed in Sandusky, Ohio. The Columbus *Helvetia* attended all 21 of the subsequent national meets.³⁶ By 1896 the *Helvetia* male chorus had a sister singing society, the *Edelweiss Damenchor*, founded under the leadership of Eliza Kunzi and Pauline

²⁵WB., April 11, 1861, Hooper, 285, Lee, II, 794.

²⁶Hooper, 285.

²⁷WB., Dec. 31, 1857; Feb. 8, 1859; Apr. 19, 1860.

²⁸Hooper, 285.

²⁹WB., Nov. 3, 1854; April 12, 1860; Dec. 13, 1860; June 7, 1860.

³⁰WB., June 23, 1854; May 30, 1856.

³¹Studer, 443.

³²WB., Feb. 22, 1855; April 2, 1855.

³³WB., Nov. 26, 1858; an earlier local success was *Das war ich*, April 15, 1858.

³⁴Lee, II, 794. Before the *Thalia* existed, traveling German theater companies performed in Columbus. One from New York appeared in 1852 (WB., Sept. 8, 1852) another in 1853 (WB., Aug. 26, 1853). The famous Thielmann family of Cincinnati spent a week in Columbus during 1854 and 1855 (WB., Aug. 11, 1854 and Jan. 19, 1855). In this connection see also Kathryn E. Utz, "Drama in Columbus" (unpubl. M. A. Thesis, Ohio State Univ., 1947), 51.

³⁵Utz, 78.

³⁶Marshall, 73.

Aured.³⁷ Still active today, the two organizations give a public concert once a year, sometimes as a joint effort by all the German singing societies of the city. Earlier the Swiss groups met at 571½ South Third Street but recently they have constructed a Swiss Chalet at 1036 South Front Street where they have a hall, a restaurant and office space.³⁸

The German *Arbeiter Gesang Verein*, begun in 1909, is an example of the tendency among all German-Americans to create social organizations according to sociological stratifications. Becoming inactive in 1918, the members reactivated in 1924 and continue today although their songs are mostly sung in English at their residence on 425 East Kossuth Street.³⁹ Little is known about a *Badischer Sangerchor* except that it was in the spotlight during the dedication ceremonies of the Schiller monument in 1891.⁴⁰

A lesser musical organization in the German community was the De Bariat Club (1859-1869), a small orchestra which encouraged good taste in music and played basically for other musical groups in Central Ohio. Its permanent president was the Forty-Eighter, Otto Dresel, its director Hermann Eckhardt.⁴¹ There was also an Eckhardt String Quartet Club, essentially a juvenile group of students studying with Hermann Eckhardt.⁴² The Washington Band was reported as early as 1840 when the German residents organized the Washington Artillery Company. Sometimes referred to simply as the German Band, it appears that the band was actually a segment of the Artillery Company of the same name.⁴³ There were others: Towler's Band (1865-1869), directed for a time by Otto Dresel, a Hemmersbach (1869-1882), a Vogelsang's Band (1869-1874), as well as several other marching bands usually having German conductors and members who were German at least in name.⁴⁴

Prior to the development of huge insurance companies and nationwide labor unions, the role played by the mutual aid society was significant. Often such societies were linked to a church, just as often to citizens with a common national origin. Following this pattern, the Germans of Columbus had their *Arbeiter-Verein* started early in the Civil War with the objective of helping the working class.⁴⁵ In the line of charitable institutions there were the First and Second German Beneficial Societies, organized about 1841 by the Protestant Churches. The Catholics had their Catholic Benevolent Association, St. Martin's Catholic Benevolent Society begun in 1858, and the St. Francis Xavier Catholic Benevolent Society begun in 1868, the latter associated directly with St. Mary's Church. The Swiss had their own mutual benefit club, the *Grutti Verein* begun in 1870 and there was even a German Butcher's Association begun in 1867. Its purpose was to pay sick members and widows of former members.⁴⁶ Finally, there was the Columbus Typographical Union, largely but not exclusively a German union which met regularly in the Westbote Building.⁴⁷

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 73-74.

³⁸ See Souvenir Booklet "Germania Gesang und Sportverein," 82.

³⁹ Marshall, 89.

⁴⁰ WB., July 7, 1891.

⁴¹ Marshall, 14, Studer, 445.

⁴² Studer, 445.

⁴³ Marshall, 4.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁴⁵ Studer, 423-425.

⁴⁶ Studer, 429, 433.

⁴⁷ See Studer, 417-423. See also Alexander Schem, *Lexicon*, III, p. 855. Schem mentions not only the singing societies with their memberships in 1869 but also provides a list of social and mutual aid groups as of 1869. They are as follows with their memberships where available: Columbus Hain (207), Franklin Capital (58), Harmonia Loge (271), Ooncordia Lager (105), Scioto Stamm (130), Th. Parker Loge (50), Turnverein (96), Germania Loge (70), Zion Loge der B'nai B'rith (50), Arbeiter-Verein (132), Erster deutscher Unterstutzungs-Verein (60), Zweiter deutscher Unterstutzungs-Verein (65), Deutscher Metzger-Verein, Verein der deutschen Wirthe, Schutzen-Verein, Grutti-Verein,

The Germans of Columbus recruited and maintained for many years two Artillery Companies, both with their marching bands. No German picnic, parade or fair would have been much without the military companies and their bands. Bright uniforms and zestful maneuvers distinguished their holidays. Cannons saluted arriving dignitaries and marching soldiers escorted them to and from the depots with lively music.

The First German Artillery Company founded in 1840 had been enlisting men for only a few months when a rival, The German Washington Artillery Company, got under way.⁴⁸ The two groups drilled regularly and achieved such a degree of preparedness that when the war came with Mexico in 1846 they formed the nucleus of the Ohio volunteer group.⁴⁹ Led by their captains, Frankenburg and Jacob, the German Companies hoped to retain their identity but were refused by Ohio's Governor Mordecai Bartley because of an alleged language problem.⁵⁰ Needless to say the Governor was denounced for his action by the *Westbote*: "The German population of Ohio will not forget this insult, this outrage, and will hold the leaders of the Whig Party responsible for it."⁵¹ Apparently the need for German support in the war was great enough to compel the U. S. Secretary of War to rebuke Governor Bartley publicly for his impetuous decision.⁵²

Nevertheless the two companies disbanded to form what was later known as the 4th Ohio Regiment.⁵³ Otto Zirkel, a Columbus physician and a veteran of the Prussian Army, became its captain. In April, 1847 the War Department announced its requisition of the basically German unit and late in May they departed for Mexico.⁵⁴ How much action the Germans met is unknown, but of the ninety-five who were called in 1847, six died, eight either deserted or remained in the West, and nineteen were still in hospitals when the detachment returned to Columbus late in July, 1848.⁵⁵ On that occasion a tumultuous welcoming parade moved down High Street to Jaeger's Orchard Garden, attracting attention even in the English-language *Ohio Statesman*.⁵⁶

Enthusiasm waned for a few years although in 1851 the Germans formed the *Grenadiers*.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, with the growth of Nativism the German military organizations seem to have declined in popularity—at least the German papers said less about them. It is known, however, that a German Infantry Company existed in 1855,⁵⁸ and that in 1859 the *Steuben-Garde* was organized.⁵⁹ Early in their existence, the guards were riddled with dissension and a disgruntled faction became the *Deutsche Jaeger Compagnie*.⁶⁰ Soon both companies were actively engaged in the Civil War and others were recruited.⁶¹ The Civil War proved to be a leveling force. As men from Ohio moved to the front in numbers, national origin and

Sherman Guard. Church organizations included: St. Josephs Waisen- und Unterstiitzungs-Verem (136), St. Aloysius Jünglings-Verein (65), St. Martinus Wohltätigkeits- und Unterstiitzungs-Verein, St. Marien Jungfrauen-Verein, St. Elisabeth Waisen-Verein, St. Bonafacius Bauverein (150), St. Franz Xavier Unterstiitzungs-Verein (68), St. Marien Alter-Verein (230), St. Vincents Jünglings-Verein (60), Kranken und Unterstiitzungs-Verein der Dreieinigkeits-Gemeinde (70).

⁴⁸WB. Dec. 28, 1843; Jan. 31, 1845. Lee, II, 79.

⁴⁹WB. May 22, 1846. Lee, II, 16, 17.

⁵⁰WB. May 26, 1846.

⁵¹*Ibid.*

⁵²WB. July 10, 1846.

⁵³WB. May 14, 1847. Lee, II, 25 includes a list of members and their ranks.

⁵⁴WB. May 21; May 28, 1847; Lee, II, 20.

⁵⁵WB. July 26, 1848; Aug. 4, 1848.

⁵⁶See Lee, II, 22.

⁵⁷WB. Sept. 26, 1851.

⁵⁸WB. June 29, 1855. The company had sixty enlisted men. Officers were C. Bretz, J. Reel, Hud., Rickly and C. Richard.

⁵⁹WB. Feb. 17, 1859. The Infantry Company had about fifty members. WB., Apr. 14, 1859.

⁶⁰WB. March 8, 1859

⁶¹Lee, II, 115.

autonomy were soon lost. The German Americans served the union army well, of course—estimates range from 176,817 to 216,000—exceeding proportionally any other nationality.⁶² The Forty-Eighters, victims of another civil conflict in their own country, were especially prominent in the American struggle.

After the War, Columbus had its German Sherman Guards and other German companies but the features marking them as German had vanished. Instead of spritely German troopers, there were veteran reunions and National Guard Organizations, and it was the experiences of former battles rather than ethnic origin that provided the mutual bond.

Gymnastic societies have sprung up wherever there have been Germans. Their origin dates from 1811 when the Berliner Ludwig Jahn sought to mobilize the moral and physical strength of Germany by gymnastic training (*Turnen*).⁶³ Soon the gymnastic societies fanned out across Germany and into German settlements in foreign lands, especially the United States.⁶⁴ Columbus was no exception. As elsewhere, the Turners became active in debate on political and social questions, sometimes fostered choruses and bands, and always maintained their physical condition by athletic exercise.

The Columbus *Turnverein* was organized in 1851 and in less than a year split into two groups; for years the original and the new *Social Turnverein* continued in friendly competition.⁶⁵ It was against the *Turnverein* that Know Nothing prejudice came to the fore in Columbus. Although Nativism had been sweeping the country since the early 1840's, only minor incidents had occurred in Columbus, but in 1853 the Fourth of July celebration threatened to erupt into a battle when the *Männerehor* and the *Grenadiers* (who in former years had always celebrated the Fourth of July with the native Americans) were returning from a picnic (for Germans) and two natives threatened to shoot into the company.⁶⁶ The man with the gun was taken prisoner by the guards but a mob closed in to shelter his companion and a brief hand to hand scuffle ensued. By October of the same year the Know Nothings in Columbus had swelled to over 2,500 and produced majorities at the polls in all but the Fifth Ward.⁶⁷ A German political party was then formed to counter the Know Nothings but it was too late to influence the elections of 1855.⁶⁸

One target for the Know Nothings was the German societies. On May 29, 1855 the *Turnverein* numbering about forty members returned from a picnic. The colorbearer carried a red silk flag bordered with black and inscribed with yellow letters in German. Rumor had it that the banner was "The Red Republican Flag of Germany" and that the inscription was anti-American. Enthusiasts therefore met the returning Turners at the Canal Bridge on Main Street demanding that they lower the flag. Upon refusal, they tried to wrest the banner from the Turners and pelted them with stones. Stone throwing continued in various parts of the city during the evening festivities. When on May 31, Mr. Zehnacker raised a similar

⁶² See Wittke, *The German-Language Press*, p. 148. For a statistical breakdown of the German-Americans in the Civil War see Wilhelm Kaufmann, *Die Deutschen im amerikanischen Bürgerkrieg* (Munich and Berlin, 1911), 118 ff. Kaufmann notes that 216,000 soldiers were German-born, 300,000 were first-generation Germans, and 234,000 more were of German origin.

⁶³ Kurt F. Reinhardt, *Germany: 2000 Years*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1961), 442. Disciples of Jahn in this country were Carl Beck, Charles Follen, and Francis Lieber who arrived in Boston about 1826 and began to translate the doctrines of Jahn into practice in America. See Albert B. Faust, *The German Element in the United States* (New York, 1926), II, 388 ff.

⁶⁴ For a history of the Turner movement in America see Augustus J. Prah, "The Turner" in Zucker, *The Forty-Eighters*, pp. 79-110; also A. J. Prah, "History of the German Gymnastic Movement in Baltimore," *Reports, Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland*, XXVI (1946), 16-29.

⁶⁵WB., Jan. 6, Feb. 20, 1852; Oct. 14, 1853. Lee, II, 771.

⁶⁶WB., July 8, 1858.

⁶⁷WB., Oct. 6; Oct. 18, 1864.

⁶⁸WB., March 80; April 6, 1856.

flag on his house (the regular meeting place of the Turners), the police removed it as a precaution.⁶⁹ The banner bore the inoffensive words: *Frisch, Fröhlich, und Frei* on one side, on the other: *Durch Übung zur Kraft; durch Forschung zur Erkenntnis; Bahnfrei*. The real cause of the outburst was a general anti-foreign feeling among the Nativists.

During the same May weekend in 1855, the *Männerchor* was attending a concert in Cleveland and when the word went out that the chorus was carrying German banners and flags, the Nativists gathered to give the singers a "warm reception" on their return. In the meantime, plans for the harrassment leaked out and when the Cleveland train arrived in Columbus, guards from the Ohio Penitentiary were present for protection. Not only the guards, but a combined "guard" of some 600 Irish, American, and German citizens assembled to assure safe transit for the chorus. The escort took the marching choir, flags flying, down High Street where they paused for a few patriotic songs before dispersing.⁷⁰

Tempers cooled but feelings continued to smolder for a month before flaming out of control on what has come to be known as the "Bloody Fourth" in 1855.⁷¹ When a German military company and seventy-eight Turners, carrying their banner and the American flag, were returning from their festivities via State toward Front Street, they began to draw cat-calls from Nativists. Along Town Street stones and epithets flew at the Turners, who in turn, broke ranks and returned the insults. Conflicting reports tell how the United States Hotel was mobbed, windows broken, and people roughed up. As stones were flying, guns began to crack. The fracas was over in minutes, but three Turners had been wounded and a native, Henry Foster, had been shot through the lungs and died shortly. By the time the Germans reached their homes in the South End, police were already on the scene. Mobs joined in, homes were entered without warrants, Germans were bound by self-appointed police and carted off to jail. Shouts rang out, "Hang the damn German on the lamp post." Stories were printed which told of women standing in doorways defending their Turner husbands from the police and the mobs, one with a revolver, another with a knife and sickle; one is supposed to have thrown two men down the stairs. Twenty Germans were detained in jail, and with one exception were released the next day on \$15,000 bail. The night before a German member of the City Council was personally freed by the mayor. Only Gottlieb Mayer was held while lawyers prepared for his trial. One month later at the hearing thirteen Turners were pronounced innocent, six were bound over to a court for jury trial, and by mid October, all had been exonerated including Mayer. The testimony heard by Justice William Field revealed that the July Fourth outburst was the result of the May 29 incident, and it was the May stoning that prompted the Turners to carry weapons on July Fourth. The outbreak was never repeated although one Turner, John Haisch, was severely injured a month later when "true Americans " attacked him.

So disruptive was the affair that the gymnastic society faded from view until after the Civil War. In 1866, however, the *Turwverein* was reconstituted in large part due to the efforts of Colonel Gustav Tafel, then a member of the General Assembly from Hamilton County. In 1869, a convention of Turners in the Cincinnati district was held in Hessenauer's Hall and in 1872, the Ohio Valley District of Turners held a three day August meet in Columbus. Parades, flags, dances, and speeches together

⁶⁹Lee, II, 62.

⁷⁰WB., June 8, 1855.

⁷¹For a running account of developments, see the following issues of the WB., July 6, July 13, July 27, Aug. 8, Oct. 12, 1855. See also Lee, II, 63-66.

with a torch-light procession of nearly 300 Turners created a memorable spectacle for the city.⁷² There were more conventions in 1878, 1881 and 1888. By 1881 the Turners owned a large hall on South High and remained active beyond the turn of the century. As with other German societies, World War I marked a difficult stage, but the Turners survived, although in weakened condition. As a result on May 15, 1920 the society joined the Germania Singing Society to form the *Germania Turn und Gesangverein*, still existing; today it is noted for its soccer team and the *Gemütlichkeit* displayed in their beer garden on South Front Street.⁷³

In addition to their gymnastic clubs, most German communities had another favorite sport, the Rifle Club, *Schützenverein*. Like the *Sängerfest*,



SYCAMORE AND CITY PARK

the *Schützenfest* was an annual competitive event between clubs from many cities. In August, 1853 Columbus had its first such festival together with parade, contest, banquet and ball.⁷⁴ An 1865 City Engineer's map of Columbus shows a large plot of land at the Southeast corner of Stewart's Grove (Schiller Park) which is labeled with the German words "Schuetzen Platz." There were also German fire companies in Columbus (four were German in a total of six), whose first purpose was to fight fires, but whose most popular activity was engaging in contests with companies from other cities.⁷⁵

The Columbus *Humboldt-Verein* had quite different objectives. On the one hundredth anniversary of the birthday of Alexander von Humboldt, the Germans of Columbus honored the scholar with a festival parade which included every German organization and society in the city. It is estimated that over 8,000 took part.⁷⁶ After the parade, Heinrich Olmhausen delivered

⁷²Lee, II, 772.

⁷³See Souvenir Booklet of the *Germania*, p. 4.

⁷⁴WB., Sept. 23, 1853.

⁷⁵WB., Aug. 25, 1859.

⁷⁶WB., Sept. 23, 1869. The following units appeared in the parade and are listed here to show the cross section of the clubs existing at a given point in time: Hemmersbach Musical Band, Sherman

an address at the Opera House and Hemmersbach's music corps presented a concert." The *Humboldt Verein* was formed to blend literary and musical culture with social enjoyment as well as to cultivate the use of the German language. Under the auspices of the *Humboldt Verein* prominent speakers have visited Columbus.⁷⁸ The Humboldt society remained active through the years, holding regular meetings and sponsoring lectures and cultural events.⁷⁹ At one time there was also a Humboldt Lodge Number 476, reported as starting in 1873, but whether the Lodge was part of the *Verein*, or a separate organization is unclear.⁸⁰

The Columbus Kossuth *Verein* was started to honor the 1849 patriot of Hungary. In that year, Louis Kossuth obtained certain rights under the Austrian crown to establish an independent government but it failed when opposed by the pressures from Russia and Austria. His armies of revolt vanquished, Kossuth took refuge in Turkey and came to the United States on a ship dispatched by the U. S. Senate despite demands for his extradition from Turkey by European governments.⁸¹ Kossuth's visit to Columbus sparked profound sympathy for the common cause of freedom. Serenaded by German singers and bands, Kossuth addressed himself occasionally in German but more often in English to the total U. S. citizenry. It was his inspiration that led fifty-five German women to initiate the Kossuth Club and to raise about \$1,000 which was donated to the cause of "freeing the oppressed people of Europe."

Earlier but in the same vein, appeals had been made from time to time in behalf of relatives and families of local German citizens, who were imprisoned or expelled from their country. Likewise, newly arriving German immigrants often made successful appeals in Columbus, usually through the local organizations.⁸²

In summary, it can be said that the German *Verein*, more than any other foreign tradition in this country, produced the emotional and social cohesiveness that made the Germans a unique group in America. Germans did not shed their ways and habits easily. Sometimes, even in Columbus, Germans took delight in flaunting their "better taste" in the face of Americans whom they regarded as tamed barbarians, but little more. Although such a haughty attitude would have been difficult for the individual German, it came easy in the anonymity of the club. This, and the need for social interchange in an era when public entertainment was not a commonplace, induced the Germans to initiate and maintain assiduously, the *Verein*. Once started, traditions die hard, especially among a people who, even as emigrants, long upheld the cultural tradition and the technical training acquired in their mother country.

Guards, Capital City Guards, Turnverein, Schulrath, Stadtrath, Arbeiterverein, St. Francis Xavier Unterstützungsverein, Harmonic Gesangverein, Liederkranz, Gesangverein, Männerchor, Vogelgesang Music Band, Erster deutscher Unterstützungsverein, Capital City Loge der St. Crispinus, Theodor Parker Loge, Zion Loge der B'nai B'rith, Harmonia Loge der Oddfellows, Columbus Hain der Druiden, Scioto Stamm der Nothmänner, Metzger-Verein, Feuer-Department, Deutsche Schuljugend von Schulen in 3. und 4. St., Bürger welche keinem Verein angehören. This list of *Vereine* might be compared to the list of German clubs that existed in 1907. Every Saturday of that year the Columbus daily *Express und Westbote* provided the names and officers of each club. There were eighty-two in all. See *Express und WB.*, Jan. 6, 1907.

⁷⁸ *WB.*, Sept. 14; Sept. 23, 1869.

⁷⁹ *Lee*, II, 771.

⁸⁰ *WB.*, July 7, 1891.

⁸¹ *Lee*, II, 780.

⁸² For details of the Kossuth visit to Columbus see *WB.*, Dec. 19, 1851; Jan. 18, 28, 80; Mar. 5, 1852. See also *Lee*, II, 88-48.

⁸² *WB.*, Oct. 26, 1843; March 5, 1846; March 26, Apr. 2. 1847.

III. THE SCHOOLS

In Ohio, public schools did not get under way until late in the 1830's. However, long before that, most cities had a sprinkling of private schools. German sections often had such schools connected with their churches. Frequently a building used for services on Sunday was used for a school during the week. The Columbus Germans had at least nine of these schools in the decade 1845-1855, and in addition private schools were conducted for children and adults. Often they handled basic subjects but just as often they took up religion, bible, and sacred song.¹

Due to pressure from the large population of German immigrants in Cincinnati, the Ohio Legislature in 1838 allowed any school subject except the three R's to be taught in a foreign language. Continued pressure from the Germans brought an amendment in 1839 encompassing all subjects.² During the 1840's the Columbus Germans were successful in setting up three German public schools (one of which dates from 1839) which together employed nineteen German teachers and enrolled 207 pupils.³ One year later in 1852 four German schools and 316 pupils prompted the Board of Education to build a new structure at Fourth and Court Streets to house exclusively German students. The number of German schools grew to five in 1858, and to six in 1861.⁴ A public atmosphere sympathetic to German-language instruction in the Columbus schools dates back to 1833 when, according to reports, ministers in the city taught German to the natives while other private schools were closed due to cholera.⁵ A public school report of 1872 furnishes a history of the city's public schools stating that not only had the idea of bilingual education become an integral part of the Columbus School System, but that the early non-German directors had supported the idea consistently.⁶

By 1864 the Columbus system had been reorganized into five elementary school districts, which were served by one high school dating from 1847. In 1864 the district with the German schools was twice as large as any other district. By 1870 German was used in the curriculum along with English in three buildings: The Central School near Mound and Fourth, the Third Street School south of Beck on Third Street, and the South Street School near Fulton and Washington. In addition, there was a one-room, ungraded school known as the "South German School—Suburban." German was taught as a regular course of study in the high school.⁷

While the Board of Education furnished night schools especially for

¹WB., Feb. 8, 1844, Dec. 5, 1845, Jan. 12, 1849, June 18, 1847. See also Margaret Sittler, p. 40.
²Nelson L. Bossing, "The History of Educational Legislation in Ohio, from 1851 to 1925," *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Publications*, XXXIX (1930), 161. See also Edward A. Miller, "History of the Educational Legislation in Ohio from 1808 to 1860," *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Publications*, XXVII (1919), 55-56. Note on page 67 that an act of 1848 provided that only English or German could be taught in the public schools of any incorporated town in Ohio.

³WB., Dec. 20, 1850. See also Hooper, 176 and Lee, I, 650. Lee states that there was one German-English school between 1838-1845, two after 1845 and three by 1850.

⁴WB., Sept. 2, 1858, Mar. 28, 1861.

⁵Carl Wittke, ed., *The History of the State of Ohio*, III (Columbus, 1941-44), 154, 158.

⁶Columbus Board of Education, *Annual Report for the School Year Ending August 31, 1872* (Columbus, 1878), 61.

⁷Harold Barnes Handerson, "German Language Instruction in the Columbus Public Schools, 1870-1900" (unpubl. M. A. Thesis, Ohio State Univ., 1959), p. 8.

teaching English to Germans, mostly the younger Germans attended.⁸ The older people, indeed, complained that the public schools they were supporting were teaching more English than German and they began to agitate for a representative on the school board.⁹ "Do we pay our taxes and support the public schools only to have our children forget their mother tongue and lose the rich heritage of German literature and culture?"¹⁰

The dichotomy between English and German arose from the realities of having a native tongue different from the one used in the country of residence. When an immigrant feels himself superior to the culture to which he emigrates, he tenaciously retains his mother tongue in the alien environment as did the Germans who emigrated to Russia and later to Kansas and the Dakotas; a century in Russia did little to wipe out their German language. But when an immigrant finds the new cultural climate desirable, use of the former language is soon threatened by cultural assimilation. For this reason Germans in the United States subconsciously emphasized the use of German in proportion as the prestige of Germany rose and fell in the world. When Germany was victorious in the Franco-Prussian War, the Columbus Germans were delirious with joy. Fifteen thousand strong, they celebrated on May 1, 1871, in the Columbus Streets. Seven speakers delivered orations between musical interludes and only the Governor spoke in English. (More about the festival later.) The second week after the celebration the editors of the *Westbote* jubilantly reported that "many Americans have already expressed to us their determination that in any case they now want their children to learn German."¹¹

By 1871, of course, the Germans had also purchased their acceptance on the battlefields of the American Civil War, and there was no longer any sign of Nativist resentment. In fact, so successful was the recognition of German, that Friedrich Fieser, editor of the *Westbote*, was elected and served for years as member, and two terms as president, of the Board of Education.¹² But the intention not to slight the use of German in the schools was not automatically solved. In their 1872 report on the Central German School, the evaluators wrote: "Some of the teachers seem to neglect teaching German. We understand that due credit is not given to the scholars in the examinations, for their proficiency in this language, and hence that neglect. This is the more wrong when we consider that in our German-English schools the best scholars in the German language are in the great majority of cases also the best scholars in the English language. The two languages should be taught to benefit and improve each other, and one should not be taught at the expense of the other."¹³

During the 1870's when the enrollment in German-speaking public schools increased from 1,500 to nearly 2,400 the recommended board procedure was that in the early grades all instruction would be in German. A gradual transition was to be made before the completion of the fifth grade in order not to jeopardize the student who would later have to cope with an English-speaking environment. Sometimes the reports indicate that the children who left school after the fifth grade were not adequately trained in English." In general, pupils of German schools who wished to finish grade school and go on to high school were permitted an additional year due to the transition from German to English. There are reports that

⁸ WB., Nov. 20, 1851.

⁹ WB., Feb. 17, 1859.

¹⁰ WB., June 28, 1860.

¹¹ WB., May 11, 1871.

¹² In 1873 an elementary school for 600 pupils was built at State and Starling Streets and named in honor of Friedrich Fieser. See Lee, I, 574.

¹³ *Annual Report of 1872*, 78.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 95.

many native Americans also sent their children to the German schools on account of their superiority and the opportunity they provided for language study."

Commenting on the quality of the German schools, the Reverend Konrad Mees, a board member, claimed, "these schools were universally most regularly attended, thus generally being the best filled schools, and, therefore, at all times entitled to a just complement of teachers."¹⁵ Likewise, Superintendent Robert W. Stevenson remained for years a champion of the German-English schools until his resignation in 1889, commenting at one point: "The privilege of learning the German language is not only given to the children of German speaking people, but to all who are sent to the public schools. It is a legally authorized branch of study, and the same opportunity should be given for its study as is given for any other branch."¹⁷ Stevenson was so convinced of the efficaciousness of the German schools that he advocated establishing these schools outside the German sections of the city, adding "the teachers who are superior instructors of the German language, rank also among the very best teachers of English."¹⁸

In 1873 a state law was passed which provided that teaching of the three R's had to be done in English. Furthermore, an economic depression in the same year caused the over-all enrollment in the schools to decline by more than one thousand pupils. Despite these factors, the total number of students taking German increased. By 1876 French was dropped from the curriculum in the high school, and a sharp increase was reported of non-German pupils attending the German schools.¹⁹ When the Columbus School Board submitted a total of twenty volumes of pupils' work to the Philadelphia Exhibition in 1876 and nine of them contained German work, suspicion arose. Charges were leveled that a "foreign" dominance prevailed in the Columbus curriculum and that German was being forced on the students by a diabolic Board of Education.²⁰ Nevertheless, the decade closed with the highest proportion of pupils who went on to high school, coming from the German-English schools. An 1879 report by the examining committee stated: "In the last few years the honors of graduation have fallen to the lot of the Central German-English school scholars."²¹

The following decade brought a change in the general trend. According to the 1880 Census, Columbus lost in its percentage of German-born citizens, but retained more than a fifth of the population when calculated as German stock born of German parentage.²² The decline of German immigration in Columbus, plus the fact that in the year 1882 German

¹⁵ Lee, I, 564. WB., June 9, 1869. The editors point out the advantages of learning German, with a long article pointing out the affinity of the German and English languages.

¹⁶Annual Report of 1872, p. 95.

¹⁷Ibid., 59-60. Hooper, 170-171 reports that "the German language as well as the English is the medium of communicating subjects to the pupils, and both languages enjoy equal importance, yet without mingling them together." The superintendent is credited with solving the language problem by this compromise in a manner far better than was the case in Cincinnati or St. Louis. See also Alexander Schem, *Lexicon*, III, p. 855. "The German-English schools form special feelings of pride for the Germans of Columbus. Probably nowhere in the United States has the German-English school system been brought to a higher state of perfection than in Columbus, Ohio. In 1869 there were in these schools, twenty-two teachers and 1100 children, virtually all from German parents."

¹⁸Annual Report of 1872, 60.

¹⁹Annual Report of 1875, 117-118

²⁰Annual Report of 1877, 48-49. The rise of "native" opposition to the German-English schools in the late 1870's is probably the result of their successes. This tendency to claw at the successful minority is not an isolated phenomenon. For example, see Ernest J. Becker, "History of the English-German Schools in Baltimore," *Reports, Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland*, XXV (1942), 13-17. Becker states on page 14 that "in 1879 the name of the English-German schools was changed to 'Public Schools.'" The purpose of the change was probably to meet opposition which had sprung up in various quarters to the general idea of teaching any language but English in the public schools at the tax-payers' expense."

²¹Annual Report of 1879, 109.

²²Compendium of the Tenth Census (July 1, 1880) (Washington, 1883), I, 1406-7. See also Handerson, 33.

immigration to the United States reached its peak, indicated a forthcoming decline in the prominence of German in the schools. Bismarck's social legislation was making it increasingly attractive for Germans to remain in Germany. Not unexpectedly, then, the enrollment in Columbus' German-English schools during the 1880's never topped the year 1878. However, it appears that a strong demand for German-English schooling continued and that the facilities were not always adequate. The 1882 examiners called attention to the "very efficient" manner in which the study of German was being carried on.²³ When German was offered in non-German districts, it was reported that "there is an unusual interest and pride in the study of this subject [German]. The progress being made and the command of the language already attained seem to prove that this is not only a profitable study, but will be of practical benefit to those pursuing it."²⁴ In 1884, the Beck Street school was put into operation as a German-English school.²⁵

Concerning the local celebration of Arbor Day in 1886 a report states that the school children furnished "appropriate music and songs in both German and English."²⁶ Perhaps this innocuous statement is of significance at the point when, as Carl Wittke says, "by 1885 German-American leaders were complaining that the younger generation was rapidly forgetting the German tongue and that parents no longer insisted on having their children study German in the schools."²⁷ The children sang bilingually in 1886 but probably did not sense that a kind of swan song was being sung for the active use of their German language. For, the following year, 1887 marks the end of the long-standing entry in the reports of the "German-English" schools to designate them as bilingual. The one exception is the separate listing of the "Central German" school. Two years later in 1889 the report recommended that the study of German be undertaken only at the option of the child's parents in whatever grade, thus eliminating the notion that school policy was behind the study of German.²⁸ Subsequent recommendations for a special superintendent to look after German (as was the case with music and drawing), was never implemented but it indicates the non-curricular position to which German was being relegated.²⁹

During the 1890's German remained significant in the Columbus system, even though the German-born population continued to decline (under 8%) and the proportions were being off-set by an increase in the native American children.³⁰ In 1890 a state law was passed which provided that "all branches shall be taught in the English language"³¹ but this law was repealed the following year, and German textbook writers, taking hope, improved their texts. Fate struck in 1893 in the form of economic depression which gave rise to anti-foreign feelings. This in turn gave rise to suspicions concerning the loyalty of students in the German-English schools. One year later Latin was gaining over German in the high school classes, and both French and Greek were reinstated.³² It is interesting to note

²³ *Annual Report of 1882*, 170.

²⁴ *Annual Report of 1881*, 212. Only two of the reporting visitors have German names.

²⁵ *Annual Report of 1884*, 64, 72, 76.

²⁶ *Annual Report of 1886*, 149-160.

²⁷ Carl Wittke, *We Who Built America: The Saga of the Immigrant*, rev. ed. (Cleveland, 1964), 229.

²⁸ *Annual Report of 1889*, 92.

²⁹ *Annual Report of 1889*, 69, 85.

³⁰ See Becker, "The English-German Schools in Baltimore," 17. Note that a similar trend could be observed in the City of Baltimore. There the enrollment in the German schools continued to rise through the final decade of the last century. Yet the enrollment in Baltimore, as in Columbus, was deceptive. While the Baltimore superintendent lamented that the schools had a larger number of pupils on roll than their buildings would accommodate he also complained about "the loose manner in which pupils are allowed to go to English-German schools." This he maintained was "injurious to discipline and instruction."

³¹ Handerson, 68.

³² *Annual Report of 1894*, 99, 226.

that Columbus closely parallels (or slightly precedes) the national trend, for in these same years, the German-language press in America reached its numerical zenith and began to decline after 1895.³³ Anti-Catholic feelings caused the withdrawal of Catholic Germans from the public school system in 1895 when the first Catholic high school opened.³⁴ Soon thereafter German was established in four more schools, but the insidious anti-German rumors persisted prompting the following note in the 1895 *Report*: "As far as Columbus is concerned, German is entirely optional and is not required of anyone in any district. . . . The bulk of the time is given to the fundamentals of a common school education—reading, arithmetic, geography, and United States History."³⁵ The following year the Ohio Legislature made it mandatory that the United States flag be flown over each school in session,³⁶ a reasonable gesture, but one which implicitly questioned loyalties and demanded visible proof of patriotism. The year 1897 struck a special blow to the teaching of German in Columbus, for in that year the Board cited one of the reasons for rising costs as the increase in the number of special teachers of German; for this reason the Board also refused to grant any more petitions from non-German schools which sought to add German to their curriculum.³⁷ Thus, 1896 becomes a kind of high-water mark for German instruction. At that time there was an elementary enrollment of 2,980 taking German out of 14,946 elementary pupils, and a high school enrollment of 299 out of a total of 1,731.³⁸ Although a decline of numbers and proportions set in immediately, the cut-off did not occur until World War I. In 1899 the demand for German teachers remained high especially in the South End where "teachers of German descent are preferred and asked for not on account of their knowledge of the German language alone, but because they understand the home life of the people."³⁹

After 1900 Columbus was largely either native or third generation German. By that time German immigration into Ohio was going to larger and more industrialized cities, particularly Cincinnati and Cleveland. The younger Germans of Columbus moved to newer areas in the city and German stock was to be found in every school district. Only on the South side did German names hold a majority. The result was that a closed German speaking community ceased to exist and with it the German language as the medium of instruction in the schools. To be sure, the German language gained more and more prestige in higher education, but this did not generate a surge of interest in German in the lower grades. When the war broke out in 1914 it was reported that 4,340 pupils were taking German, about 1/6 of the total, but this plummeted to nothing in 1918 when even the German books had already been burned.⁴⁰

Columbus also had numerous parochial and private schools for which, however, statistics are not available. Mention will be made of the German parochial schools when dealing with the German churches.

But before leaving the subject of German schools, a word about the kindergarten program and Capital University. As early as 1838 Caroline L. Frankenburg set up a kindergarten in Columbus. Only one year earlier in 1837, the first kindergarten was established by Friedrich W. Froebel in

³³Witke, *The German-Language Press*, 208; Cf. Becker, *loc. cit.*, 13-7.

³⁴Kenneth Bradford, "Development of the Courses of Study in the Columbus Public High Schools from 1847 to 1938" (unpubl. M. A. Thesis, Ohio State University, 1989), 16.

³⁵*Annual Report of 1895*, 206.

³⁶*Annual Report of 1896*, 60.

³⁷*Annual Report of 1897*, 111.

³⁸Handerson, 66-57.

³⁹*Annual Report of 1889*, 21.

⁴⁰Hooper, 171. For a picture of the use of German in Ohio public schools after World War I see Frederic J. Kramer, "German in the Secondary Schools of Ohio (1925-1986)" *Monatshefte*, XXIX (1987), 402-408.

the town of Blankenburg, Germany. Usually credit is given to Mrs. Carl Schurz for organizing the first kindergarten in America at Watertown, Wisconsin in 1856." If it is correct as Hooper states that Miss Frankenburg began a kindergarten in Columbus in 1838, it may well have been the first one in America. A former student of Froebel, Miss Frankenburg conducted



CAROLINE LUISA FRANKENBURG, 1836-1858

the school in Columbus for a short time, then returned to Germany. However, in 1858 she returned to initiate the system on a permanent basis.⁴²

The story of Capital University starts in 1830. Under the leadership of Wilhelm Schmidt, a young German theologian, and with the general patronage of the Lutheran Synod of Zanesville, a seminary was started at the Schmidt home in Canton, which a few months later located on South

⁴¹ See Wittke, *We Who Built America*, 280.

⁴² Hooper, 169-170. See also WB., Dec. 7, 1860; Dec. 27, 1860. See also Bill Arter, *Columbia Vignettes* (Columbus, 1966), 70. Mr. Arter has sketched a building which served from the 1870's onward as the kindergarten. In his write-up he reports also that when Caroline Louise Frankenburg returned to Columbus in 1858, she used a little house at Rich and Pearl Streets. "She spoke only German, but this was no handicap since half the town spoke that language. Tuition was 75 cents per week." That so many spoke German is probably an exaggeration. Hooper also reports that during the 1870's there was a "college" for the training of kindergarten teachers. It was located on Fifth Street north of the Cathedral.

High Street in Columbus.⁴³ Since students came from all over the state, many had an inadequate knowledge of German and practically from the beginning, lectures had to be given in English. When Professor Schmidt died in 1839,⁴⁴ the Seminary Board of Directors immediately authorized the teaching of theology in English. And when they hired Charles F. Schaeffer, formerly pastor in Hagerstown, Maryland to become the second professor and successor to Schmidt, English lectures became the practice if not the rule. Schaeffer was proficient in German but American born, and preferred English. When the Board appointed German born professor Friedrich Winckler in 1841, trouble over the language situation flared up from the English wing. Winckler took a stand on the letter of the constitution⁴⁵ insisting that German was the only authorized language of instruction.⁴⁵ But when in 1841 the Synod met in Zanesville to consider the situation, Schaeffer had already resigned. The committee members reaffirmed "the German language is the only medium through which theological instruction may be given."⁴⁶ It was a Winckler victory, however, one that was bought dearly because the English constituency withdrew financial support and in 1845 the synodical board was forced to settle the vexing " language question " once and for all by recommending that lectures be given in both German and English, but "that German textbooks be used until English translations of safe German texts were available."⁴⁷

The college division of the Seminary dates from 1842-43 when the Board received a charter from the Ohio Legislature to establish " Germania College " for the purpose of preparing teachers for the schools and students for the Seminary. Positive steps toward this goal came in 1847 when the Rev. William F. Lehmann, a master of both German and English, was appointed professor. His sense for the practical eventually led to his becoming president of the combined institutions; by lecturing equally well in both languages until his death in 1880, he almost single handedly settled the language question.⁴⁸ An act of the Ohio Legislature passed on March 2, 1850 constituted Capital University with the same objectives originally set up for the Seminary that "its chief object shall be to educate young men for the ministry of the German Lutheran Church and to educate German teachers of schools so that both the interests of our Church and the education of Germans in general may be promoted and a knowledge of the language and literature of Germany may be diffused."⁴⁹ From the beginning, the University was given to classical principles of education, with Professor Lehmann directing the program of German language instruction and German literature. As early as 1851 an endowment was made to set up a Scandinavian Theological Professorship, and although it was not immediately carried out, it shows that divergent forces were continually at work which threatened to undermine the continued use of German as a living language in the university and the Seminary.

It is no wonder, then, that when the university appealed to the Germans of Columbus for financial backing, the south-siders were skeptical: "Will the Seminary and the University remain German? We must know that first before we contribute "⁵⁰ President Reynolds responded in a public

⁴³ David B. Owens, *These Hundred Years: The Centennial History of Capital University* (Columbus, 1950), 11 ff.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 16-17. Wilhelm Schmidt was born in Germany in 1803 of a Lutheran Pastor and educated at the University of Halle. His tombstone in Greenlawn Cemetery bears the inscription "Wilhelm Schmidt 1803-1839 Unser Lehrer, Unser Vater."

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁴⁸ See Lee, II, 207. See also Heinrich A. Rattermann, " Professor Wilhelm Friedrich Lehmann," *Der deutsche Pionier*, XII (1880), 451-453.

⁴⁹ Owens, 41.

⁵⁰ WB., Feb. 7, 1851.

letter to the *Westbote*: " The teaching in the Seminary will be done in German; German will be studied and used not as a dead but as a living language." ⁵¹ For a time thereafter German did seem to gain ground, and the Reynolds administration fell into unpopularity with the English branch, but the supporters of German could not avoid the fact that Lehmann was the only faculty member who could converse freely in German. For a time the other faculty members moved more and more in English-speaking circles, which in the 1850's also meant less and less in Lutheran circles.

In the meantime the Synod remained dominated by the German faction. The result: President Reynolds was forced to resign. Taking his place in 1854 was Christian Spielmann, born in Baden, one time editor of the *Lutheran Standard*, and at the time a Columbus pastor. When Spielmann's health failed in 1857, however, the Board turned to the University's faithful servant, and in many ways its compromising savior, William F. Lehmann. Born in Markgröningen, Württemberg in 1820 Lehmann had come to the United States at the age of four and had become a genuine representative of both the German and the American cultures. Serving as president of the University until 1880 and as editor of the *Lutherische Kirchenzeitung* for almost the same period, Lehmann was most influential in accomodating the German with the English wings of his church. ⁵³

Both German and English remained firmly with the University, but always in unison with each other. Lehmann delivered addresses in German and English; he arranged conferences to feature a speaker in German, then one in English. Funds poured in for new buildings and the newspaper prospered so well that from time to time profits could be siphoned off for the University. There were laments as late as 1866 that English was being slighted, but in fact spoken English was gaining steadily. ⁵⁴ Books for the library were still solicited from German universities and the periodicals remained largely German. There were two student societies, one for each language group—*Homonoia* for the English element, and *Germania* (still in existence), the latter organized in 1861 to cultivate an active German language by sponsoring written compositions, debates and competitive declamations. The *Germania* society also published a paper, *Thalia*, but it later folded. Commencement programs featured student orations in German and in English but under scrutiny, it seems clear that even with Lehmann at the helm, the German language was fighting for its life.

After the death of Lehmann in 1880, the American born Mathias Loy became president, ⁵⁵ and for a decade led the University along the paths established by Lehmann. In 1894, F. W. Stellhorn, born in Germany and professor of German and history at Capital, became president. As editor of *Kirchenzeitung* and of *Zeitblätter*, Stellhorn was a representative of the German-language supporters, but he was too much the realist to instigate controversy over use of the German language. Directives from the Board indicate that as late as 1900, " reports shall be furnished in German and English," ⁵⁶ but these old by-laws were no longer followed to the letter. In fact, ferment about the language problem was aired in the *Kirchenzeitung* from time to time: "There has been terribly much complaint, both about the German and the English instruction in our educational institutions. The Germans complain it is too English, and the English complain

⁵¹ WB., Mar. 7, 1851.

⁵² Owens, 62.

⁵³ See Owens, Chapter III, " The Lehmann Administration," 73 ff.

⁵⁴ Owens, 104.

⁵⁵ See Charles G. Fry, " Mathias Loy, Patriarch of German Lutheranism in Ohio," (unpubl. diss. Ohio State Univ., 1965).

⁵⁶ Owens, 131.

it is too German." " An indication of the outcome of the controversy is the following action: On May 12, 1902, by an act of the General Assembly of the State of Ohio, the name of the seminary was changed from "The German Lutheran Seminary of the German Lutheran Synod of Ohio and adjacent States," to the new title "The Theological Seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and other States."⁵⁸ But that did not automatically solve the language problem, particularly in the University where continued insistence on the use of German in the classroom and the prevailing view of the Synod that the University should educate for the church and not for secular professions, severely retarded progress. For a time the bickering continued but the eventual outcome of the brooding was that in 1910, the Board officially discontinued the medium of German for classroom instruction.⁵⁹

Rear guard actions to save German proved to no avail. The cost of supporting a dual language program contributed to the eventual demise of German. Way back in 1845 the Synod had considered asking permission of the King of Prussia to raise funds in his kingdom to endow a German professorship at Capital.⁶⁰ But nothing came of it. Again in 1899, the *Kirchenzeitung* proposed a fund to endow a German professorship which would allow one man "to devote his entire time to the German language and literature, in general, by promoting the German with all his heart."⁶¹ It was argued that German was the receptacle of Lutheran theology, that Germany was again the center of culture, and that every pastor should know German. The original proposal was enacted in 1902 when it was resolved that ten percent of the net profits of the Lutheran Book Concern and all the net profits of the *Kirchenzeitung* should be used to endow the German professorship at Capital University. The profits grew to a tidy sum of money by 1909.⁶² But success came too late; for although the money was put away and the endowment maintained, it has never been used, going instead into the general endowment fund.

⁵⁷Sept. 8, 1906 as quoted in Owens, 145.

⁵⁸Willard D. Allbeck, *A Century of Lutherans in Ohio* (Yellow Springs, Ohio, 1966), 279.

⁵⁹Owens, 145. For a larger picture of the German vs. English conflict within the Lutheran Churches of Ohio, see Allbeck, *A Century of Lutherans in Ohio*.

⁶⁰Owens, 205.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 161.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 162.

IV. THE CHURCHES

Second only to the German press and the enthusiastic German organizations, the most influential institution in the German-American community was the church. Generally speaking this held true also for Columbus, although the local German churches were not the cohesive force that they were in many other German settlements. For many reasons it is virtually impossible to delineate the labyrinthine history of Columbus' early German churches. Many things contributed to obscuring the facts: The German population was constantly in flux; whole colonies of Germans were moving on; a restless political and economic spirit pervaded religious spheres; churches sprang up overnight and vanished as quickly; experimental sects, finding the local climate unfavorable, often moved on; some churches altered their names with every shift in the wind; for example the German Evangelical Church became the Evangelical Lutheran Church, then the German Lutheran Church; the First German Protestant Church seems to turn into the Independent Protestant Church. But if nothing else can be said, one thing notable is that new names were often linked to German-English language conflicts.

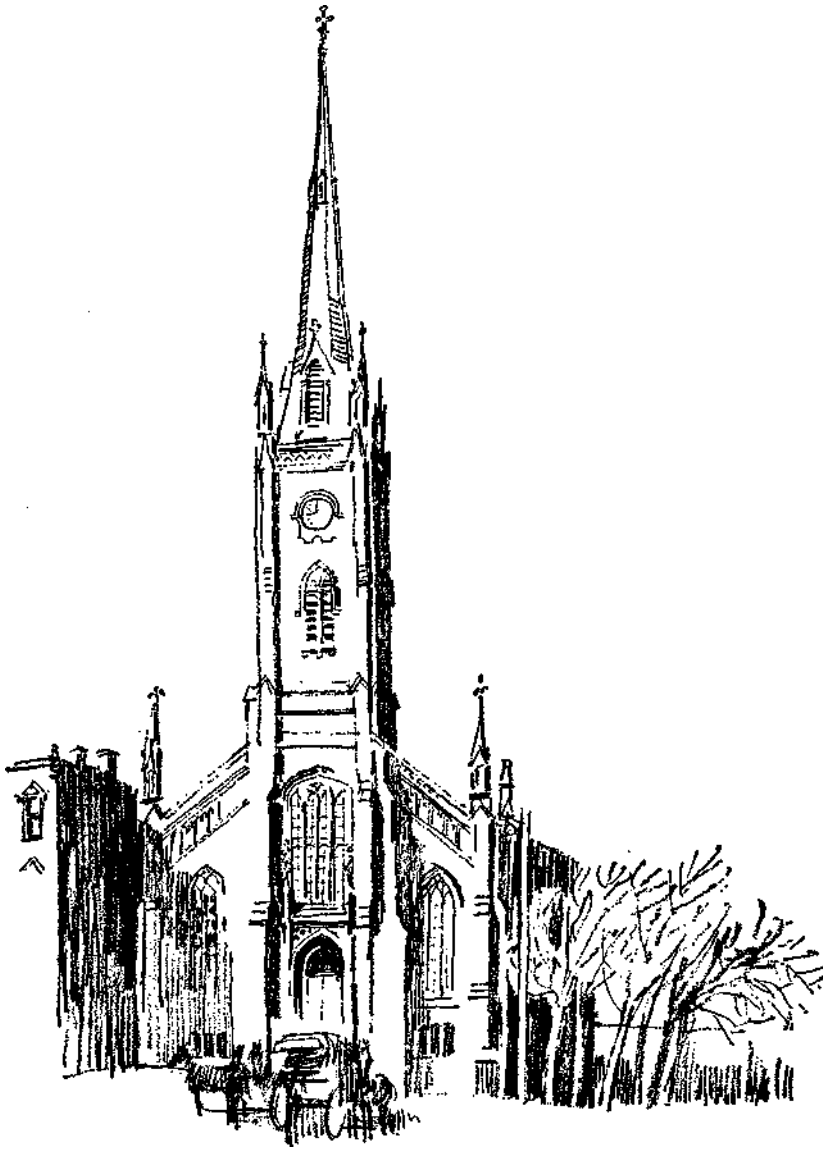
German-speaking Lutherans, mostly sons and grandsons of the pioneer settlers of the Shenandoah Valley and Western Maryland, gathered for German services several years prior to the formal organization of the first *Lutherische Gemeinde* in 1821. This congregation resulted from the mission efforts of Charles Henkel who also became the first pastor. Henkel came from Virginia while the leading layman of the group was Christian Heyl from Maryland.¹ Until 1840 the congregation used only German, but then English was introduced for some services and soon it threatened to squeeze out the German. The man directly responsible for this venture was the Reverend Charles F. Schaeffer formerly of Hagerstown, Maryland. Schaeffer initiated English afternoon services and an English Sunday School. Succeeding Schaeffer was the Reverend Konrad Mees who built St. Paul's Church at Mound and High Streets. When agitation over languages continued in 1845 two new congregations were organized, one called Trinity German Evangelical, and one called the First English Lutheran Church.² Interestingly, it was the great compromiser at Capital University, Professor William F. Lehmann who served for a time as pastor of both new churches. Meanwhile the Reverend Konrad Mees continued as pastor of St. Paul's and served for many years as leader in church and civic affairs.³ It seems that the language controversy plagued most of the local Lutheran churches although often the language was only the scapegoat for deeper theological dissent. Of course, foreign tongues always create unfounded suspicions

¹ Several letters written by David Henkel during the early days of Columbus are included in the Henkel Family Papers which Klaus Wust has recently catalogued and prepared for microfilming by the Alderman Library of the University of Virginia. See also Carolus Henkel, *Eine Predigt über die Kinderzucht, welche gehalten wurde, in Columbus, Ohio, im Jahr unsers Herrn 1821* (New Market, Va., 1822), a booklet of 20 pages. For a biographical sketch of Christian Heyl in English, see *History of Franklin and Pickaway Counties, Ohio* (William Brothers, Publishers, 1880), 583.

² Lee, II, 695. See also Alexander Schem, *Lexicon*, III, 354-865 for a sketch of all the early German churches in Columbus.

³ Lee, II, 695-696. See also Hooper, 196 and Studer, 209.

Among those who do not comprehend them. Frequently caught in the crossfire, the *Westbote* studiously held to its neutral position, reporting church affairs from week to week without editorial comment.⁴



GERMAN LUTHERAN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH

Whatever the exact cause, forty-eight members left St. Paul's in 1847 to join the Germans at Trinity Lutheran, making the Reverend Lehmann their permanent pastor who remained at the helm for decades. St. Paul's

⁴WB., July 81, 1846; Mar. 5, 1847; May 13, 1853.

at Mound and High burned in 1856 but was rebuilt within a year.⁵ Also in 1856 Trinity Lutheran began construction of its church (still standing) at Third and Fulton Streets.⁶ With the German professors from Capital University serving frequently as pastors, the German Lutheran churches prospered throughout the nineteenth century and remained essentially German-speaking; Trinity Lutheran in 1866 opened a school which lasted only two years, but later operated a successful parochial school for dozens of years.

Numerous German protestants rejected the rites of the Lutheran Church. As early as 1843 a group of these had organized the Independent Protestant German Church.⁷ Its members experienced lean years until 1857, during which time they had to lease their new church on Mound near Third to the Trinity German Evangelical Lutheran congregation. The most prominent pastor of the Independent German Protestant Church was the Reverend Christian Heddaeus.⁸ From the first, female members were admitted an equal voice in this church's affairs, and at an early date, the theory of evolutionary creation was taught by its pastor Edward Graf.⁹

St. John's German Protestant Evangelical Church sprang up in 1872 when the two established German Lutheran churches refused to keep members who belonged to secret societies. Leaving the Lutherans, these Christians built their own structure at 59 East Mound Street and continue today under the name of St. John's Evangelical Protestant Church.¹⁰ The German Emmanuel Church, organized in 1857 and located on South Third Street, seems to vanish from history. More is known about the German Methodist Church. Organized in 1843, it took the members only one year to complete their brick church at Third and Livingston. When their new building was completed in 1872, William Nast, the father of German Methodism, spoke at the dedication ceremonies, preaching both in English and in German.¹¹ Another church apparently belonging to the United Brethren in Christ and simply listed as 'the German Church' was organized in 1868 and located south of Main Street east of Seventh. In 1872 it had some twenty-five members and about fifty pupils in the Sunday school.¹²

Since large numbers of German immigrants in Columbus had come from the Rhine territories and from Bavaria, they included many Catholics—some estimates run as high as one half.¹³ These Catholics in Columbus first held services in the home of Henry Nadenbusch. By 1833 there were sixteen Germans among the original twenty-one members.¹⁴ More formal worship began in 1837 when the Reverend Henry Damien Juncker arrived

⁵WB., Dec. 10, 1857 tells of the dedication of the new structure.

⁶For a sketch and brief history of this church see Bill Arter, 61.

⁷Hooper, 203.

⁸Christian Heddaeus was born in 1829 near Worms, Germany, studied theology at the University of Tubingen and later became a tutor for the children of civil officers at the court of the Grand Duchy of Hesse. He arrived in the United States in 1857 spending some time in Pennsylvania before coming to Columbus in 1866. His wife nee Kuder was born near Heilbronn but had come to this country at the age of ten. See biographical sketch in Lee, II, 830-831. In an interview with Monsignor Edmund A. Burkley, present pastor of St. Mary's Catholic Church, I learned that Father Burkley's parents came to Columbus from rural Baden-Württemberg and that their name was once Bürkle. The 87 year old Father Burkley spoke a high grade of German which he learned in South Columbus. A priest for over sixty-two years (all spent at St. Mary's, his home parish) he spoke of referring as a child to the Protestant Churches, not by their names, but as Heddaeus' Church, or Mees' Church, etc.

⁹See WB., April 16, 1891 which reports on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the church. See also Lee, II, 709.

¹⁰Studer, 211-212. See also Souvenir Booklet, "St. John's Evangelical Protestant Church, Columbus, Ohio" Anniversary 1872-1947. The pastors of this church (German title: Deutsche Evangelische Protestantische St. Johannes Gemeinde) were W. E. Purpus 1872-1879, J. J. Weiss 1879-1885, J. Ackermann 1885-1896, J. Pister 1897-1911 who in 1909 introduced a morning English service to be conducted once a month.

¹¹See WB., April 16, 1891 which reports on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the church. See also Lee, I, 282. See also Carl Wittke, *William Nast: Patriarch of German Methodism* (Detroit, 1959).

¹²Studer, 214.

¹³See Sittler, 39.

¹⁴Taylor, 196.

with the assignment to build a stone church. For the next few years, traveling priests served the parish because Father Juncker had to return to his flock in Chillicothe.¹⁵ On February 25, 1843 Father William Schonat, having just arrived from Silesia, became the first permanent pastor. One year later he announced the need for a larger church and gave it the titular designation, Holy Cross. It took a decade to complete the new structure on the corner of Rich and Fifth, but since its dedication in 1853¹⁶ little has changed and it still stands today. Meantime in 1843 the old stone church was converted into a two room schoolhouse and sisters arrived to teach. Holy Cross, the mother of all Catholic life in Columbus, had pastors who were exclusively German until 1877, and all of them had been of German birth.¹⁷ The second Catholic Church in Columbus was St. Patrick's which began in 1852 and comprised about one fourth of the original membership of Holy Cross, essentially the Irish sector.

Until Columbus became a diocese in 1868, it had been served by the Bishop of Cincinnati. Judging from the names of chancery officials, the new episcopal see was immediately dominated by the Irish element. Likewise, the Cathedral parish, St. Joseph's, had one Irish pastor after another, primarily because the parishioners were the Irish spill-over from St. Patrick's parish. Only Bishop Sylvester H. Rosecrans had a Germanic background but as a born American he was more at home with the Irish Catholics than the Germans.¹⁸

What happened to the Irish of St. Patrick's happened two years earlier in 1866 to the Germans of Holy Cross. The first division of Holy Cross to form St. Patrick's was thought necessary because it facilitated worship for the English-speaking members. The second split was more a cellular multiplication. As Holy Cross grew beyond capacity in 1863, the German Catholics in South Columbus made a plea for their own church in a more convenient location. Their wishes were granted when a committee met to consider plans to build a Catholic school somewhere in the southern part of the city.¹⁹ The man put in charge of this building program was Father Francis X. Specht, an assistant at Holy Cross. Father Specht, born in Osnabrück, Germany in 1840 had come to the United States in 1857 and had seen his own labors come to fruition in the new school on the south side in 1865. Immediately Catholics used one room of the school for masses on Sunday and early the next year, began construction of a church. One of the first acts of the new bishop in 1868 was to make the new church independent of Holy Cross, calling it St. Mary's and making Father Specht its first pastor. At the dedication ceremonies on November 29, 1868 Catholics from all over central Ohio gathered to march in procession from Holy Cross down to the new parish where Bishop Rosecrans offered the mass.²⁰

Located in the heart of the German element in Columbus, St. Mary's

¹⁵ See La Vern J. Rippley, "The Chillicothe Germans," *Ohio History*, LXXV (1966), 218.

¹⁶ *WB.*, Sept. 8, 1858.

¹⁷ Taylor, 200.

¹⁸ Bishop Rosecrans was born in Ohio of parents who in 1808 emigrated to the United States from Amsterdam, originally spelling their name Rosenkrantz. Young Sylvester was first a Methodist, studied at Kenyon College, and after becoming a convert to Catholicism, studied under the Jesuits at Fordham. Bishop Purcell of Cincinnati sent him to Rome where he completed his studies for the priesthood, receiving while there his doctorate in divinity in 1852. Before assuming his duties in Columbus, he served as president of the Cincinnati Catholic Seminary and later as Coadjutor Bishop of that diocese. See biographical sketch in Lee, II, 654-665.

¹⁹ St. Mary's Parish, Columbus, Ohio Centennial 1885-1965," 22. See also Lee, II, 647. The members of that original committee were the pastor of Holy Cross, Father J. B. Hemsteger, Louis Zettler, Peter Hinterschitt, John Ranft, Frederick Weber, Frank Wagner, Peter Boehm and Cornelius Lang.²⁰

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 28. Now over one hundred years old St. Mary's Church still stands. Gothic in style, it forms one of the impressive landmarks of today's 'German Village' section of Columbus. Likewise the 1865 school behind the church is still in use. Its corner stone reads "Katholische St. Mariensohule 1865."

was immediately a large parish and prosperous. By 1872 it had built a huge rectory which still stands and more than 250 pupils attended its parochial school annually. Until 1913, Father Specht remained pastor of the parish. In 1855, however, he was appointed to serve also as Vicar General of the diocese,²¹ and was subsequently assisted at the parish by other priests, mostly, but not exclusively German. When Father Specht died in 1913, the bishop delivered a sermon in English and Father Rhode preached in German. Following Father Specht as pastor was Father Joseph M. Wehrle. Already in 1905 Father Edmund A. Burkley (Bürkle) himself a son of the parish, began his priestly career as assistant pastor at St. Mary's. When Father Wehrle died in 1924, Father Burkley became head pastor and continues in that position today, a fascinating link to the Germans who inhabited Columbus before the turn of the century.²²

The story of German Catholicism in Columbus would not be complete without mention of Father Joseph Jessing and the *Ohio Waisenfreund*, a journal he founded and edited for many years. Born in Münster, Westphalia, in 1836, Joseph Jessing attended German schools before enlisting in the Prussian Army. In the war against Denmark, he gained distinction as a sergeant who took part in the successful bombardment of Düppel on April 18, 1864; for his bravery he was decorated by King Wilhelm of Prussia. Retiring to his home, he was recalled to military service in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866. After the war he decided to emigrate to the United States and to study for the priesthood. Landing at Baltimore on July 27, 1867 he went immediately to St. Mary's Seminary in Cincinnati. Ordained a priest by Bishop Rosecrans in 1870, Father Jessing was sent to Sacred Heart Parish in Pomeroy, Ohio.²³

Having served as a regular correspondent from the front and for several years as an editor in Germany, Father Jessing was a natural to undertake the publication of a religious paper of his own, the *Ohio Waisenfreund*. His original objective was to found an orphanage and he started the paper as a means of earning the necessary funds. Beginning May 1, 1873 the first issue of the paper came off the hand press, entitled simply *Ohio*, a name which was soon lengthened to its present title. So successful was the paper that by 1875 Father Jessing had already purchased a house to serve as the orphanage. Only two years later, at the request of Bishop Rosecrans, Father Jessing moved the Orphanage to East Main Street in Columbus.

The *Waisenfreund's* circulation grew extending beyond the borders of Ohio and even beyond those of the United States. In later years the original orphanage was renamed Josephinum. In 1888 the Josephinum became also a college for the priestly education of German-American students who lacked money to study in another seminary. Today the seminary is no longer limited to students with a German background. In 1895 it came under direct papal tutelage and received its present title "The Pontifical College, Josephinum" the only such college in North America and one of only three in the world. In 1931 the College moved from East Main Street eleven miles north to spacious grounds on Highway 23 in the northern sector of the City of Worthington.²⁴

German-Jewish life in the City of Columbus dates back to 1838 when

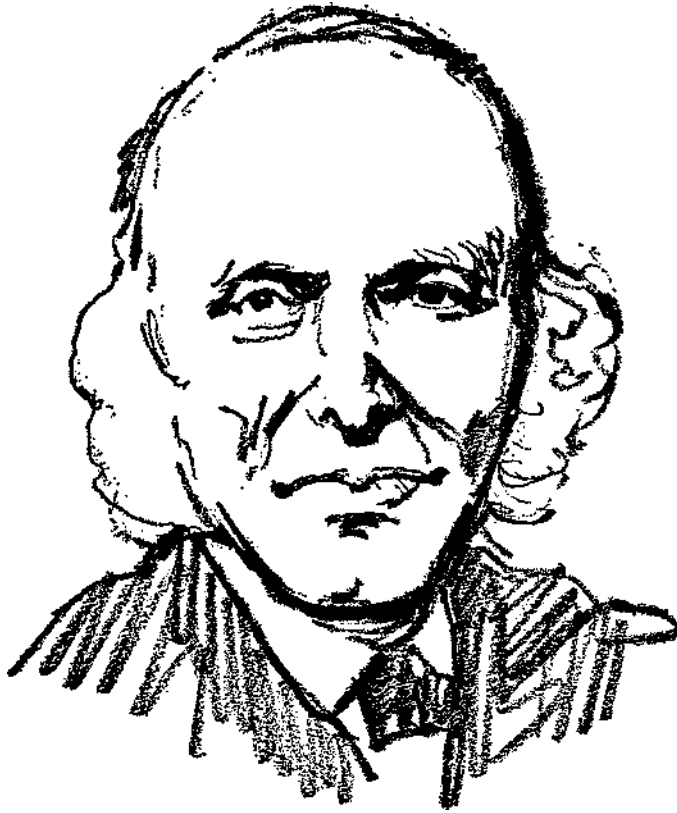
²¹ It is interesting to note that Fr. Specht's predecessor in that office had been Fr. John B. Hemsteger, formerly pastor of the other German Church, Holy Cross. Father Hemsteger had been born in Westphalia in 1827 and attended the seminary in Cincinnati. He became Vicar General in 1868 Lee, II, 642.

²² *Ibid.*, 26. In 1914 Father Wehrle started a parish high school which also continues today. Father Burkley granted the author an interview which filled many gaps in source material.

²³ See "Biographical Sketch of Joseph Jessing," in Lee, II, 828-829.

²⁴ The complete set of the *Waisenfreund* is available at the College Library.

several Jewish families settled in Columbus. But no congregation was organized until 1851 when the orthodox society, B'nai Jeshuren, began with Simon Lazarus serving as rabbi.²⁵ Simon Lazarus immigrated to the United States in 1851. Born near Nuremberg in Bavaria, he had studied to become a rabbi but later founded a clothing store instead. Forty-four years old when he arrived in Columbus, Simon Lazarus immediately began a similar clothing store on High Street south of Town—the site where today's huge department store stands.²⁶



SIMON LAZARUS

At first Jewish meetings were held above the Twin Brothers—Gundersheim—Clothing Store and in other rented halls. The congregation had to grope its way through its first two decades. But in 1870 with local contributions and heavy support from the Eastern States, a temple was erected at Main and Third Streets. The construction was supervised by the

²⁵ Hooper, 216-217 and Studer, 216-219.

²⁶ In a personal letter to the author, Robert Lazarus Sr. explained that Simon Lazarus had two sons: Fred (born in Germany and brought to America at the age of one, the father of Robert Lazarus Sr.) and Ralph who helped their father Simon until his death in 1877. Ralph was a bachelor but Fred had four sons: Simon, Fred Jr., Jeffrey and Robert who carried on the store. The younger Simon became president when Fred died in 1917. When Simon died in 1947, Robert took over, while Fred Jr. moved to Cincinnati in 1946 to head the Federated Department Stores. Jeffrey has just retired as Executive Officer of Shillito's in Cincinnati. Robert continues as Chief Executive of the Columbus store. See also biographical sketches of Fred Lazarus in Hooper, 341 ff. and Taylor, 574-575.

Gundersheimer brothers and by Rabbi Goodman. At the dedication ceremonies several German societies participated and the *Männerchor* seems to have played a significant role. When the new structure was nearing completion, the members invited Dr. J. Wechsler of Nashville to become rabbi. To accept, Wechsler turned down a more lucrative offer from Selma, Alabama. The original temple served the community for thirty years until 1905 when a larger one was built on Bryden Road near Eighteenth Street.²⁷ The early Jewish congregation was entirely German and the list of rabbis shows that it continued to be German for a long time. Two prominent ones who held long tenures after J. Wechsler were David Klein and Joseph Kornfeld. Official records of the Jewish community, the so-called *Protokoll Buch*, were kept in German until the year 1879 when English was adopted.²⁸ For the most part services were in Hebrew. Other Jewish Groups included the Beth Jacob, composed of Russian-German Jews most of whom had emigrated from Germany to South Russia under Catherine the Great but came to America around 1890. Throughout their Russian sojourn and for a time in America, these Jews continued to use German in their records. This community had its synagogue on Washington Avenue, in the heart of the German settlement of South Columbus.²⁹

²⁷ In 1961 this temple became the A. M. E. Zion Church and was renamed Caldwell Temple.

²⁸ *The Columbus Dispatch Magazine*, May 14, 1967 features an article on the Jewish Cemetery on Mount Calvary Avenue which contains stones with German, Hebrew, and English inscriptions. According to Studer, 223, the Jews had purchased a plot somewhere else but Studer notes that it lay within the city limits and a city ordinance forbade burials within the corporation limits. The Jewish people advertised in the German papers for a more suitable plot in 1872, apparently without success. However, in about 1878 entries in the records tell of laying out lots in a newly purchased area with fences conforming to the Catholic Mount Calvary Cemetery. This plot was used until about 1894 when arrangements were completed for Jews to be buried in Green Lawn Cemetery. Between then and 1935 the little cemetery on Mount Calvary had faded from memory. Studer also notes on p. 226 that the East Grave Yard on East Livingston "was formerly used as a public burying place, principally by Germans but of late years [publication date 1873] only for the burial of the very poor, the friendless, and public paupers." The Jewish records show that in 1872 the removal of bodies from this East Graveyard was authorized at congregational expense. An 1865 map of Columbus indeed shows this cemetery on East Livingston, the northern portion of which is labeled "Jewish Cemetery." Presently the site is covered by Children's Hospital. See also William T. Martin, *History of Franklin County*, 392.

²⁹ Hooper, 217.

V. POLITICS

A discussion of the Columbus Germans and politics must start with a few general facts: The City of Columbus increased its population enormously between 1840 and 1850, from 6,048 to 17,871. During the following decade, however, the population remained almost constant. Continuing as a city of about 18,000 for a solid decade, Columbus suffered an economic recession, for which foreigners were implicated. Before 1850, more than thirty annexations were necessary to accommodate the increases. Highways were plotted and plank roads built. The Feeder Canal linked Columbus to major waterways. Railroads converged on the downtown from outlying points in the country. But the Gold Rush of 1849 changed matters and Columbus became overnight little more than a transportation point on the National Road. As such it was eclipsed as a population center. Even settlers who had planned to stay suddenly felt the lure of fortune and moved on. For these and other reasons the Columbus Germans never shared in the political and other fruits of the German Forty-eighters.

The pre-1848 German immigrants were not bursting with interest in political matters, indeed, in their mother country there was little opportunity to participate. Furthermore, most in this earlier group were poorer and less well educated. As a result they were content to be left alone to dwell among their countrymen, if only they could make a living and retain their cherished Old-World patterns of living. When the opinionated German intellectuals were forced out of Germany by the unsuccessful revolutions of 1848, they stormed America with their ideas leaving clouds of dust wherever they went. These Forty-eighters often set themselves up as authorities aggressively criticizing their compatriots of earlier immigrations with such epithets as *Stimmvieh* (animals that followed a leader like cattle).

For the most part the Forty-eighters passed right through Columbus. By and large they preferred larger cities and Columbus was not growing. Consequently the Germans of Columbus remained more Grays (the pre-revolutionary German immigrants) than Greens (post-revolutionary, especially the new intellectuals). The only noteworthy Forty-eighter to come to Columbus was Otto Dresel who arrived in 1853. Like his co-refugees he took an active part in politics, was elected a member of the Ohio Legislature and superintendent of schools.² Unlike his co-refugees of 1848, however, he was not a Republican but a staunch Democrat. He stumped for Douglas against Lincoln and was often the object of attacks, especially during the Civil War.

Generally the older immigrants were supposed to be Democratic and it was considered down right heretical to be Whig. Before 1850 it was the

¹ For a discussion of the Forty-eighters in American politics see Lawrence S. Thompson and Frank X. Braun, "The Forty-Eighters in Politics" in Zucker, *The Forty-Eighters*, 111-166.

² See biographical sketch of Otto Dresel in Zucker, *The Forty-Eighters*, 289-290. See also "Otto Dresel" in *Der deutsche Pioneer*, XIII (1881-1882), 411-419, 482-490. Besides his contribution to public life Dresel was well known for his musical talent and for his poetry and novels, some of which were serialized in the *Westbote*. After a long stay in Columbus Dresel fell victim to a lingering illness. In a deep depression he took his own life with a pistol on January 6, 1881.

unwritten rule of all immigrants to flock to the "friendly" Democratic Party, and the Columbus Germans did so passionately: "A coon-skin could go through the eye of a needle more easily than the mass of the Germans in Franklin County could go over to the Whig Party. . . ."³ It was the influx of Germans into Columbus that pushed the Whig Party to the brink of collapse: "The Whig majority has diminished from election to election largely because of the German vote. . . ."⁴ From its first issue in 1843 and for more than seventy years the *Westbote* remained outspokenly Democratic. Early in its career it had become actively involved for the Democrats by founding the Hickory Club of Franklin County.⁵

In 1844 the Columbus Germans rallied to the slogan, "with Polk, Dallas, and *Tod*; against Clay, Nativism, and Whigery,"⁶ to produce the notable Democratic victory.⁷ Astonishing Democratic triumphs in local elections caused the Germans to be ardently courted in the 1848 presidential campaign. One year later the Democrats took control of both houses of the Ohio Legislature electing forty members, five of which were German.⁸ In 1850 they elected the first Democratic Governor since 1842.⁹

When General Winfield Scott visited Columbus on September 23, 1852 as the unsuccessful Whig candidate for president, he became a welcome target for the Democratic campaign. "The weak, poorly-organized procession that straggled down High Street was taken as a sign of the disintegration of the local Whig Party."¹⁰ The *Westbote* subsequently printed letters, supposedly written by German soldiers who had served under Scott, which indicted him for maltreatment and prejudice against foreigners.¹¹ After such taunts, needless to say, the victory of Franklin Pierce did nothing to quell the growth of Nativism in Columbus. Two years later in 1854 the German vote solidified even more to elect Jacob Reinhard (editor of the *Westbote*) to the City Council after a unanimous nomination by the fifth, the German ward.¹²

The 1856 presidential campaign saw a proud display of hickory poles in front of many a German home and when the *Westbote* erected theirs on August 8, Gutmann's band played, speeches were applauded and a Democratic banner was proudly unfurled atop the pole.¹³ During the heat of the campaign two Democratic meetings brought out German bands and citizens who occupied places of honor behind the Democratic Committee. German breweries contributed heavily and German voters cast ballots eight to one for Buchanan.¹⁴ When depression struck in 1857, the *Westbote* charged: "Our credit is in the hands of the Republican fakers, our stocks have fallen twenty percent, our treasury is empty, and our businessmen have lost confidence in the state. . . ."¹⁵ When Germans from Cincinnati were attending an 1858 Republican convention in Columbus, several casually joined members of the *Männerchor* in a tavern after rehearsal. The visitors suggested that the group go to serenade the Republican Gover-

³WB., Oct. 19, 1848.

⁴WB., Oct. 18, 1843.

⁵WB., Nov. 2, 9, 19, 1848.

⁶WB., June 7, 1844. Doggerels in the German paper read: "Clay, O Weh! Coon wie dumm! Niehr Rumm!"

⁷WB., Nov. 15, 1844.

⁸WB., Dec. 7, 1849.

⁹WB., Oct. 11, 1850.

¹⁰WB., Sept. 24, 1852.

¹¹WB., Oct. 22, 1852.

¹²WB., Mar. 24, 1854.

¹³WB., Aug. 1, 8, 1856, Oct. 31, 1856.

¹⁴WB., Nov. 7, 1856. At one time there were seven breweries in Columbus, which provided work for many South-Side Germans. When prohibition bankrupted these industries the Germans left the South Side in droves. Migratory citizens moved into the large old homes and absentee landlords allowed the area to decay. The "German Village Society" now supervises the restoration of this area.

¹⁵WB., Oct. 9, 1857.

nor Salmon P. Chase. In a flash, a Columbus singer proclaimed: "Gentlemen, if you think that the members of the *Männerchor* will permit themselves to be used as political tools you have been sadly misinformed. We are Democrats, and if you are convinced that we will sell our political convictions for a glass of beer, your stupidity is lamentable."¹⁶

Abraham Lincoln, though recognized by the Columbus Germans after proving himself in the fight, was at first despised, "Who is this Lincoln anyway? Lincoln springs and jumps like a young cat. . . . He places himself before the calm figure of Douglas and talks at him for hours at a time gesturing wildly in his face—so near he could gouge an eye out with his long pointed fingers."¹⁷ Douglas spoke in Columbus in 1859 with little reference to the German vote, and the 1860 campaign was rather quiet. Carl Schurz also spoke and the *Westbote* regretted that such a talented man would support the Republican Party remarking that Schurz was, however, no longer German and that he lacked "the philosophical spirit of a good German lecturer."¹⁸ When Douglas appeared for a rally in October, thousands of Germans marched under the motto "Germans by birth, Americans by choice, Democrats by principle."¹⁹ But although the Germans voted Democratic, they received Lincoln when he stopped on his way to Washington, with the full fanfare of bands and choirs usually accorded only to Democratic celebrities.²⁰ And when the editor of the German paper in Toledo recommended dividing the United States to make the north a German state, and the south a yankee English establishment, the *Westbote* countered that such an idea was unsound and would be regrettable.²¹

Despite the posthumous popularity of Lincoln, he never enjoyed much support from the Germans in Columbus. In 1864, amidst extensive reporting on the war and solid support for the war effort among the Germans, the *Westbote* cheered the nomination of General George B. McClellan on the Democratic ticket. Begging their readers to do their part, the editors wrote "German citizens of Ohio, . . . our country has suffered long enough under the party which has brought so much misfortune to our land. A victory for [the Republicans] would put the last nail in the coffin of freedom. Don't rest until the last vote of every Lincoln opponent has been tallied. Lincoln's policy has been destructive of people and country."²² When Lincoln won anyway, the Germans took consolation in the fact that Columbus and Franklin County went Democratic.

Four years later, after an outpouring of grief for the assassinated Lincoln, the German editors confessed that they were about to support the popular General Ulysses S. Grant for election in 1868, admitting that their real goal was to get a Democratic majority in the House. At the last minute, however, they charged that Grant was in the hands of evil men with far greater intelligence than his own, and that they were, therefore, casting their support to Horatio Seymour, the Democratic candidate.²³ Praising local Germans for good attendance at the Columbus State House for Democratic rallies, the paper urged them to vote a straight Democratic ticket. Emil Rothe, Forty-eighter and Wisconsin journalist, appeared to speak on behalf of the Democratic Party, but when even that did not carry

¹⁶ WB. July 22, 1858.

¹⁷ WB. Sept. 2, 1858.

¹⁸ WB. Mar. 22, 1860.

¹⁹ WB. Oct. 4, 1860.

²⁰ WB. Feb. 21, 1861.

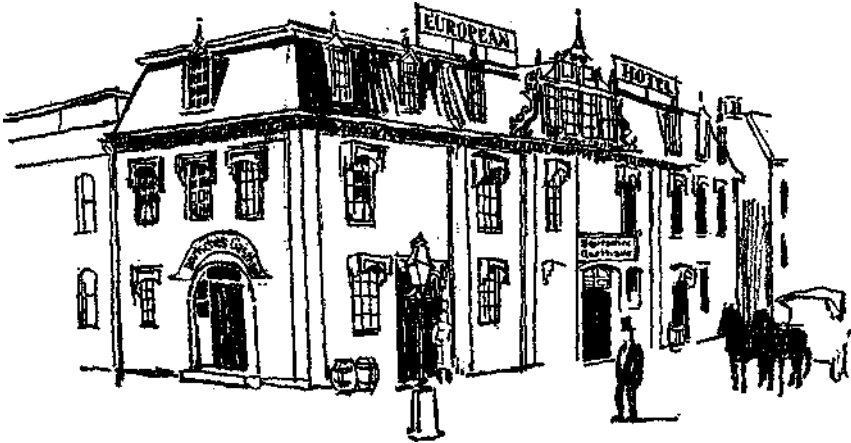
²¹ WB. Dec. 18, 1860.

²² WB. Oct. 6, 1864. We must correct Arndt-Olson, 477, who report that the *Westbote* was Republican from 1860-79.

²³ WB., Sept. 10, 1868.

the day, the *Westbote* again rejoiced that at least the Democrats achieved a 600 vote majority in Franklin County²⁴ and when Grant was swept into office, the blame was laid at the feet of those who did not vote.

The year 1871 witnessed the great German peace festival of May 1 when the German victory in the Franco-Prussian War promised a period of ascendancy for Germans all over the world. To the Columbus Germans, the victory signalled a triumph of German culture and a long reign of peace in the world. Public opinion in the United States had for years considered Napoleon III the trouble maker of Europe. Now that he was eliminated, many, including those not always in agreement with the policies of Bismarck, felt a relaxation of world tensions.



DEUTSCHES GASTHAUS UM 1870

On the morning of May 1, artillery salutes awakened the city early in the morning, German flags waved in front of German homes and a large wheel showing the German national colors revolved in front of Ambos Hall.²⁵ A triple arch of honor was erected at the entrance to City Park where later in the day a large "Peaceful Oak Tree" was brought in a special procession led by the Hemmersbach band and planted as a memorial to peace. The parade which moved through the streets to the park displayed such units as a wagon drawn by six white horses each led by a page. Banners on coaches read "Peaceful Germania." One float carried a large figure of the German emperor on a throne where he was flanked

²⁴WB., Oct. 16, 1868.

²⁵ See WB., May 4, 11, 1871. *Columbus Dispatch*, May 1, 1871. See also Studer, 94, The grand marshal of the parade was Dr. O. Zirkel who rode in a Prussian Husar's uniform. Speeches were given by Heinrich Olnhausen J. H. Heitmann, Pastor Heddaeus and Dr. Wirth as well as others. In the evening the Thalia Verein and the Turners gave the *Zar und Zimmermann* production.

Many houses had inscriptions mounted on placards—for example above the Strödter's *Männerchor* Hall

Ein einzig Deutschland, stark und frei,
Von Vierzig Millionen,
Ist heute unser Feldgeschrei
Und Friede den Nationen.

But the Forty-Eighter, Otto Dresel posted the following:

Ein einzig starkes Deutschland! Schall es heute,
Aus tausend deutschen Kehlen weit und breit,
Kein Preussen, Sachsen, Bayern!
Schon recht! Nur wiensch ich, dass in kurzer Zeit
Wir neben Kaiserreich und Einigkeit
Auch Deutschlands Freiheit feiern.

by maidens representing peace and liberty. Other units honored notable German contributors to civilization: Johannes Kepler, Albrecht Dürer, Johannes Gutenberg, the Fugger Family, the Rothschild Family and others.

In 1872 the Democrats regained new life, turning out 2,000 marchers with torch lights and three cavalry companies to rally to the cause of Horace Greeley.²⁸ Ulysses S. Grant, the Germans felt, was "the friend and protector of a corrupt army of officials" whereas "Greeley had all his life been a friend of the worker." When Grant won despite their efforts, the editors charged Grant followers with stealing ballot boxes even though Columbus went for Greeley by nearly one thousand votes.²⁷

The 1876 Republican Convention was reported broadly in the *Westbote* primarily because Governor Rutherford B. Hayes of Ohio was nominated. But it was Samuel J. Tilden, the Democratic nominee, whom the paper supported. On October 7, there was a mass Democratic parade of over 2,000 torch bearers, 500 men on horseback carrying Chinese lanterns, and a gathering of about 8,000 to hear speeches from the steps of the Capitol. When Hayes carried Ohio despite these displays, the Germans cried victory because the Republican majority in the state was held to a mere 6,000 votes instead of the minimum majority of 40,000 which had been predicted.²⁸

Similar rallies for Winfield S. Hancock in 1880, with their mile-long processions, could not turn the Republican tide, and when James A. Garfield captured the White House, the Columbus Germans ignored the fact by boasting of the handy Democratic win in Franklin County.²⁹ Finally achieving a Democratic presidential victory with Grover Cleveland in 1884, the *Westbote* was quite ecstatic. To be sure, Ohio had voted Republican by some 11,000 votes but Franklin County was safely Democratic and the German paper covered the front page with a rooster crowing for Cleveland.³⁰

The year 1888 brought jubilation when Columbus Senator Alien G. Thurman was nominated for Vice-President. The campaign was rather uninspiring, however, and much interest was diverted from politics by the Ohio Centennial Exposition, and by the Columbus encampment of the Grand Army veterans. Both events occupied the month of September when some 70,000 veterans and 173 musical units massed to compete for the attention of the news media. Therefore, when Benjamin Harrison won, the *Westbote* simply remarked that the Democrats would easily survive, and focused instead on the fanatical temperance advocates who were linked with the Republican Party.³¹ There was also another reason for slackened enthusiasm in politics: the year 1888 marks the first major election covered by the *Westbote* under new editorship. In 1884 the indefatigable Jacob Reinhard and Friedrich Fieser had turned over the reins to Jacob's son Henry. Under Henry Reinhard the opinionated editorial views of an older school and a former generation were definitely absent from the paper.

For the first time in 1892 the *Westbote* printed a ballot facsimile to explain to its constituency the mechanics of voting. Needless to say, it printed only a Democratic ballot showing the names of Grover Cleveland for president and Adlai E. Stevenson for Vice-President. When the results were in, showing that Columbus had voted Democratic by a slim ninety-five votes and that Ohio had gone Republican by over 23,000, the editors composed a long poem in German singing the virtues of Grover Cleveland.³²

²⁶WB., Sept. 12, 28, 1872.

²⁷WB., Nov. 16, 1872.

²⁸WB., June 22, 1876, Oct. 12, 19, 1876.

²⁹WB., Sept. 16, Oct. 21, Nov. 11, 1880.

³⁰WB., Nov. 6, 1884, Oct. 23, 1884.

³¹WB., June 12, Sept. 20, Nov. 8, 1888.

³²WB., Oct. 18, Nov. 10, 17, 1882

In 1896 the *Westbote* pleaded with its readers to vote a straight Democratic ticket, regardless of their feelings about free silver. But when William McKinley dragged the Republicans of Franklin County to victory



MAYOR GEORGE J. KARB, 1891-1895
First German Mayor of Columbus

on his coat tails, defeat was readily admitted. The editor explained that the nonsense of free silver had confused the voters.³³ The re-election of McKinley in 1900 created little stirring. However, in its election issue the *Columbus Express* dwelt on the great power wielded by the Germans

³³ WB., Oct. 80, Nov. 3, 6, 1896.

in metropolitan centers where they numbered over 100,000. The columnist pointed out that in the United States the Germans totaled over ten million or eighteen percent of the population and that they were therefore a definite force with which politicians had to reckon.³⁴

The overwhelming majority for Theodore Roosevelt in 1904 evoked little comment. It was passively reported that Roosevelt's 11,000 majority in Franklin County put the President 1,000 votes ahead of the local Republican ticket, and only the City of Columbus itself went Democratic.³⁵ By 1908 the German editorials were still recommending a Democratic ticket, but in the same issues they were running article after article on the former achievements of Germans in America. Their positions in politics and their contributions to the Civil War were popular topics. Between the lines of these articles one can read the telling fact that the Germans were on the wane as a powerful autonomous block in American political life. In the German papers of Columbus this gradual shift in approach is definitely visible between 1904 and 1908. When in 1908 Ohio elected Judson Harmon its new Democratic Governor by a 26,000 vote majority, the editor splashed a big eagle across the front page headlining "Harmon and Liberality Win in Ohio." Cheers went up that the Germans of Ohio had withstood their trial by fire. The national event that Republican William H. Taft, also an Ohioan, won the Presidency, appeared only on the second page.³⁶

During the summer of 1912 the *Westbote* continued to predict the defeat of President Taft but it was slow in warming up to Woodrow Wilson. Complying with the trend noticed in all German-American papers around the turn of the century, the German press in Columbus continued to shun bold positions in politics. Late in August, the Democratic Party was shunted from the spotlight by reports on the Twelfth *Sängerfest* of the North American *Sängerbund*, and more articles praising the greatness of older German immigrants.

The Balkan War and Turkish movements in that area snatched the center stage. Editors of the Columbus German papers were beginning on the one hand to arouse in their German readers an interest in world affairs, and on the other, to evoke a nostalgia for their ethnic past. The Germans had had a distinguished history as a distinct immigrant group which now began to lose its own identity. Gradually they were becoming indistinguishable.

Finally, after nearly seventy years of vigorous support for the Democratic Party, the editors of the *Westbote* announced on October 29, 1912 that "we have reached the point where we now place party on the sidelines and have our eyes open only for the common good of the country. For this reason we are for James M. Cox for Governor of Ohio, not because he is a Democrat, but because we think his platform is the correct one and because Cox has always been a man of honor and keeps his word. We believe in the rule of the people by the people. . . . No longer do we urge you to vote for a party but for men only."³⁷ When both Wilson and Cox won, the paper pronounced that "the people have voted for men, not for parties."³⁸

During the First World War the Germans of Columbus were at first quick to swallow the German explanation about the causes of the war. As German-Americans they realized early that the British propaganda

³⁴ *Columbus Express*, Nov. 10, 1900.

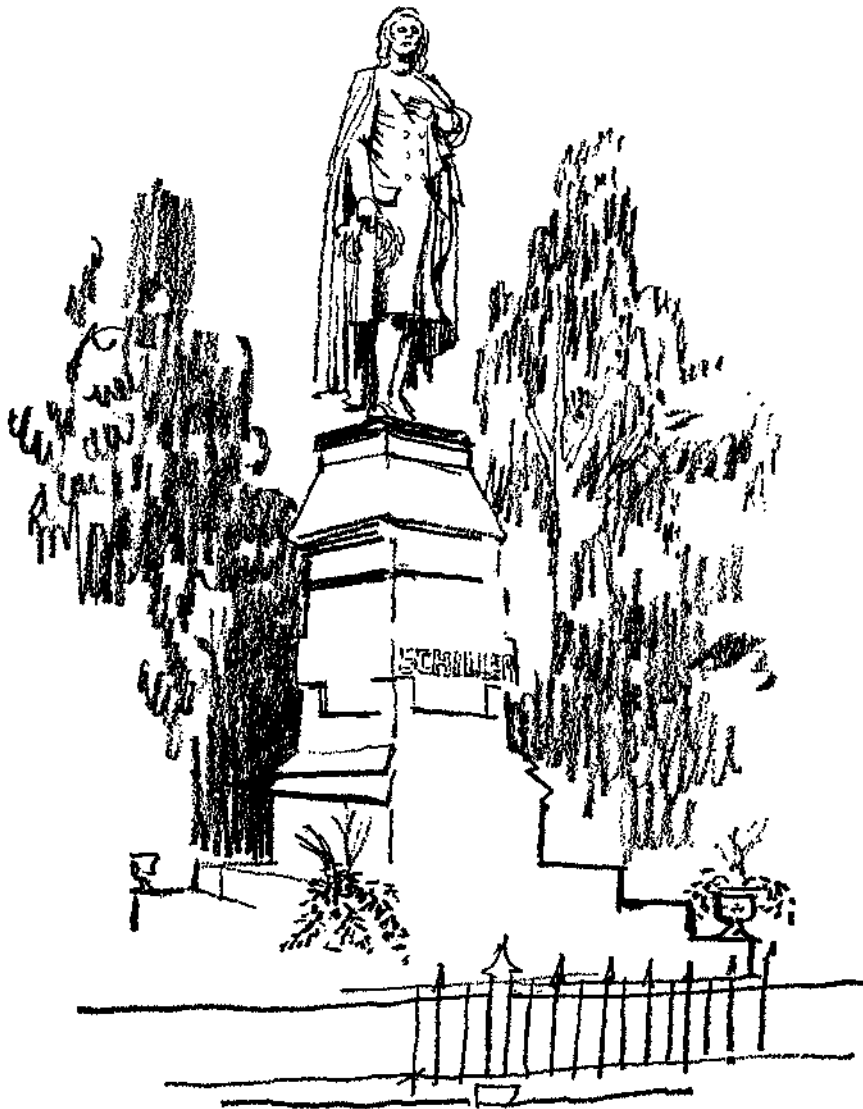
³⁵ *WB.*, Nov. 11, 1904.

³⁶ *WB.*, Oct. 2, 1908, Nov. 6, 1908.

³⁷ *WB.*, June 21, 1912; Aug. 30; Oct. 8, 22, 29, 1912.

³⁸ *WB.*, Nov. 8, 1912.

machine was responsible for partiality in the American press. In Columbus there were still about seven thousand German and Austrian immigrants when the war broke out. More lived in Franklin County and tens of



SCHILLERPARK

thousands more were of German stock. Mostly these citizens had been Americanized. As such they bothered less about German victories in Europe than about social freedom and economic opportunities at home. Thus, absorption into the mainstream of America was already a *fait accompli* by the time the pressure against the Germans in America began to build

up. As for the reaction of Ohio's German-Americans during World War I, this story has been competently told by Carl Wittke and others.³⁹

The Columbus Honor Roll for the First World War includes among the dead a significant number of German names, some of which can be found in the early annals of Columbus history.⁴⁰ But on the home front Germans were maligned and the charges of sabotage were multiplied. The study of German in the public schools was banished and former teachers of German were kept under the strictest surveillance. Proof of allegedly disloyal utterances resulted in speedy discipline or removal, regardless of previous services. On April 19, 1918 lighted woodpiles were provided on East Broad Street where citizens were to bring their German books to be burned. Reserve Guards stood by to prevent violence. In Schiller Park German-bred dogs were slaughtered and more books were burned at the foot of the Schiller statue. The Board of Education sold its German textbooks for fifty cents a hundred weight with the restriction that they be used only for pulp—a venture that netted some \$400. The City Council changed the name of Schiller Park to Washington Park, Germania Park to Mohawk Park.⁴¹ Streets formerly called Schiller, Germania, Kaiser, and Bismarck became Whittier, Steward, Lear, and Lansing respectively. Petitions for name changes were countless and few organizations resisted or protested. The Order of Druids as well as certain Protestant and Catholic Churches, which had been using the German language in rituals for over seventy years, substituted English posthaste. Summing up the frenzy best was the First German Methodist Church which switched its name to First Zion Methodist and erected a tablet with the inscription: "We stand for God and Christ, Our Country and Flag, Humanity and Democracy."⁴²

By the time the furor abated, the German element as a separate entity in Columbus had all but vanished. Delineating an identifiable German population after World War I, proves as impossible as bagging fog. Where you think you see it thickest, it eludes you fastest. Today's Columbus Germans are a mere wisp of a once substantial and cohesive element. They have become "Americans of German descent" in a community whose older inhabitants are still amazingly aware of the influence German immigrants exerted on the growth of their city.

The illustrations were made by
DONALD L. DODRILL of Columbus, Ohio.

³⁹ Carl Wittke, *German-Americans and the World War; With Special Emphasis on Ohio's German-Language Press* (Columbus, 1936); see also Alice Good, "Anti-German Sentiment in Ohio during the World War" (unpubl. M. A. Thesis, Ohio State Univ., 1935); Carl Wittke, "Ohio's German Language Press and the Peace Negotiations," *The Ohio Archeological and Historical Quarterly*, XXIX (1929), 49-79.—For the impact of the World War on the Germans in Baltimore see Dieter Cunz, *The Maryland Germans* (Princeton, 1948), 895-402.

⁴⁰ See Hooper, 95. We mention only a few names: Eichenlaub, Flesher, Herbst, Bauer, Biederman, Graessle, Kaiser, Reieheneder, Eberst, Rosenbaum, Reinhard, Seltzer, Wolfersberger, Zimmermann, Schapfle and others.

⁴¹ The name Schiller was returned to the Park in 1956. Mohawk has now become Beck Square.

⁴² Hooper, 83.

