

German Immigration to Dubois County, Indiana, During the Nineteenth Century

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In the nineteenth century the German immigrants made an indelible impression on a number of regions in the United States. Their political, cultural, and social influence has made its imprint on many American institutions. Although the Germans had very little to do with the framing of the Constitution of the United States, they have had a part in the development of the republican form of government which the Constitution established. They have been influential in some of the more important and progressive political contests of the nineteenth century, such as the abolition of slavery, civil service reform, sound money, party reforms, and independence in voting.¹ The American educational system from the kindergarten to the university was influenced by the Germans. Their social influence may be found in the cultivation of those arts and habits which elevate and add to the happiness of living. Art and music were especially fostered by the Germans.²

As the following letter indicates, Adolf Brandeis was much impressed by the musical talent of a group of Germans while he visited Madison, Indiana, in the fall of 1849:

I cannot complain of boredom as there are six or eight German students in our house, some of them from Vienna and some from Saxony, who have just come over here. As they do not know what else to do for a living, they think of travelling about and giving vocal concerts. Some of them are excellent musicians with good voices, and we have singing and music all day long. Besides that, they are fine fellows.³

Albert B. Faust, the historian, made this complimentary statement about the Germans in America:

The German traits are such as to unite the various formative elements of the American people more securely and harmoniously. In common with the English stock of New England, the German is inspired

¹ Albert B. Faust, *The German Element in the United States* (2 vols., Boston, 1909), II, 200; Edward A. Ross, *The Old World in the New* (New York, 1914), 57.

² Faust, *The German Element in the United States*, II, 250-252; Ross, *The Old World in the New*, 54.

³ Josephine C. Goldmark, *Pilgrims of '48* (New Haven, Connecticut, 1930), 221.

with idealism, the origin of education, music, and art; he shares with the Scot a stern conscience and a keen sense of duty; he touches the Irish with his emotional nature, his joy of living, and his sense of humor; and, thus linking the great national elements together, the German provides the backbone, with the physical and mental qualities of vigor, sturdiness, and vitality, and the moral tone of genuineness, virility, and aspiration.⁴

The largest contribution to the population of the United States for a period of a hundred years from 1820 to 1919, was made by a group of ten nations, most of which were located in western Europe.

THE TEN LEADING COUNTRIES⁵

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|
| Germany | 5,494,690 | England | 2,434,144 |
| Ireland | 4,348,759 | Canada and Newfoundland | 1,882,661 |
| Italy | 4,100,735 | Sweden | 1,110,377 |
| Austria-Hungary | 4,068,451 | Norway | 727,139 |
| Russia | 3,279,254 | Scotland | 557,759 |

Immigration to the United States in this century showed an almost steady increase until the decade of the nineties. A similar decline occurred in the second decade of the twentieth century.⁶

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|-----------|---|-----------|-----------|---|-----------|
| 1820-1830 | - | 151,824 | 1871-1880 | - | 2,812,191 |
| 1831-1840 | - | 599,125 | 1881-1890 | - | 5,246,613 |
| 1841-1850 | - | 1,713,251 | 1891-1900 | - | 3,687,564 |
| 1851-1860 | - | 2,598,214 | 1901-1910 | - | 8,795,386 |
| 1861-1870 | - | 2,314,824 | 1911-1919 | - | 5,305,810 |

German immigration during this same period did not follow exactly the same pattern. It was quite large in the decades of the fifties and the eighties, after which it declined sharply.⁷

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|-----------|---|---------|-----------|---|-----------|
| 1820-1830 | - | 7,729 | 1871-1880 | - | 718,182 |
| 1831-1840 | - | 152,454 | 1881-1890 | - | 1,452,970 |
| 1841-1850 | - | 434,626 | 1891-1900 | - | 505,152 |
| 1851-1860 | - | 951,667 | 1901-1910 | - | 341,498 |
| 1861-1870 | - | 787,468 | 1911-1919 | - | 142,944 |

⁴ Faust, *The German Element in the United States*, II, 475.

⁵ United States Department of Labor, *Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration* (1930), Tables 83 and 84, pp. 202-205. The figures for Canada and Newfoundland from 1820 to 1898 included all British North American possessions. From 1820 to 1868 the figures for Norway and Sweden were combined.

⁶ United States Department of Labor, *Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration* (1930), Tables 83 and 84, pp. 202-205.

⁷ *Ibid.*

German immigration of the nineteenth century may be divided into three periods. The first period would include all those who came before 1848 and who were frequently referred to as the "Grays." This period attracted many peasants and laborers who were accustomed to hard work and who did not possess a high standard of living. Some of the better educated who came during this time, in spite of hard work, did not achieve success. Gustav Körner, who came to America in 1833, was an outstanding leader of the "Grays" and was contemptuously referred to as "der graue Gustav." The second period, from 1848 to 1865, attracted mostly merchants, manufacturers, and professional people who were better-known as the "Greens" or "Forty-eighters." This group was very influential in the political and cultural development of the United States. The most outstanding German-American of this period was Carl Schurz. Many of these immigrants entered the field of journalism and at one time controlled almost half of the German newspapers in the United States. The "Forty-eighters" were disappointed in the efforts put forth by those who had migrated before 1848 in maintaining German institutions, and through their newspapers attacked the "Grays." The third period began after the Civil War, 1866, and represented a better educated working class. Many who were identified with this period were interested in the development of the commerce and manufactures of the United States. Then too, there were those who became prominent in technical and professional fields.⁸

It is not possible to give the total immigration figures for the first period because no records were available prior to 1820. From 1820 to 1847 the addition of Germans to the population of the United States was 397,213; from 1848 to 1865 there was a considerable increase making the total for that period 1,382,315; and from 1866 to 1899 there was

⁸ Friedrich Münch, "Die drei Perioden der neueren deutschen Auswanderung nach Nordamerika," *Der Deutsche Pionier* (18 vols., Cincinnati, 1869-1887), I (1869), 243-246; Carl F. Wittke, *We Who Built America* (New York, 1940), 193; Faust, *The German Element in the United States*, I, 590; Ernest Bruncken, "German Political Refugees in the United States during the Period from 1815 to 1860," *Deutsch-Amerikanische Geschichtsblätter von Illinois* (Chicago, 1901-), III (October, 1903), 44; George M. Stephenson, *A History of American Immigration* (Boston, 1926), 48; "German Emigration to America," *The North American Review* (248 vols., Boston, New York, 1815-1940), LXXXII (1856), 266-267.

again an increase with a total of 3,212,213 for the third period.⁹ Among those who emigrated during the first two periods were political refugees and intellectual men who gave the movement color. Many of them were young people with high ideals which they had not been able to realize in the old country.¹⁰

A number of factors may account for the German immigration. Here consideration must be given to events in Germany as well as in America. Associations were formed in Germany to settle a state and secure its admission to the Union as the twenty-fifth member of the Confederacy. The object was to form a German state beyond the ocean where the German language and customs might be preserved, as well as to receive those whose hopes and claims to liberty and right had been denied in old Germany.¹¹ The associations were interested in a particular area in America. It appears as if more remote districts were sought in order that there might not be too much interference by Americans. Among the associations formed were the Giessener Auswanderungsgesellschaft which was interested in settling a German state in Arkansas, and the Mainzer Adelsverein which planned to develop Texas.¹²

The Giessen Association was formed in 1833. It had a membership of several hundred individuals from Hesse, Westphalia, and the Saxonies, among whom were many wealthy and educated men. In the spring of 1834 a delegation from this company embarked in two ships at Bremen for the United States. They had the necessary resources to carry out their plan, but because of inexperienced leaders the project failed. Disagreements among the various individuals arose, and at each stopping place a group would leave. The remainder settled in the vicinity of St. Louis. They brought a bell along from Germany for the proposed town hall, but it was eventually hung in a barn. A costly telescope which was brought for the intended observatory was placed in a log cabin.¹³

⁹ "Statistical Review of Immigration to the United States, 1820 to 1910," in *Senate Documents*, 61 Cong., 3 Sess., VII, no. 747 (serial no. 5865), 66-92.

¹⁰ Stephenson, *A History of American Immigration*, 43.

¹¹ *Stuttgart Universal Gazette*, September 2, 1832, quoted in Niles' *Weekly Register* (Baltimore, 1811-1837), XLIII (November 3, 1832), 148.

¹² Wittke, *We Who Built America*, 197-198.

¹³ Franz Löher, *Geschichte und Zustände der Deutschen in Amerika* (Cincinnati, 1847), 278.

In 1842 among the schemes which had evolved in Germany for settling emigrants in America was that patronized by certain noblemen. An association was formed with Count Castel in charge. In the following year Count Waldeck was sent as an agent to Texas. He accomplished very little outside of appropriating a slave plantation for himself. He was dismissed, and the next year the association became very active. Under the title of Mainzer Adelsverein, a charter was granted by the Duke of Nassau, who assumed the protectorate. The plan for inviting emigrants was published. It offered to each adult who subscribed \$120, a free passage, and forty acres of land; to a family who subscribed \$240, a free passage, and eighty acres of land. The association further stated that it would provide log houses, stock, and tools at reasonable prices, and erect public buildings and roads for the settlement. The land that was purchased was in the heart of the savage country and the enterprise failed.¹⁴

Societies were also organized in America to promote German settlement. Among the most outstanding ones were the Pittsburgh Homestead Association, the Cincinnati German Association, Germania in New York, and the Chicago Landverein, which was influential in the settlement of New Ulm, Minnesota.¹⁵

On January 24, 1835, Germania was organized in New York. Its objects were to maintain a strong German character, German customs and education, to make an effort to improve conditions in Germany, and to assist refugees and immigrants with advice and material aid.¹⁶

Since a grant of land had been made to 235 Poles in 1834,¹⁷ Franz Löher states Germania also sent a memorial to Congress requesting land for German refugees and offering to pay later the minimum price. Congress, however, did not grant their request. They then planned to direct German settlers to one state of the Union, get control of it, and make it a German state. They could not agree on a location, as some wanted Texas, others Oregon, while most of the group favored states between the Mississippi and the

¹⁴ Frederick L. Olmstead, *A Journey Through Texas* (New York, 1857), 173-175.

¹⁵ Wittke, *We Who Built America*, 198.

¹⁶ Gustav Körner, *Das Deutsche Element in den Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika, 1818-1848* (Cincinnati, 1880), 108.

¹⁷ *United States Statutes at Large*, IV, 743.

Great Lakes. The society finally dissolved, and the members scattered over the United States, some establishing colonies, and others becoming newspaper editors.¹⁸

In August, 1836, in Philadelphia a meeting was held in the Penn Hotel for the purpose of forming a German state. In a later meeting a constitution was adopted and directors were chosen. This association later bought over twelve thousand acres of land in Gasconade County, Missouri, and founded the town of Hermann on the Missouri River. Only a few settlers arrived in the fall of 1837, but in 1838 quite a large group arrived.¹⁹

During the first months of 1854, a number of Chicago businessmen supported a movement to pass a law to create the office of commissioner of emigration, whose task it would be to travel through Germany in order to direct emigrants to Illinois. Since the law was never passed, the Germans of Chicago organized a society which employed an agent to take care of the new German immigrants when they arrived at that city.²⁰

After the Civil War many of the Southern states directed their attention to white immigrants to aid reconstruction in the South. In Charleston an immigrant aid society was founded and shares were offered to the people which might be paid for either in money or land. Farms and plantations were acquired, and those in charge sought to induce peasants from Europe to become settlers. In Alabama the legislature incorporated a German Association which was expected to promote German immigration to that state by advertising in European papers the possibilities of the soil for white labor.²¹

The federal government was interested in the problem of immigration as a "Special Report on Immigration," was made in 1870 by Edward Young, chief of the Bureau of Statistics. The document contained information about prices and rental of land, staple products, facilities of access to market, cost of livestock, advantages of the particular dis-

¹⁸ Löher, *Geschichte und Zustände der Deutschen in Amerika*, 281-282.

¹⁹ Körner, *Das Deutsche Element*, 70-71.

²⁰ Arthur C. Cole, *The Era of the Civil War, 1848-1870 (Centennial History of Illinois*, 5 vols., Springfield, Illinois, 1918-1920, III, 1919), 23-24.

²¹ Ellis P. Oberholtzer, *History of the United States since the Civil War* (5 vols., New York, 1917-1937), I, 80.

strict, living expenses, and kinds of labor in demand in Western and Southern states.²² In 1872 at the expense of the federal government ten thousand copies of the above-mentioned document were printed in German and distributed in Europe.²³ Such action on the part of the federal government, no doubt, would make an impression on those who had thought of migrating to America, and it is likely others would also become interested.

Because entire villages were depopulated, the governments of Germany became alarmed, and, therefore, placed a quarantine against all American publications and prohibited American-German papers in their dominion. Newspapers were not permitted to receive or accept advertisements which might induce or encourage emigration, and no placards relative to emigration could be posted in public places.²⁴ The emigration, nevertheless, appears to have continued.

A review of conditions in Germany may indicate why emigration took place on such a large scale. After the Napoleonic Wars famine and sickness as well as severe winters brought hardships to many a German home. In the spring, therefore, after the snow had disappeared from the roads and the people could travel with more ease one heard from all over Germany "Nach Amerika! Nach Amerika!"²⁵

In 1816 the ports of Holland were filled with Germans, and in the spring of 1817 it appeared as if southern Germany might be depopulated. In a fortnight four thousand bade farewell to Baden, and Württemberg in the same year lost sixteen thousand. The banks of the Rhine were crowded with people who did not have the means to emigrate. Some thirty thousand returned from Holland because of insufficient funds to defray the cost of the voyage to America. In 1818 the emigration fever again took its toll. Thirty thousand went down the Rhine through Mainz, and Württemberg

²² "Special Report on Immigration," in *House Executive Documents*, 42 Cong., 1 Sess., no. 1 (serial no. 1470).

²³ "Printing of Report on Immigration in the Swedish Language," in *House Executive Documents*, 42 Cong., 1 Sess., no. 287 (serial no. 1615). The title of this document is misleading.

²⁴ "Emigration and Immigration, Reports of the Consular Officers of the United States," in *House Executive Documents*, 49 Cong., 2 Sess., no. 157 (serial no. 2483), 154; *Niles' National Register* (Washington, Baltimore, or Philadelphia, 1837-1849), LXIX (December 13, 1845), 226; *ibid.*, LXXII (July 24, 1847), 325.

²⁵ Löher, *Geschichte und Zustände der Deutschen in Amerika*, 254.

again contributed nine thousand. In 1817 and 1818 about sixty thousand left the fatherland while in 1819 only twenty thousand. The decrease may be attributed to a better harvest and a milder winter. In the next five years the emigration continued but alternated between six and twelve thousand.²⁶

Newspapers and letters from America painted beautiful pictures about the land. No doubt, letters similar to those written by Gottfried Duden were circulated. A few paragraphs are here quoted from Duden's Thirteenth Letter:

I must impress emphatically upon you that the meaning of the words "fertile soil" is very different in this region from what it is in Germany. Good soil, or soil of the first order does not require any fertilizer for the first hundred years of its use, and during the first decades is too rich even for wheat. . . . Average soil, or soil of the second class is still of such a nature, that during the first twelve to twenty years fertilizer can not increase the yield of grain. . . .

I am unable to describe the impression, which my wanderings, for days, in this river valley have made upon me. For hundreds of miles one can wander among these giant trees without being touched by a single sunbeam. The ground is so black from the humus that has accumulated since primitive times, that it seems one were walking on beds of coal. I have seen grapevines, whose trunks, over a foot in diameter, rose straight up for more than a hundred feet and then spread their densely foliated vines over the tops of elms.

There are several varieties of grapevines here, and many hills are so covered with them that in a short time a wagon load of grapes can be gathered. . . .²⁷

The great flood of the Rhine in 1825, scanty harvests, and a severe winter in other regions encouraged emigration. In 1829 and 1830 when conditions improved in Germany emigration decreased. In the spring of 1832 many were again on the move. One day seven trains with seven hundred emigrants from the vicinity of Stuttgart went through Koblenz, and in the neighborhood of Heilbronn one thousand went at once to America.²⁸

In 1846-1847 and again in 1852-1855 the failure of the potato crop in Germany, as well as a considerable rise in the price of rye and other foodstuffs served as an incentive

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 254-255.

²⁷ "Gottfried Duden's 'Report', 1824-1827," translated by William G. Bek, *Missouri Historical Review* (Columbia, Missouri, 1906-), XII (1918), 83-85.

²⁸ Löher, *Geschichte und Zustände der Deutschen in Amerika*, 255, 271.

to some people to emigrate. In 1850-1853 there was also a failure of the vintage in Württemberg.²⁹

A letter written in 1854 indicates that the conditions were bad and taxes so high that many were worried about raising the necessary funds each month.

You say that the Graefinhausers have been at your house, and this week the following have left [for America]: Jacob Mager's three sons, Mansebauer's second son. They will soon come to see you. In the spring Lehnert's Fritz from Ertzhausen will come with his entire family and his old father will go with them. He has already sold everything, and you are also to tell Miller Schneider's son to write home. His parents are still well. We are just now having fruit markets, and when we want something we have to go to the markets at Grossgerau or to Rottlage, or to Darmstadt in order to buy. But there is the rub—the money is lacking for that. We are not allowed to buy from any farmer or Jew. . . . there has been little [work] so that many can't make a living, and what's the use. Everything is bad! It would be a good idea if everybody moved away.

Also write me what taxes you have to pay every month. I have to pay 73 florins³⁰ every month; soon we'll not know any more how to raise the money and where it is to come from. . . .³¹

Some farmers emigrated because they feared another war and there appeared to be no future under the heavy burden of taxation which existed.³²

Both rich and poor emigrated to escape military service, which was considered by the rich as an inconvenience and by the poor as a hardship. A young man was expected to devote fifteen days each year to military practice and from four to six weeks to maneuvers. The young man who had a position as a clerk or workman frequently lost his position or job by being called off to military practice in the midst of his work, or the young farmer was called for a period of four to six weeks for maneuvers just at harvest time, when it was practically impossible for him to leave.³³

²⁹ Frederick J. Turner, "German Immigration into the United States," *Chicago Record Herald*, September 4, 1901.

³⁰ Until 1875 a florin or gulden having the value of thirty-five cents was the monetary unit in the South German states.

³¹ From the original letter written to Peter Schmidt in Buffalo, New York, on February 3, 1854, by Schmidt in Fleischmühl, Germany. This letter was loaned by Robert Irrmann of Park Ridge, Illinois, the great-grandson of Peter Schmidt.

³² "Emigration and Immigration," in *House Executive Documents*, 49 Cong., 2 Sess., no. 157, p. 152.

³³ *Ibid.*; Jeremiah W. Jenks, and W. Jett Lauck, *The Immigration Problem* (New York, 1913), 14; Turner, "German Immigration into the United States," *Chicago Record Herald*, September 4, 1901.

A few lines from a letter written in 1867 indicate conditions and the destructiveness of the troops:

Everybody is clamoring for money and food because what the troops did not eat, they destroyed. I also harvested very little and am making many debts which will be hard to pay. There is nothing to be earned for everything is at a standstill because we are all afraid of a great war this year. Everything is ready, all the soldiers have been mobilized and in May there will be another call. . . .³⁴

An impression was made upon many a German mind by the statements that in America the taxgatherer was not a constant visitor to the cabin of the settler, and that no one was obliged to serve as a soldier for more than a week each year. Posters announcing the departure of vessels from Bremen, Holland, and Havre were to be found in conspicuous places in every village and town. The great topic of the day, emigration to America, was discussed in the family circle and beerhouses.³⁵ When a letter arrived from America giving detailed information on military service and taxes, such as the following, no doubt, serious consideration was given to it in the family circle.

There is no conscription in this land and soldiers are hired like servants. Men go if they have a desire for military service.

Concerning the taxes, these are not the same in all states because the debts of one state may exceed those of another. . . . Here in the state of Indiana, we have first, for men from twenty-one to fifty years, the poll tax. This takes the place of military service. Then there is a tax on livestock and furniture which is assessed each year, but not high, perhaps for half of its value, and the rate is not the same each year; usually it is sixty or sixty-two cents on the hundred dollars. The first hundred dollars are at present free and likewise the things most essential to keeping house. It is a large household that pays sixty to sixty-two cents household tax.

Public land is free from taxation for five years after purchase; after the expiration of this time, the tax is one cent an acre. If the taxes are not paid within the period allowed by law, there is no collector sent until after the two years. . . .³⁶

³⁴ From the original letter written to Lampert Schultheis at Ferdinand, Indiana, by John Georg Fischer from Feuerthal, Germany, April 12, 1867. The letter is in the possession of Mrs. Ira Rothrock of Mount Vernon, Indiana, a granddaughter of Lampert Schultheis.

³⁵ "German Emigration to America," *The North American Review*, LXXXII (1856), 259-260.

³⁶ Donald F. Carmony (ed.), "Letter Written by Mr. Johann Wolfgang Schreyer," *Indiana Magazine of History* (Bloomington, Indiana, 1905-), XL (1944), 292-293.

Some were interested in emigrating because they were compelled to work beneath their station in life and some would rather starve than to engage in work which their associates regarded as disgraceful. In America no one needed to be ashamed of honest work. A carpenter who had difficulty in finding employment at his trade emigrated to the United States where he might chop wood or engage in some other type of work until an opening developed in his trade. Sometimes German army officers had to resign commissions because they were unable to pay a gambling debt or for some other reason. They might emigrate to America and there achieve success by herding cattle in Texas, which would have been considered a disgrace to his entire family if he had engaged in such an occupation where he was known.³⁷

The father of a family frequently felt it was his duty to lift his children to a position of security and happiness. He wanted to free them from the thought of spending their last years in a poorhouse or having to depend upon charity. If he emigrated to America, he felt that he might have an opportunity to find security.³⁸ Johann Wolfgang Schreyer in his letter written in 1846 from Indiana to Germany indicated that a man owed it to his children to emigrate to America.

A man with a large family acts in the interests of his children by coming, even if the greatest part of his belongings must be sacrificed for the journey. . . . If a man does not wish to undertake the journey on account of advanced age or for some other reason, he can do nothing better than to help his children emigrate to America, and the results of this emigration will surely be so valuable that the younger descendants will thank the ancestor who has afforded them the blessings of this land.³⁹

In Mecklenburg the conditions of the peasants were little more than serfdom and there appeared to be little hope for political reform or for improvement in their civil and social position. These people could be induced without much difficulty to give a willing ear to the emigration agents, because in America these emigrants saw a land where their ideals could be and would be realized. They saw an oppor-

³⁷ "Emigration and Immigration," in *House Executive Documents*, 49 Cong., 2 Sess., no. 157, pp. 152-153.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 131, 204.

³⁹ Carmony (ed.), "Letter Written by Mr. Johann Wolfgang Schreyer," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XL, 293-294.

tunity for political and religious freedom, an absence of restrictions upon the development of society, and the possibility of publishing opinions which could not be realized in the old country.⁴⁰ A few excerpts from Schreyer's letter which places particular emphasis on the rights of the individual follow:

All men stand on a common footing; officials are chosen for one or two years from among the people. . . . Every man, after he has lived here five years, can become a citizen of the United States. It costs him one dollar and he can vote on all questions and be elected to public office.

Independence is the greatest blessing of this country, and when one goes into the cities on the Fourth of July, the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, one finds such festivities going on as excel all similar celebrations in Germany. It is a celebration that declares independence over again, speeches are made in English and German and the people are exhorted to do all in their power that this freedom may be preserved; a heartfelt tribute is paid to the men who gained the precious freedom of our land. After the conclusion of these speeches, it is not the custom here to give three cheers for the public officials, but all believe that the United States form a nation of sovereign citizens who recognized no superior but God. Expressions of this character are so numerous that I could fill whole pages and everyone is filled with enthusiasm, especially a German who hears all this for the first time. It seems impossible to him that there is really a country on earth where the worth of the individual is so recognized, and it is to him a delight to hear people say: "Thank God, I, too, am an American."⁴¹

A change in the early forties in the established church of Prussia drove many old Lutherans to America.⁴² Apparently some were dissatisfied before the change was made since in 1838 a Lutheran congregation with its pastor set sail for America to "preserve the true faith," and in this trait it resembled the Pilgrims who left England, and then Holland, to come to America to preserve liberty of conscience. They

⁴⁰ Thomas W. Page, "The Causes of Earlier European Immigration to the United States," *The Journal of Political Economy* (Chicago, 1892-), XIX (1911), 677-683; Edith Abbott, *Historical Aspects of the Immigration Problem* (Chicago, 1926), 97; Fred A. Shannon, *Economic History of the People of the United States* (New York, 1934), 167.

⁴¹ Carmony (ed.), "Letter Written by Mr. Johann Wolfgang Schreyer," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XL, 288-289.

⁴² *St. Louis Republican*, June 7, 1843, quoted in *Niles' National Register*, LXIV (June 17, 1843), 256.

differed from the Pilgrims in that they had sent agents ahead to purchase land.⁴³

In America it was possible to get fertile land cheap. The immigrant could purchase land out of his small savings on more favorable terms than at home and become a property owner, which position he could seldom hope to attain in his country.⁴⁴ In Germany the original estates had been divided into smaller areas for a number of generations until the tracts had become so small that it was impossible to support a family.⁴⁵

Some of the young women were interested in emigrating to America because they had heard the rumor that there was a demand for domestic services and that the compensation was much better than in Germany.⁴⁶ This rumor was confirmed by Schreyer who wrote ". . . the girls, especially are eagerly sought after for maid service. . . ."⁴⁷ The certainty of constant employment with a remuneration and hours which were more favorable, made their imprint on many.⁴⁸

Of the many Germans who came to the United States because of these or other reasons and who were living in 1850 nearly half were living in the North Central states. There were 573,225 Germans in the nation, of which there were 274,235 in the North Central states, or 47.84 per cent.⁴⁹ It is apparent that Indiana had a smaller percentage of Germans than the adjoining state of Illinois. The Germans may have chosen the North Central states because land was more plentiful. Some of them, no doubt, avoided the Southern states because they were not acquainted with the pro-

⁴³ New York *Sun* quoted in *Niles' National Register*, LIV (August 4, 1838), 367.

⁴⁴ "Emigration and Immigration," in *House Executive Documents*, 49 Cong., 2 Sess., no 157, pp. 164, 240; Wittke, *We Who Built America*, 188; Abbott, *Historical Aspects of the Immigration Problem*, 99.

⁴⁵ Joseph Schafer, "The Yankee and the Teuton in Wisconsin," *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1917-), VI (1922-1923), 143.

⁴⁶ "Emigration and Immigration," in *House Executive Documents*, 49 Cong., 2 Sess., no. 157, p. 175.

⁴⁷ Carmony (ed.), "Letter Written by Mr. Johann Wolfgang Schreyer," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XL, 294.

⁴⁸ Page, "The Causes of Earlier European Immigration to the United States," *The Journal of Political Economy*, XIX, 685.

⁴⁹ *Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, Statistics*, Table XV, p. xxxvi.

ducts of the South, free labor had been humiliated by competition with slave labor, and the climate did not appeal to them.⁵⁰

| State | Total Foreign Population | Germans | % of Germans |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---------|-----------------|
| New York | 651,801 | 118,398 | 20.66 |
| Ohio | 218,512 | 111,257 | 19.41 |
| Pennsylvania | 294,871 | 78,592 | 13.71 |
| Missouri | 72,474 | 44,352 | 7.74 |
| Illinois | 110,593 | 38,160 | 6.66 |
| Wisconsin | 106,695 | 34,519 | 6.02 |
| Indiana | 54,426 | 28,584 | 4.99 |
| Maryland | 53,288 | 26,936 | 4.70 |
| Louisiana | 66,413 | 17,507 | 3.06 |
| Kentucky | 29,189 | 13,607 | 2.36 |
| Michigan | 54,852 | 10,070 | 1.76 |
| Iowa | 21,232 | 7,152 | 1.23 |
| Minnesota | 2,048 | 141 | .03 |
| Remaining states | 474,445 | 43,950 | 7.67 |
| Total | 2,210,839 | 573,225 | |

Cincinnati became one of the leading German-American cities in the United States. The area where the Germans settled in this city, which was across the canal, became known as "Over-the-Rhine" district.⁵¹ Travelers were impressed by the fact that in almost all of the cities in the state of Ohio, German translations were affixed to all signs over the stores in large golden letters, which should be sufficient evidence that a large number of Germans had inhabited that state, and that they must have been good customers.⁵²

Abraham Lincoln was also well aware of the fact that many Germans had settled in Illinois because he found it advantageous to carry a German grammar and study that language in a night class. In the winter of 1854 near Cairo on the Mississippi River he had seen fourteen ice-locked steamboats which were loaded with two thousand German and Irish immigrants.⁵³

We know that Germans were living in Indiana during

⁵⁰ Kate A. Everest, "How Wisconsin Came by its Large German Element," *Wisconsin Historical Collections* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1854-), XII (1892), 311.

⁵¹ Wittke, *We Who Built America*, 200.

⁵² Karl Bernhard, Duke of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach, *Travels Through North America during the Years 1825 and 1826* (2 volumes in one, Philadelphia, 1828), II, 152.

⁵³ Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln, The Prairie Years* (2 vols., New York, 1926), I, 449.

the first quarter of the nineteenth century since the French-Swiss colony of Vevay was founded in 1796 and some German farmers followed this colony. Then too, Johann Georg Rapp, a Württemberger, in 1815 founded a colony on the Wabash, in Posey County. The Duke of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach while traveling in America during the years 1825 and 1826 visited this colony and mentioned that it consisted of Württembergers and that he conversed in German with them. Elias P. Fordham, when he visited the colony in 1818, made particular mention of the fact that German was spoken, that the people were orderly, the town neat, and that some of the members of the colony were excellent musicians. Thomas Hulme's Journal contains an entry of a visit with the Germans at Harmony, Indiana. Adlard Welby, who toured America during 1819-1820, stopped at Harmony, Indiana, made particular mention of the poverty of the Germans living there, but was impressed by the musical talent which members of this group displayed. The colony which had first located in western Pennsylvania returned to its former location in 1825.⁵⁴ Since no records were available giving the German population of Indiana prior to 1850, the following table has been prepared for 1850-1890 on the basis of the census reports of the United States, *Statistics of Population*:

ELEMENTS OF INDIANA'S POPULATION

| Year | Aggregate Population | Native | Foreign | German |
|------|-------------------------|-----------|---------|--------|
| 1850 | 988,416 ⁵⁵ | 931,392 | 54,426 | 28,584 |
| 1860 | 1,350,428 | 1,232,144 | 118,284 | 66,705 |
| 1870 | 1,680,637 | 1,539,163 | 141,474 | 78,060 |
| 1880 | 1,978,301 | 1,834,123 | 144,178 | 80,456 |
| 1890 | 2,192,404 | 2,046,199 | 146,205 | 84,900 |

From this table it can readily be seen that Indiana had a small foreign population, but of that foreign population

⁵⁴ Faust, *The German Element in the United States*, I, 455-456; Bernhard, *Travels Through North America during the Years 1825 and 1826*, II, 106-123; Frederic A. Ogg (ed.), *Personal Narrative of Travels in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky; and of a Residence in the Illinois Territory: 1817-1818* by Elias P. Fordham (Cleveland, 1906), 205-208; William Cobbett, *A Year's Residence in the United States of America* (London, 1819), 478-489; *A Visit to North America and the English Settlements in Illinois, with a Winter Residence at Philadelphia* by Adlard Welby, a reprint of the original edition, London, 1821 in Reuben G. Thwaites (ed.), *Early Western Travels, 1748-1846* (32 vols., Cleveland, 1904-1907), XII (1905), 260-267.

⁵⁵ The total for the figures listed is 985,818, but the nativity of 2,598 inhabitants was unknown.

the Germans constituted over fifty per cent. According to the 1870 Census only one county, Vanderburgh, in that year had over twenty per cent Germans; three, Lake, Dubois, and LaPorte, had between fifteen and twenty per cent; and four, Dearborn, Ripley, Allen, and Franklin, had between eleven and fourteen per cent; while the remaining eighty-four counties had less than ten per cent. Of the four counties which had the highest percentage, two were located in the extreme north and two in the extreme south. The county, however, which had the largest percentage was in the southern part of the state. Lake County in the extreme northern part of the state ranked second, while Dubois County, which is of particular interest for this study, ranked third with 17.89 per cent Germans.

Just when the first Germans came to Dubois County is doubtful. The 1820 Census of the United States⁵⁶ records ten families (Conrad, Hurst, Hase, Miller, Shack, Wineinger) whose names indicate German origin; in 1830⁵⁷ fifteen families (Abel, Conrad, Coonrod, Hurst, Lineus, Miller, Stutesman, Waggoner, Winkler)⁵⁸ lived in Dubois County whose names might lead one to believe that they were of German origin. Some of these families may have migrated from other states, as one must not overlook the fact that many Germans settled in other states before arriving in Dubois County.

Twelve Catholic families from Baden, Germany, in 1836 chose Dubois County for their future home and eleven entered land near Jasper.⁵⁹ During 1837 twenty-four more Catholic families arrived, in 1838 fourteen, in 1839 forty-six, and in 1840 eleven.⁶⁰ If records were available for all the Germans who settled in Dubois County before 1850, there might be quite a list. A list of forty-one Germans who had arrived before 1838 was recorded by George R. Wilson in one of

⁵⁶ Records from the United States Census for Indiana, 1820 (from Photostat Copies in the Indiana State Library), Dubois County, II, 35-40.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 1830, IV, 121-126.

⁵⁸ The names were carefully checked by several residents of Dubois County.

⁵⁹ John T. Melchoir, *Leaves from the Early History of Saint Joseph's Parish*, I, 3, unpublished manuscript of 2 volumes; Tract Book, Dubois County, Indiana.

⁶⁰ Melchoir, *Leaves from the Early History of Saint Joseph's Parish*, I, 3-6.

his unpublished volumes on Dubois County.⁶¹ The 1850 Census lists four families who had children born in Indiana before 1836.⁶²

In the fall of 1849 Adolf Brandeis wrote a letter to his wife in which he mentioned in some detail the life of a Catholic German village sixty-five miles cross country from Louisville. Since the village he wrote about was Ferdinand, it may be assumed that quite a few Germans had settled in Dubois County before 1849. Although somewhat exaggerated, it tells us something about this German settlement. Several paragraphs from the letter follow:

Now let me tell you something about my life here, I am in a part of the country inhabited, for a distance of about 60 to 80 miles, exclusively by Germans and since I left the steamboat I have not heard a single word of English.

The place I am describing is a completely Catholic German village protected and governed by the church that crowns the hilltop. In the evenings the men come into the village bars of which there are three, to drink and talk. They cast lots or play domino to decide who is to pay the reckoning for the beer; and as I always take part in the game and pay, and then leave my beer, I have made many good friends.

But one of the main features of German life is lacking here and that is music. Moreover, I have as yet seen few women, so that the whole reduces itself more or less to an improved version of barroom life. . . .

To give you an idea where I am, I must tell you that I went from Louisville on the boat to Troy and then rode twenty miles inland. The cross country distance from Louisville to here is sixty-five miles.⁶³

The earliest naturalization records available in the Dubois County Courthouse began in 1853. These records indicated that sixty Germans who settled in Dubois County arrived in the United States before 1848. They were distributed over the years as follows:⁶⁴

| | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1812— 1 | 1833— 1 | 1839— 4 | 1844— 8 |
| 1820— 1 | 1836— 2 | 1841— 3 | 1845— 8 |
| 1827— 1 | 1837— 2 | 1842— 4 | 1846— 8 |
| 1832— 1 | 1838— 2 | 1843— 4 | 1847—10 |

⁶¹ George R. Wilson, *Historical Notes on Dubois County*, V, 193, unpublished manuscript of 23 volumes.

⁶² The Linecank and Nicum families were living in Indiana in 1830, the Auglert family in 1834, and the Katterjohn family in 1836. Original Returns of Seventh Census, 1850, Dubois County, Indiana (microfilm in Indiana University Library).

⁶³ Goldmark, *Pilgrims of '48*, pp. 221-222.

⁶⁴ Naturalization Record of Intention, Dubois County, Indiana, 1853-1869 and 1869-1910. (Only the head of the family is listed in the record.)

In the second period of nineteenth century German immigration, which covers the years from 1848 to 1865, three hundred and seventy Germans arrived in the United States who later settled in Dubois County. The number that arrived each year during this period is as follows:⁶⁵

| | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1848—14 | 1853—38 | 1858—15 | 1863— 2 |
| 1849— 9 | 1854—72 | 1859—10 | 1864—13 |
| 1850— 6 | 1855—25 | 1860—24 | 1865—22 |
| 1851— 9 | 1856—19 | 1861— 9 | |
| 1852—41 | 1857—37 | 1862— 5 | |

During the last period of the nineteenth century, a total of 303 Germans emigrated to the United States whose destination was Dubois County. The distribution by years is as follows:⁶⁶

| | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1866—31 | 1875— 4 | 1884—15 | 1893— 2 |
| 1867—24 | 1876— 9 | 1885— 7 | 1894— 8 |
| 1868—10 | 1877— 4 | 1886— 7 | 1895— 2 |
| 1869—14 | 1878— 4 | 1887— 4 | 1896— 2 |
| 1870—17 | 1879— 2 | 1888— 5 | 1897— 3 |
| 1871— 5 | 1880— 9 | 1889— 6 | 1898— 2 |
| 1872—16 | 1881—20 | 1890— 5 | 1899— 0 |
| 1873—17 | 1882—15 | 1891— 2 | |
| 1874—11 | 1883—11 | 1892—10 | |

A further analysis of the naturalization records shows that during the period from 1853 to 1869, May, June, October, and November were the favored months to make the voyage to America, whereas between 1869 and 1910, May, September, and October were chosen to make the journey to the new homeland. While some months were more favorable for the voyage across the ocean, a number of emigrants apparently took advantage of the opportunity to sail to America when the occasion presented itself regardless of the season of the year, and so there was some emigration every month of the year.

The census records for Dubois County show an increase and decrease of Germans somewhat similar to that of the United States as a whole. Before considering the reasons which brought about these fluctuations it might be well to take note of the following table:

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

ELEMENTS OF DUBOIS COUNTY'S POPULATION⁶⁷

| Year | Aggregate Population | Native | Foreign | German |
|------|-------------------------|--------|---------|--------|
| 1820 | 1,168 | | | |
| 1830 | 1,778 | | | |
| 1840 | 3,632 | | | |
| 1850 | 6,321 | 4,699 | 1,622 | 1,603 |
| 1860 | 10,398 | 7,574 | 2,824 | 2,641 |
| 1870 | 12,597 | 10,136 | 2,461 | 2,264 |
| 1880 | 15,992 | 13,872 | 2,120 | 1,944 |
| 1890 | 20,253 | 18,484 | 1,769 | 1,663 |

No records were available giving detailed information in regard to the nativity of the inhabitants of Dubois County prior to 1850. As can be seen from the table, about one-third of the inhabitants in 1850 and 1860 were of foreign birth, in 1870 one-fourth, in 1880 one-sixth, and in 1890 one-eleventh. Of the foreign element, the Germans constituted 98.8 per cent in 1850, 93.5 per cent in 1860, 91.9 per cent in 1870, 91.6 per cent in 1880, and 94 per cent in 1890.

Immigration after 1852 has been referred to as a stampede in which economic causes dominated.⁶⁸ From the census records, it may be assumed that Dubois County also became the home of some of these immigrants.

The fact, however, cannot be overlooked that there was a decline in German immigration between 1861 and 1880. It is possible that the Civil War may have been responsible in part for this decline, but this was an era of railroad building and the development of manufactures in Germany. Because people were prosperous, they had less desire to emigrate.⁶⁹

The consciousness of the German Government concerning the protection of individuals and the rights of the laborer may be regarded as an important factor to induce the Ger-

⁶⁷ *Eleventh Census of the United States, 1890, Statistics of Population*, VIII, Table 4, p. 17; Table 15, p. 409; Table 33, p. 621; *Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Statistics of Population*, I, Table XIV, 505; *Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Statistics of Population*, I, Table VII, 352; Original Returns of Eighth Census, 1860, Dubois County, Indiana; Original Returns of Seventh Census, 1850, Dubois County, Indiana.

⁶⁸ Stephenson, *A History of American Immigration*, 43.

⁶⁹ Turner, "German Immigration into the United States," *Chicago Record Herald*, September 4, 1901.

mans to remain at home, and to hinder them from seeking in other lands greater prosperity.⁷⁰ Then too, on the heels of the great financial crash of 1873, which began with the so-called "Black Friday," emigration began to decline until 1877 when it reached its minimum.⁷¹

From 1881 to 1885 emigration increased. This period coincided with a period of prosperity in the United States. The railroads had perfected their organization for opening the Western states, and the steamship companies as well as railroads sent emigration agents to Europe. Since transportation rates were low, even the poor people could take advantage of the opportunity to emigrate to America.⁷² Because there was a large exodus, and the German colonial and other associations feared that the emigrants might lose their German nationality and language, they made an effort to direct them to Brazil, Uruguay, or Paraguay.⁷³

The decrease in 1885 seems to indicate that either the economic conditions of Germany had improved and the attractions of America had diminished, or that the new colonial policy of Bismarck kept many wavering. The Prussian Government had adopted new measures to colonize at home. The Eastern provinces of Prussia and Posen showed the highest number of emigrants, the lowest degree of industry, and the worst farming conditions, although the soil was very fertile. Upon investigation, it was discovered that it was impossible for the sons of German farmers to become independent and own their homestead and farm because of the large manorial estates. The people who were an asset emigrated and the less desirable class remained. The government, therefore, purchased large estates and divided them. This made it possible for the small farmer to own his own farm and engage in systematic farming where the rotation of crops was possible and financial returns were profitable. In Leipzig the press was antagonistic to emigration and re-

⁷⁰ "Emigration and Immigration," in *House Executive Documents*, 49 Cong., 2 Sess., no. 157, p. 31.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁷² Turner, "German Immigration into the United States," *Chicago Record Herald*, September 4, 1901.

⁷³ "Emigration and Immigration," in *House Executive Documents*, 49 Cong., 2 Sess., no. 157, p. 111.

fused to publish favorable reports which might tend to increase emigration during this period.⁷⁴

It may be assumed that the decline on this side of the ocean during the last ten years of the nineteenth century may be attributed to the financial depression of 1893, the dissatisfaction and depression in the West, as well as the reduction of desirable public lands.⁷⁵

It is apparent, therefore, that when the workshops, shipyards, and factories in America were operating to capacity, and when good crops and remunerative prices enabled the American farmer to enjoy the luxuries of life, the emigration from Germany was high, whereas in years of depression or stagnation of business in America emigration invariably declined. The bad condition of the labor market in America had a direct effect on emigration in that fewer prepaid tickets were sent to friends in Germany.⁷⁶

In Germany, no doubt, the progressive, industrial, and peaceful political policy of the German Emperor carried considerable weight in the decline of emigration.⁷⁷ The settlement of Germans in Dubois County as well as in the nation at large reflected these influences.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 109, 197.

⁷⁵ Turner, "German Immigration into the United States," *Chicago Record Herald*, September 4, 1901.

⁷⁶ "Emigration and Immigration," in *House Executive Documents*, 49 Cong., 2 Sess., no. 157, pp. 180-181.

⁷⁷ "Special Consular Reports," in *House Miscellaneous Documents*, 52 Cong., 1 Sess., no. 19 (serial no. 2974), 247.