

Some Characteristics of German Immigrants In Dubois County, Indiana

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Dr. Ernst Engel, a prominent German statistician, divided the economic life of a man into three periods, two of which are unproductive and one productive. The first or juvenile period continues until the fifteenth year and includes the raising and education of an individual. This is not only an unproductive time, but also the cause of considerable outlay of money. The second or labor period, ranging from fifteen to sixty-five years, is the productive time of life. The third or aged period is unproductive, and the individual is dependent upon his savings or upon the labor of others.¹

Many of the Germans who migrated to America were young active men between twenty and thirty years of age.² Most of the immigrants who came to Dubois County, Indiana, were young people between the ages of twenty-one and forty. The average age was twenty-eight. They were, therefore, in the productive years or the prime of life, ready to enter into various pursuits.³

This was in contrast with the ages of the native-born sons and daughters of Indiana in 1850 in Dubois County. Forty-eight per cent of the native-born were in the unproductive periods. All but one per cent of these were in the first or juvenile period, which was also the most expensive period.⁴ The approximate cost of raising an American farmer or unskilled laborer for the first fifteen years was one hundred talers⁵ per year, while in Germany the approximate cost of bringing up a manual laborer was fifty talers per year.⁶

¹ Friedrich Kapp, *Immigration and the Commissioners of Emigration of the State of New York* (New York, 1870), 144.

² *Niles' Weekly Register* (Baltimore, Maryland, 1811-1837), LVIII (April 25, 1840), 111.

³ The age of immigrants from 1853 to 1910 was as follows: 20-30, 384; 31-40, 186; 41-50, 85; 51-60, 51; 61-70, 23; over 70, 6. Naturalization Record of Intention, Dubois County, Indiana, 1853-1869 and 1869-1910. (Only the head of the family is listed in the record.)

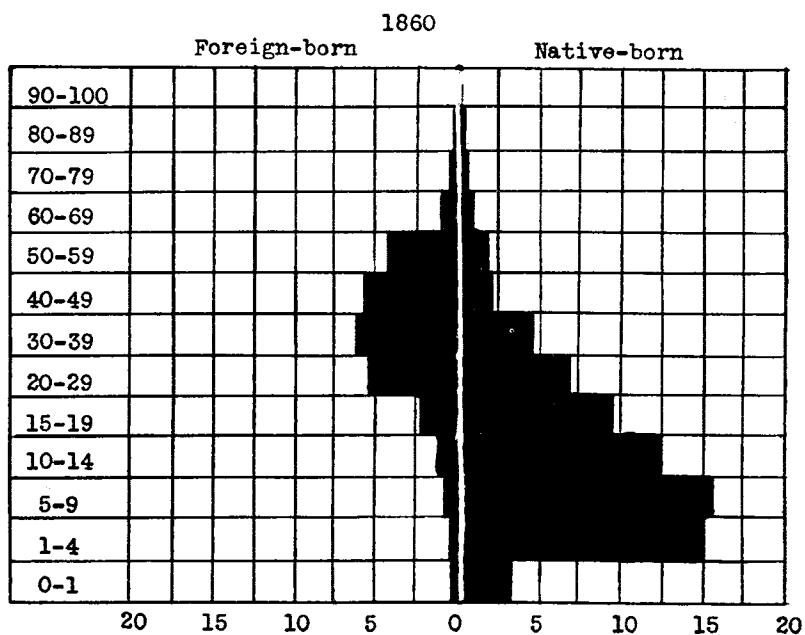
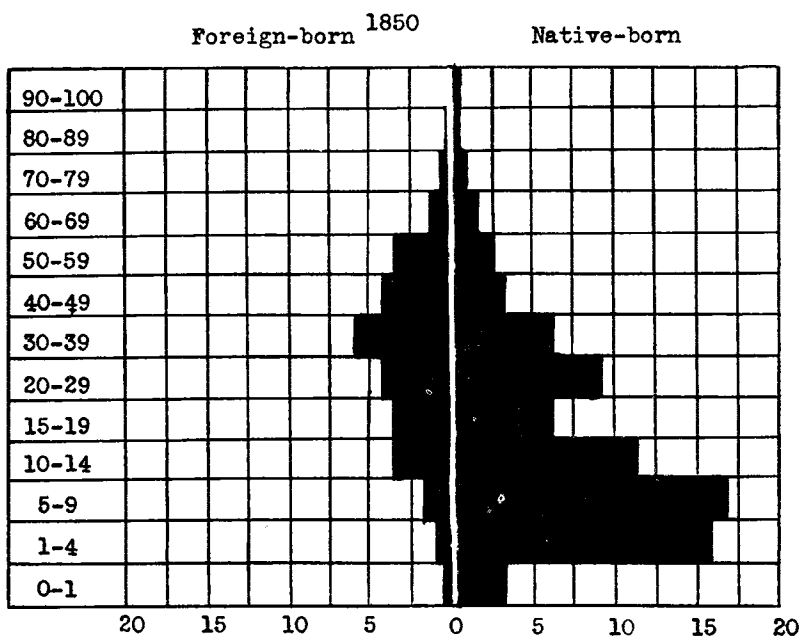
⁴ Original Returns of the Seventh Census, 1850, Dubois County, Indiana (microfilm in the Indiana University Library, Bloomington, Indiana).

⁵ A large silver coin issued by various German states. These varied but slightly from one dollar in value. In Germany in 1873 the old taler was made legal tender at three marks (71.4 cents).

⁶ Kapp, *Immigration, and the Commissioners of Emigration of the State of New York*, 146.

AGE GROUPS

Original Census Returns, Dubois County, Indiana



The Germans in 1860 constituted about 25 per cent of the total population of the county, of which 21 per cent were in the second or labor period, which included the most productive years. For the same year the native-born population of 48 per cent again came into the unproductive periods.⁷ The graphs made on the basis of the Original Census Returns may make the story somewhat more comprehensible.

A high percentage of the Germans who emigrated to the United States were single.

EMIGRANTS TO THE UNITED STATES⁸

	Single	Married	Widows & divorcees
1878	76.71	21.18	2.11
1879	77.31	20.92	1.77
1880	76.37	21.50	2.13
1881	77.01	20.88	2.11
1882	79.68	17.86	1.46
Average 1878-1882	77.51	20.46	2.03

Although less than 25 per cent were married, Germany became sufficiently conscious of the fact that families were migrating to make an attempt to found a German colony to which these emigrants might be directed. Many of the Germans formed the habit of remaining together, and in some cases dispossessed whole townships and almost whole counties of native American farmers.⁹

A large number of the Germans who settled in Dubois County before 1861 came as families, and with the appearance of these families a noticeable improvement in living conditions took place. From the marriage records, it was also obvious that almost all the Germans who came to Dubois County after 1881 were married.¹⁰

⁷ Original Returns of the Eighth Census, 1860, Dubois County, Indiana (microfilm in the Indiana University Library, Bloomington, Indiana).

⁸ "Emigration and Immigration, Reports of the Consular Officers of the United States," in the *House Executive Documents*, 49 Cong., 2 Sess., no. 157 (serial no. 2483), 201.

⁹ Frederick J. Turner, "German Immigration into the United States," *Chicago Record Herald*, September 4, 1901; Edith Abbott, *Historical Aspects of the Immigration Problem* (Chicago, 1926), 271.

¹⁰ Albert Kleber, *Ferdinand, Indiana, 1840-1940* (St. Meinrad, Indiana, 1940), 29; Albert Kleber, *St. Joseph Parish* (St. Meinrad, Indiana, 1937), 11, 13; George R. Wilson, *History of Dubois County* (Jasper, Indiana, 1910), 131; Record of Returns of Marriages, Dubois County, Indiana.

There were 216 German families living in Dubois County in 1850 who had one or more children who had been born in Germany, likewise in 1860 there were 189 families who had one or more children who had been born in Germany. There may have been other families, but because they had no children there is no way of ascertaining whether they were married in Germany or in the United States. Some young people married shortly after their arrival in the United States and then migrated to Dubois County.¹¹

The general impression of many people has been that German families were much larger than native-born families. There were in Dubois County 474 German families in 1850, that is, families in which both parents were born in Germany; and 486 native-born families, with both parents born in the United States.¹² The table which follows indicates that the families of native-born parents were larger than those of parents born in Germany.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER FAMILY IN 1850¹³

No. of Chil- dren	Germans			Native		
	Average Age		% of Families	Average Age		% of Families
	M	F		M	F	
None	38.68	35.72	9.92	33.08	28.22	12.14
1	40.84	37.47	13.72	34.55	30.35	11.94
2	41.88	37.38	20.89	36.13	29.55	14.20
3	40.97	37.23	18.99	38.97	34.56	13.99
4	41.76	36.25	14.14	38.19	34.19	11.73
5	44.34	39.34	11.39	40.44	35.82	10.70
6	45.80	38.71	6.33	43.81	38.48	11.11
7	43.72	41.27	2.32	41.53	40.81	6.58
8	50.43	39.57	1.48	47.68	40.72	4.53
9	39	38	.21	35.83	31	1.23
10				49.40	42.20	1.03
11	50	46	.21	49	44.50	.41
12				49.50	42	.41

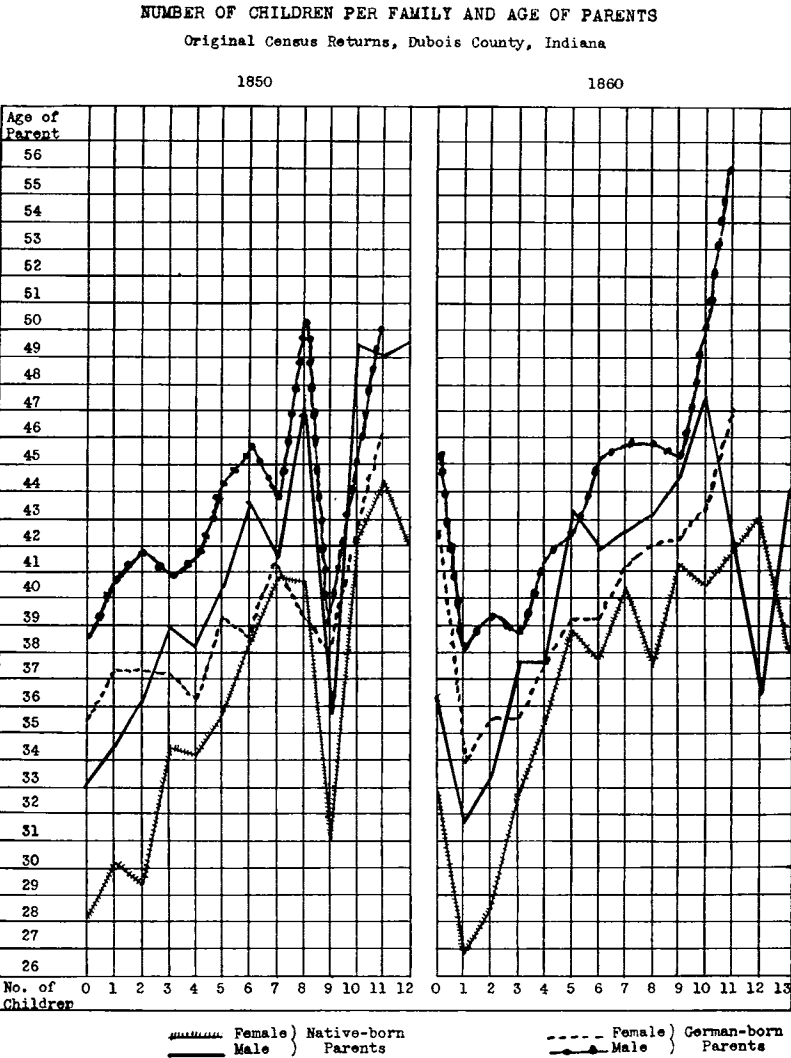
¹¹ Original Returns of the Seventh Census, 1850, Dubois County, Indiana; Original Returns of the Eighth Census, 1860, Dubois County, Indiana; Goodspeed Brothers & Company, *History of Pike and Dubois Counties* (Chicago, 1885), 751.

¹² Original Returns of the Seventh Census, 1850, Dubois County Indiana.

¹³ *Ibid.*

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This table also shows that the German parents were older than the native-born parents. The accompanying graphs indicate that the above statement holds true for both 1850 and 1860.



NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER FAMILY IN 1860¹⁴

No. of Children	Germans			Native		
	Average Age of Parents		% of Families	Average Age of Parents		% of Families
	M	F		M	F	
None	45.36	42.75	10.60	36.45	32.89	13.88
1	38.10	33.98	12.47	31.71	26.95	14.58
2	39.46	35.54	16.08	33.35	28.56	17.15
3	38.87	35.54	17.21	37.68	32.78	15.27
4	41.64	37.70	13.97	37.68	35.64	12.87
5	42.50	39.27	14.09	43.38	38.94	9.61
6	45.23	39.24	7.86	41.95	37.84	7.55
7	45.72	41.22	4.49	42.76	40.40	4.29
8	45.84	42	2.37	43.18	37.58	2.92
9	45.33	42.33	.37	44.55	41.11	1.55
10	50.33	43.66	.37	47.50	40.50	.34
11	56	47	.12			
12				36.50	43	.34
13				44	38	.15

Eight hundred and two German families were living in Dubois County in 1860, in which both parents were born in Germany, and 583 native-born families, with both parents born in the United States.¹⁵ The table for 1860 does not indicate as great a difference in the classification of families according to the number of children (columns 4 and 7) as did that for 1850, but it must be noted that the German parents were again older than the native-born parents.

As early as 1832, the Germans were regarded as desirable settlers and when compared with the English paupers were referred to as a "luscious peach" and the latter as a "bitter Indian Turnip."¹⁶ The Germans were willing to work hard and support themselves. They opened up waste areas, cut fine farms out of the heavy timber, and placed them under cultivation. One seldom heard of a German being in the poorhouse, and quite a few died rich. The Germans who came to America during the nineteenth century were gen-

¹⁴ Original Returns of the Eighth Census, 1860, Dubois County, Indiana.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Niles' Weekly Register*, XLIII (September 15, 1832), 40.

erally not wealthy, therefore, they looked for areas not only where considerable land was available but also where the price was low. The Germans took pride in keeping the land in their possession; it was something permanent with them, not to be sold but to remain in the family for a number of generations.¹⁷

German statistical tables indicate that the amount of gold carried by emigrants during the first part of the nineteenth century varied from \$76 to \$318 for each emigrant. Money, however, was not the only property, but wearing apparel, tools, watches, books, and jewelry were also brought along. It may be estimated that the personal property of the emigrant was one hundred and fifty dollars. Approximately 4,297,980 immigrants arrived at the port of New York from May 5, 1847, to January 1, 1870. The national wealth of the United States for this period may be considered as increased by more than five billions of dollars through immigration if the capital value of each male and female immigrant is estimated at fifteen hundred dollars and seven hundred and fifty dollars respectively, with an average of \$1,125 for both. Some Germans from the districts near the Rhine might be considered rather wealthy as they brought with them in 1832 when they emigrated between three and four thousand pounds. One hundred thousand Germans in 1843 had made arrangements to emigrate to the United States and together possessed approximately five million dollars.¹⁸

Many of the German families, however, who settled in Dubois County were very poor. A family of four in 1845 walked from Troy to Ferdinand, a distance of eighteen miles, with whatever luggage they had. The average settler around Ferdinand had scarcely enough money to buy land and the

¹⁷ *Ibid.*; *Illinois Journal*, July 25, 1855, quoted in the *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* (Springfield, Illinois, 1908-), VII (1914-1915), 12; Edwin D. Coe, "Reminiscences of a Pioneer in the Rock River Country," *Wisconsin Historical Society, Proceedings* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1874-), No. 55 (1908), 194; Albert B. Faust, *The German Element in the United States* (2 vols. Boston, 1909), I, 435, 445; II, 30; Carl F. Wittke, *We Who Built America* (New York, 1940), 209.

¹⁸ Kapp, *Immigration, and the Commissioners of Emigration of the State of New York*, 143-144, 146-147; *Niles' Weekly Register* XLIII (November 24, 1832), 196-197; *Niles' National Register* (Washington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, 1837-1849), LXIV (July 15, 1843), 320.

necessary tools. Bread and coffee were prepared from Indian corn, which sold for twenty-five cents a bushel in 1841. When no corn was available acorns were roasted and used for coffee.¹⁹ A letter written on January 8, 1842, gives some insight into the poverty endured by some of the settlers.

. . . . But you must pardon me for not having written for so long a time; I wanted to spare you. Should I have written lies? That is not my way, and I also did not want to write the truth, because I am convinced that good children can have no true joy in knowing that things are going badly with their parents. I should not have written even now, were it not to calm you. My weakness and my money do not allow me to make a journey to Cincinnati this winter, but as to summer, you know quite well that when the mainspring is missing the clock stands still, especially when one had to do all the cultivating of the soil with the hoe. But on New Year's day I wrote to Eva at Louisville, where she has employment since August 24, to visit you by the middle of March. By that time she will surely have earned several dollars to clothe herself again and to send us a few, and if perhaps you also have obtained a few dollars through the sale of instruments, we shall after all procure a cow. Eva has more time, money, and opportunity from where she is, and, if she receives the letter, she will be able to tell you how we fared last spring and summer. But as to the aid that you, my dear son-in-law, thought of sending us, I must decline that because I know from experience that here debts are not paid off as easily as in Europe, and the few clods of earth that I still possess I should like to leave free of debt to my children, except it were a small debt that I could pay back to you during the first year of your arrival here. —Eva has had to work hard with us this half year; she was very industrious, and we could have had need of her very much during the whole year, especially since mother is getting ever older and weaker; but necessity knows no law. Her clothes tore from burning of brushwood and from all other sorts of man's work that she had to do. Such a woman ought for week days to have cloth that is like our German so-called *Petermann*; but, because I could not buy her any, I had to let her hire herself out We have for 2½ months lived on alms that good people have handed us. Meat is cheap here this year, a hundred pounds of pork at \$2.—whoever has the money.²⁰

Another family left Germany in 1834 and came as far as Cincinnati where the father left his family and came to Dubois County to purchase land, making the entire trip there and back on foot. A man who settled near Huntingburg came to America in 1831, as a poor lad, fourteen years of age, with only fifty cents in his pocket. Another German

¹⁹ Kleber, *Ferdinand*, 30, 60-61.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 62-63.

came to this region in 1862 who was almost as poor as far as material possessions were concerned.²¹ Many other cases might be cited illustrating the meager financial resources of early German settlers in Dubois County.

The Germans were willing to hire themselves out but were seldom content to serve for wages, preferring to be paid in land or produce, thus becoming partners instead of servants of their employers. A story has been related by a traveler that one day as he was traveling through Texas a German mechanic met him. He had heard of a German settlement in the mountains that was without a blacksmith so he set out to offer his services in exchange for a plot of ground where he might produce some food for his family. The Germans were, moreover, honest, patient, industrious, persevering, and very thrifty, adding dollar to dollar, and within less than fifty years the German pioneers of Dubois County achieved an economic status that occupied the middle ground between poverty and wealth.²²

The German preferred to settle in the forest because it served as a protection against storms, and because of his economical habits he saw that the forest conferred benefits so far as the necessary fuel, timber, bedding, and forage were concerned, and then too, he cherished them for sentimental reasons. Ferdinand in Dubois County was founded in a primeval forest, and one can readily see that the Germans must have felt at home there. The German pioneer brought his family to settle down in the heart of the wilderness and remain, whereas some of the American pioneers brought their horse, ox, cow, dog, gun, and family to remain only long enough to be able to sell his farm at a small profit. The Germans in certain districts of Dubois County gradually crowded out the American afflicted with the *wanderlust*.

²¹ Goodspeed, *History of Pike and Dubois Counties*, 606, 586; Huntingtonburg, Indiana, *Signal*, August, 28, 1879.

²² Abbott, *Historical Aspects of the Immigration Problem*, 275; Frederick L. Olmstead, *A Journey Through Texas* (New York, 1857), 212; Niles' *Weekly Register*, XLIV (June 8, 1833), 233; Wittke, *We Who Built America*, 187; J. J. Lalor, "The Germans in the West," *Atlantic Monthly* (Boston, 1857-), XXXII (1873), 463; Otto L. Schmidt, "The Mississippi Valley in 1816, Through an Englishman's Diary," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* (Cedar Rapids, Iowa, 1914-), XIV (1927), 142; Kate Everest Levi, "Geographical Origin of German Immigration to Wisconsin," *Wisconsin Historical Collections* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1854-), XIV (1908), 352; George M. Stephenson, *A History of American Immigration* (Boston, 1926), 51; Kleber, *Ferdinand*, 66.

The Germans seemed to know how to get ahead. When they were given an ax in the calloused hand, they soon produced results.²³

Henry Clay in his speech delivered in the Senate of the United States on February 2, 3, and 6, 1832, in defense of the American system against the British Colonial system, had this to say about the Germans:

There are some foreigners who always remain exotics, and never become naturalized in our country; whilst, happily, there are many others who readily attach themselves to our principles and our institutions. The honest, patient, and industrious German, readily unites with our people, establishes himself upon some of our fat land, fills his capacious barn, and enjoys in tranquility, the abundant fruits which his diligence gathers around him, always ready to fly to the standard of his adopted country, or of its laws, when called by the duties of patriotism.²⁴

Several county officials who were interviewed claimed that Colonel Jacob Geiger, founder of Huntingburg, was aware of the thrifty Germans and Huntingburg was platted in 1837 for their benefit.²⁵ The larger lots were provided so that there might be sufficient space for gardens. Since the plat is rather unique, a copy of it has been reproduced.

In order to form an estimate of the wealth of the inhabitants of Dubois County, the real estate valuation as given in 1850 in the Original Census Returns was used. The total valuation for the county in 1850 was \$402,176 of which \$225,816 was credited to native-born inhabitants, \$172,610 to Germans, and \$3,750 to inhabitants born in other foreign countries. On a percentage basis, 56.15 per cent was allotted to native-born inhabitants, 42.92 per cent to Germans, and .93 per cent to other foreigners. The Germans constituted

²³ Joseph Schafer, "The Yankee and the Teuton in Wisconsin," *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1917-), VI (1922-1923), 133; Faust, *The German Element in the United States*, II, 57; Kleber, *Ferdinand*, 28, 16; Wilson, *History of Dubois County*, 102; William G. Bek, "The Followers of Duden," *Missouri Historical Review* (Columbia, Missouri, 1906-), XV (1921), 663; "Der Deutsche als Pionier der Welt," *Der Deutsche Pionier* (18 vols., Cincinnati, Ohio, 1869-1887), II (1870), 43.

²⁴ *Niles' Weekly Register*, XLII (March 3, 1832), 2-16, see 6.

²⁵ Before Colonel Geiger purchased this section of land, he and other gentlemen from Kentucky had frequently hunted here and in remembrance of these expeditions he named the town. Goodspeed, *History of Pike and Dubois Counties*, 547. In the early records an "h" was added after the final "g." Plat Book, Dubois County, Indiana, I, 39; II, 9.

about 25 per cent of the entire population of the county. The total valuation in 1860 was placed at \$2,131,904 of which \$1,140,725 was in the hands of Germans, \$917,688 credited to native-born inhabitants, and \$73,491 listed for other foreigners. According to percentages, 53.51 per cent was allotted to Germans, 42.04 per cent to native-born inhabitants, and 3.45 per cent to other foreigners. Again in 1860 the Germans constituted approximately 25 per cent of the entire population of the county. At the time of the 1850 census the real estate of the native-born inhabitants had 13.23 per cent higher valuation than that of the Germans. By the time of the 1860 census, however, the real estate valuation of the Germans was 10.47 per cent higher than that of the native-born inhabitants. It has already been stated that many

PLAT OF HUNTINGBURG

Plat Book, Dubois County, Indiana, I, 39; II, 9.

North				
5	4	3	2	1
North Street				
6	30 21	20 11	10 1	22
	29 22	19 12	9 2	
7	28 23	18 13	8 3	21
	27 24	17 14	7 4	
	26 25	16 15	6 5	
Jackson Street				
8	31 40	41 50	51 60	20
	32 39	42 49	52 59	
9	33 38	43 48	53 58	19
	34 37	44 47	54 57	
	35 36	45 46	55 56	
VanBuren Street				
10	90 81	80 71	70 61	18
	89 82	79 72	69 62	
11	88 83	78 73	68 63	17
	87 84	77 74	67 64	
	86 85	76 75	66 65	
South Street				
12	13	14	15	16
South				

of the early German settlers were very poor. It may, therefore, be assumed that a number of years of hard work brought results since in 1860 the total real estate valuation of the Germans in Dubois County was over fifty per cent of the total. Many of the Germans bought small tracts of land (forty acres) and gradually added to their possessions. A man who did not have the cash to pay for the land which he desired to purchase gave notes. The rate of interest in Dubois County in 1840 was 10 per cent.²⁶

A considerable number of the Germans who emigrated to America the latter half of the nineteenth century were farmers. They were attracted by cheap public and railroad lands, and later by free homesteads; they became pioneer farmers. They brought with them less of the militant spirit and more of the thrifty, balanced, agricultural life. It was their thrift, self-reliance, and intensive agriculture that made them model farmers in America. Some of the American farmers did not have the love for home, such as was to be found among the Germans, who took their families with them in pursuit of simple pleasures. The former was always borrowing either money, tools, or provisions, but the German farmer relied upon his own resources. When he erected a few buildings, some of his American neighbors accused him of building a town. It is true that buildings for his livestock and produce at times were far more pretentious than his humble dwelling. The day laborers and peasants whose demands were simple and who were used to hard work, had no difficulty in adjusting themselves to the conditions in the New World; the others, however, made no progress and in time many succumbed.²⁷

²⁶ Original Returns of the Seventh Census, 1850, Dubois County, Indiana; Original Returns of the Eighth Census, 1860, Dubois County, Indiana; (It was impossible to read some of the figures for 1860, but the percentages are fairly accurate.); Tract Book, Dubois County, Indiana; Deed Record No. 1, Dubois County, Indiana, 364.

²⁷ Stephenson, *A History of American Immigration*, 43; Huntingburg, Indiana, *Signal*, June 19, 1879; Wittke, *We Who Built America*, 188; Frederick J. Turner, *The United States, 1830-1850* (New York, 1935), 19; John R. Commons, *Races and Immigrants in America* (New York, 1907), 133; Bek, "The Followers of Duden," *Missouri Historical Review*, XV, 663-666; Faust, *The German Element in the United States*, II, 472; William H. Dawson, *The Evolution of Modern Germany* (London, 1908), 152-153; Abbott, *Historical Aspects of the Immigration Problem*, 272; Friedrich Münch, "Die drei Perioden der neueren deutschen Auswanderung nach Nordamerika," *Der Deutsche Pionier*, I (1869), 244.

A number of German farmers in the West were "Latin farmers," who were more familiar with Virgil than guiding a plow, and some Germans who worked on railroads and in shops knew Homer in the original. These farmers encountered difficulties with the American plow which required the lifting of the handles, whereas the German plow which rested on wheels was forced into the ground by pressing on the handles. When the harvesting of the corn was undertaken, the hired man took his knife used for pruning trees. This required constant bending of the back and was a slow process since only enough stalks could be cut to set up two shocks before nightfall. One family who had two swords which had been brought from Germany to serve as a defense against the Indians and animals of the forest were put to use. One of these swords had been used against France in 1813 and now became a useful tool on the American frontier. Some of the German pioneer farmers also brought hand sickles and scythes with which to harvest the small grain. Later, they used the heavy wheat cradle, but this practically exhausted them. The threshing was done with flails on an improvised floor, and later the grain was tramped out by horses. Of the "Latin farmers" who lived in Missouri one after the other went to ruin, but the day laborers prospered and were happy in the new homeland.²⁸ No doubt, the city-bred folk from Germany, had been convinced that the American ax was more difficult to wield than the pen, and the plow and manure fork were stupid tools. It may be assumed that German farmers in other areas encountered similar experiences.

As a group, however, the Germans were considered successful farmers because they looked for good land, and those who had money frequently displaced native-born settlers. Their methods played no small part in their success. They were thorough and patient; the land was carefully cleared of stumps and stones, and they endeavored to produce the largest possible yield per acre. Because permanent possession was foremost in their mind, they believed in the rotation of crops, and were careful not to exhaust the soil. They were economical. They saved on wood by using stoves instead of

²⁸ Wittke, *We Who Built America*, 189; Friedrich Münch, "Sonst und jetzt," ('et haec meninisse juvabit'), *Der Deutsche Pionier*, IV (1872), 229-231.

fireplaces, and in constructing fences built in a manner which required the least wood. Their diet was simple, the furniture plain but substantial, and clothing was made of material which wore well. The livestock was not permitted to run wild; in the winter the animals were kept in stables, and never over worked at any time. Fences, buildings, and the garden, as well as agricultural implements were kept in good repair.²⁹ Travelers were impressed by German settlements and by the characteristics mentioned above. They were easily able to distinguish the German farms from those of the native Americans. "The land better cultivated, the enclosures better formed, prove clearly it is a German settlement. With them everything announces ease, the fruit of their assiduity to labour."³⁰

The German farmer's labor was more productive because he was assisted by his wife and children. In his estimation a woman was also capable of working in the field, and hired labor should be used only when the grain was to be harvested. Lalor makes the statement that the German never sought in his wife an intellectual companion. If he was a philosopher, the less his wife knew of syllogisms the happier he was. It may be assumed that because the German relied upon his family for work in the fields, he did not approve of slavery, and in some states helped turn the tide of sentiment in the direction of the cause of the Union.³¹

German business enterprises began on a small scale and developed gradually. They used no short cuts, but climbed the ladder step by step. The German was hard-headed and not easily taken off his feet. He never suffered from the speculation fever. He had a tendency to be pessi-

²⁹ Faust, *The German Element in the United States*, II, 29.

³⁰ Francois A. Michaux, "Travels to the West of the Alleghany Mountains . . . 1802," in Reuben G. Thwaites (ed.), *Early Western Travels, 1748-1846* (32 vols., Cleveland, 1904-1907), III (1904), 109-306, see 152.

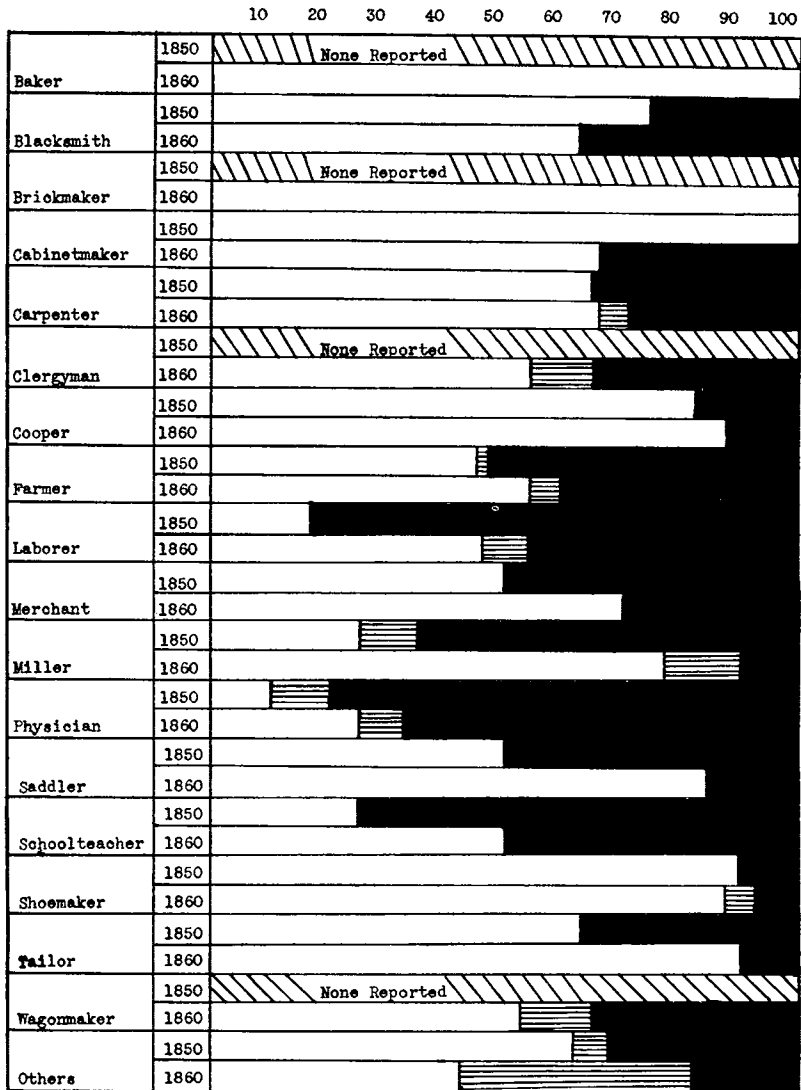
³¹ Abbott, *Historical Aspects of the Immigration Problem*, 272; Schmidt, "The Mississippi Valley in 1816 . . ." *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XIV, 143; Lalor, "The Germans in the West," *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXII, 463; Faust, *The German Element in the United States*, II, 30, 126-130; I, 446; Edward A. Ross, *The Old World in the New* (New York, 1914), 52-53; Olmstead, *A Journey Through Texas*, 142; Gustav Körner, *Das Deutsche Element in den Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika, 1818-1848* (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1880), 323; Herman E. von Holst, *The Constitutional and Political History of the United States* (8 vols., Chicago, 1881-1892), IV, (1885), 426-429; Albert J. Beveridge, *Abraham Lincoln, 1809-1858* (2 vols., Boston, 1928), II, 228.

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mistic toward everything that could not be measured in dollars and cents. At times he was more successful than his competitors because the price of his goods was cheaper, the goods were of a more serviceable character, and he used more efficient means of attracting customers. The Germans en-

OCCUPATIONS

Original Census Returns, Dubois County, Indiana



None Reported Germans Other Foreigners Native

gaged in various occupations and in large sections of the United States furnished blacksmiths, butchers, carpenters, coopers, saddlers, shoemakers, and tailors. Regardless of what type of occupation the German engaged in, he walked well, worked well, and looked well. The explanation for his tidiness, orderly bearing, and smartness of carriage may be attributed to moral rather than economic origin; these qualities resulted from training and not from social conditions. As a rule, the home influences were such as to affect his aesthetic and cultural sensibilities in a favorable manner. orderliness and thrift stand out in the foreground.³²

Although most of the Germans who migrated to Dubois County were farmers, a number of blacksmiths, carpenters, coopers, merchants, shoemakers, saddlers, tailors, and wagon-makers also came.³³ The accompanying graph showing occupations in Dubois County was prepared on the basis of the 1850 and 1860 Original Census Returns. It will be seen that the Germans excelled in the highly skilled trades, whereas in the professions, such as teaching and medicine, they occupied second place in relation to the native-born.

The German farmers, skilled workmen, and tradesmen worked in a community that was changing from a thinly settled frontier to a stable agricultural society. There were 27,543 acres of land in Dubois County in improved farms in 1850 which figure had increased over one hundred per cent by 1860. Over eleven hundred farms contained less than fifty acres and only 397 contained more than fifty acres. There were no farms containing more than five hundred acres. Wheat, corn, oats, tobacco, and potatoes were among the more important products produced.³⁴

In the early days poor boys in Dubois County were usually turned over by the overseer of the poor to some farmer

³² Schafer, "The Yankee and the Teuton," *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, VII, (1923-1924), 152; Ross, *The Old World in the New*, 64-65; Lalor, "The Germans in the West," *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXII, 463; Wittke, *We Who Built America*, 208; Josiah Flynt, "The German and the German-American," *Atlantic Monthly*, LXXVIII (1896), 664; Dawson, *The Evolution of Modern Germany*, 79, 152; *Senate Reports*, 54 Cong., 1 Sess., II, no. 290 (serial no. 3363), 4; Turner, "German Immigration into the United States," *Chicago Record Herald*, September 4, 1901; Kuno Francke, "The Germans," in Henry Pratt Fairchild (ed.), *Immigrant Backgrounds* (New York, 1927), 42-57.

³³ Original Returns of the Seventh Census, 1850, Dubois County, Indiana; Original Returns of the Eighth Census, 1860, Dubois County, Indiana.

³⁴ *Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, Statistics, Table XI*, 790; *Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Statistics of Agriculture*, II, 38-41; 198.

to learn farming. As a rule, the agreements were in writing, and they frequently stipulated that the apprentice was to serve and obey his master until he had reached the age of twenty-one. At times, the boy also contracted not to get married, nor to play cards, dice, or other unlawful games, or visit places where gambling was in vogue. In return for his services, he was to be clothed, fed, taught the occupation of farming, taught to read, write, and cipher, and sometimes got a horse well broke for use. When the apprentice reached the age of twenty-one the master was to give him two suits, one of which was to be a pair of Kentucky jeans, each to be worth twenty-five dollars.³⁵

In Dubois County, the blacksmith ranked next to the farmer in importance. He made all of his own tools, except the bellows, anvil, vise, and files. Only bar iron³⁶ was available, and it was necessary to go to Louisville to get it. The pioneer blacksmith made plows, rakes, corn hoes, grub hoes, hammers, wedges, shovels, butcher knives, axes, sickles, locks, keys, and other useful tools for the pioneer. Even the sheriff sometimes had to call on the blacksmith to weld the iron chain which joined the handcuffs on prisoners. "Store" horseshoes were not known in Dubois County before 1835. In those days practically all the forge work was paid for in trade, and the blacksmith's home was always supplied with flour, bacon, pork, lard, vegetables in season, apples, pumpkins, and other produce. That there was a demand for blacksmiths can be seen by the fact that Jacob Geiger induced Bernhard Niehaus, a pioneer blacksmith, to come to Huntingburg by giving him a town lot.³⁷

Since charcoal burning was common in pioneer days, the apprentice of the blacksmith was occasionally called upon to perform this task. The charcoal pit was made by marking off a circular space which measured from fifteen to twenty feet in diameter, and then cord wood was piled, on end, all over it; openings for fires were left on each side of the large pile of wood, and the center was filled with chips. The wood was banked in and the fire was started. For several days the pit required careful watching. When the fire was about to break out, it was covered with earth and subdued. Sugar

³⁵ A garment made of a twilled cotton cloth. Wilson, *History of Dubois County*, 133.

³⁶ The cost was about seven cents a pound, and the smallest size measured an inch or an inch and a half. Wilson, *History of Dubois County*, 134.

³⁷ Wilson, *History of Dubois County*, 134-135.

maple, beech, and wild cherry wood were used, but the latter made the finest charcoal.³⁸

A merchant in Dubois County during the early days sometimes used a wheelbarrow to transport his supplies from Troy to Ferdinand. The merchant from Louisville or any other city also had difficulties when he bought farm products from the businessmen in Ferdinand. A Louisville merchant in 1849 bought some beans from a storekeeper in Ferdinand, and since the latter refused to take care of the packing and shipping, the Louisville merchant found it necessary to spend some extra days in Ferdinand.³⁹

It may be assumed that the early German cabinetmakers, carpenters, brickmakers, and wagonmakers are responsible for the furniture factories in Jasper, the brickyard, furniture factory, and wagon works in Huntingburg. There were twenty-seven manufacturing establishments in Dubois County in 1860 employing thirty-eight men and no women, and the annual value of the products was \$40,747.⁴⁰

No matter how humble a German's occupation may have been, he tried to do his best. He knew the force of the old proverb, "Arbeit macht das Leben süß."⁴¹ Edward Ross has pictured the German in a most fitting manner by these words:

The German is lasting in his sympathies and his antipathies and leisurely in his mental processes. It takes him long to make up his mind and longer to get an idea out of his head. In his thinking he tries to grasp more things at a time than does the Celt. Not for him the simple logic that proceeds from one to two outstanding factors in a situation and ignores all the rest. He wants to be comprehensive and final where the Latin aims to be merely clear and precise. It is this very complexity of thought that makes the German often silent, his speech heavy or confused. But just this relish for details and this passion for thoroughness make him a born investigator.⁴²

The Germans made a real contribution not only to Dubois County but to America and in a few lines Frederick J. Turner has summed up their real value: "They have infused into the American stock and society a conservatism and steady persistence and solidity useful in moderating the nervous energy of the native Americans."⁴³

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 134.

³⁹ Kleber, *Ferdinand*, 68; Josephine C. Goldmark, *Pilgrims of '48* (New Haven, Connecticut, 1930), 221.

⁴⁰ *Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Statistics of Manufactures*, III, 119.

⁴¹ Faust, *The German Element in the United States*, II, 470.

⁴² Ross, *The Old World in the New*, 65-66.

⁴³ Turner, "German Immigration into the United States," *Chicago Record Herald*, September 4, 1901.