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Schlaraffia Milwaukia

Antje Petty

Members of the *Schlaraffia Milwaukia* with visitors from New Orleans, March 2011. Photo courtesy *Schlaraffia Milwaukia*.

In the nineteenth century a colorful *Vereinskultur* (Verein = club, society) flourished in the German states. People joined singing societies, gymnastic clubs, shooting societies, the Freemasons, and a multitude of other groups, depending on their interests, goals, political or religious leanings, and local traditions. Germans who immigrated to the United States brought their *Vereinstradition* with them, and to this day we find Liederkranz choirs and Turner gymnastics societies in American communities. Much less known, however, is another German phenomenon: the Schlaraffia.

The Schlaraffia was founded in 1859 in Prague (then part of the Austrian Empire) at a time—a decade after the failed revolutions—when any gathering of people was easily construed as political and raised the suspicions of the authorities. In this atmosphere a group of German artists and actors decided to form an explicitly non-political society whose sole purpose was the amusement of its members in a cultural and

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INSIDE

Greetings, Friends and Readers!

We have reached the end of the spring semester at the UW–Madison, and we are looking back on the past academic year as a period of hard work and many accomplishments. Our March symposium on "German and German-American Dimensions of the U.S. Civil War" was a success, with all of the sessions attended by good-sized audiences from within the university, the local community, and more distant places. It was our intention to explore the time before, during, and after the end of the Civil War, focusing especially on the contributions made by Germans and German-Americans, as well as the war's reception in Europe and the way developments in America were influential there.

We hope soon—within a very few weeks—to be able to share with you some of our ongoing work on our Civil War project: check the Max Kade Institute's Web site <mki.wisc.edu>, where you will find not only several of the symposium lectures, but also other information, including Newsletter items, bibliographical entries, translations into English (or synopses) of selected important texts, images, commentaries, and other materials that relate to the topic. We hope that this MKI-hosted Civil War forum becomes an ongoing discussion and sharing of information over the next several years, a site constantly under construction that sparks your imagination and invites your participation.

Our Friends' Annual Meeting was held this year on May 7 in the village of St. Nazianz, not far from Manitowoc; a report of the program and also photographs can be found elsewhere in this issue. We were pleased at the turnout and especially at the distances from which some of the Friends came to attend: from Minnesota, from the Chicago area, and from all over Wisconsin. Our hosts in St. Nazianz welcomed our visit and gave us guided tours of the historical sites; and we were delighted to be there. We would like to express our gratitude to them and, above all, to Karyl Rommelfanger, whose energy and dedication as chief-in-charge of the local arrangements were in evidence throughout.

If you have been on the Library Mall in the last couple of months, you will notice that the new roof for the University Club is nearly finished. The roof will certainly benefit the MKI as well as the Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures (CSUMC), which will be housed together right under it on the fourth floor. CSUMC is seriously cramped in its current location on the third floor, where they have been located for the last two years, and they are looking forward to rejoining the MKI as soon as things are ready. We lament only the fact that progress is so slow—the original schedule called for the roof to be ready at the end of the summer of 2010—but those who know about such things assure us that delays are not out of the ordinary.

Once again, I would like to close my remarks by expressing our heartfelt thanks for the support you have given to the Library Project capital campaign—so far. We appreciate your assistance as we move toward our goal, and we will keep you informed about our progress.

Now come the summer months, which should be a time to catch up. The MKI will take part in Milwaukee's German Fest, which will be held from the 28th to the 31st of July, and we would love to see you there. Meanwhile, we send you our very best wishes: enjoy the good weather, keep away from the bad weather, be healthy, work hard, and stay in touch!
—Cora Lee

The Newsletter of the Friends of the Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies is published three times a year at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Submissions are invited and should be sent to:

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2011 Friends Annual Meeting in St. Nazianz, Wisconsin

On a beautiful, sunny, and warm Saturday in early May, over fifty Friends met for the 2011 Annual Meeting in St. Nazianz, a town of 730 inhabitants near Manitowoc, Wisconsin. We started out with a tour of St. Gregory's Church, a beautiful stone structure that was built by Ambrose Oschwald's utopian Catholic community. Afterwards, we strolled across the old cemetery adjoining the church, where fascinating grave markers still bear witness to the German settlers who founded the community in 1854. For a detailed history of St. Nazianz see the two-part article by Karyl Rommelfanger in the Fall 2010 and Winter 2011 issues of your Newsletter.

Then we visited two buildings in downtown St. Nazianz, just a short walk from the church: the lovingly restored old post office and the old fire house, which today houses the St. Nazianz Historical Society. Next on the schedule was a stop at the property of the old Salvatorian Seminary, which is connected to the town by a beautiful park. The Salvatorian Order of the Divine Savior bought the old communal properties in 1896, where it opened a seminary and later a high school. We strolled around the large property and visited the old Seminary building, St. Ambrose Chapel, the Seminary cemetery, and Loretto Chapel, where Father Oschwald is buried. Abandoned for over twenty years, many of the buildings are currently in serious disrepair. However, new owners are raising funds to restore the property to its former glory, with the intention of using it as a retreat.

Then it was time for the annual business meeting, where MKI staff members gave an overview of the Institute's activities, and four new members were elected to the Friends Board of Directors: Edward Langer, Luanne von Schneidemesser, and Johannes Strohschänk were elected to a first term, and Elizabeth (Betsy) Greene was elected to a second term. Three members leave the Board now after having served two terms: Hans Bernet, Tom Lidtke, and Fran Luebke. We are grateful for everything they have done for the Friends and the Institute over the last six years. At a brief meeting of the new Board of Directors the following officers were elected: James Kleinschmidt (President), Charles James (Vice President), Sandra Casterline (Secretary), and Peter Arvedson (Treasurer). Peter Monkmeyer again agreed to serve as assistant to the Treasurer.

The day concluded with a delicious meal at the Silver Valley Banquet Hall. We thank Karyl Rommelfanger for organizing this marvelous event. Special thanks go also to the wonderful people of the St. Nazianz Historical Society and the Christian Ministries, who guided us through their buildings and treated us to coffee and cake and punch.

For images of the event see pages 8 and 9.

D. C. Luening's Colorful Career, or Coming of Age as an Immigrant

Antje Petty

In the last days of 1936, German- and English-language newspapers in Milwaukee, throughout Southern Wisconsin, and even in Chicago lamented the passing of Dietrich C. Luening, a renowned citizen of Milwaukee who had died on December 18 at the age of 88. People fondly remembered "Professor Luening" for his service to the Milwaukee Public School District, where he had been principal at two different schools for over forty years, and for his pioneering work in the education of deaf children. German papers in particular emphasized D. C. Luening's commitment to the German language and the Milwaukee German community, where he had held leading positions in the Liederkranz (singing society), the Masonic Aurora/German lodge, and the Schlaraffia Milwaukia (see lead article). The papers were a bit more circumspect about Luening's youth, hinting at a "colorful career" (*Milwaukee Journa*l, 19 December, 1936).

The Max Kade Institute holds a little book that describes those colorful years in D. C. Luening's life: his autobiography *Vom Schiffsdeck zum Katheder: Werdegang eines Menschen welcher sich erst spaet im Leben gefunden* (From the Ship's Deck to the Lectern: The Story of Someone Who Found His Way Only Late in Life), self-published in Milwaukee in 1922. It was donated to the Institute with other family documents by D. C.'s grandson and longtime MKI Friend, Robert Luening. Written in a self-deprecating style and laced with humorous anecdotes, the book is the coming-of-age story of Dietrich, a troubled boy from the northern German port city of Bremen, who took to the high seas at age 14 and wound up in Wisconsin a few years later.

According to the autobiographical account, Dietrich was born in 1848 in Amsterdam, where his father was a wholesale merchant. When the business faltered in 1854, his father and oldest sister immigrated to America, while his mother returned with her other children to her hometown of Bremen, where she had grown up in a prominent merchant family. There Dietrich was put in the care of a childless uncle and aunt who were unable to deal with a rambunctious and mischievous six-year-old. A broken church window was the final straw, and Dietrich was sent on, to stay with various uncles and aunts and grandparents. No matter where he lived, however, he managed to get himself into trouble, and school was not his priority. At age ten, he was thrown out of the renowned "Bürgerschule" for instigating a fight. Looking back, the author concluded: "Once more, Dietrich missed a golden opportunity to associate himself with the good kids." Other school failures followed, and in June 1862—after the police arrested him because of a street fight—the family decided to send him to "Das rauhe Haus," the last resort for difficult youths. At this point Dietrich had had enough. Barely 14 years old, he left his family and shipped out to sea as a cabin boy on the commercial sailing vessel *Diana*. The same month, his mother and siblings immigrated to Milwaukee to join his father.

D. C. Luening on the day of his retirement as Principal of Milwaukee's 9th Street School, 1922. ***Milwaukee Sentinal*****, 19 December 1936.**

One reads that young Dietrich's life for the next sixteen months, as the *Diana* traveled from Bremen to Hong Kong with a crew of thirteen, "was not a string of happy days. On the contrary, there were many dark hours. A rope's end frequently danced on Dietrich's back, making sure that he quickly learned the sailor's skills. A better person, however, he became not." In Hong Kong, Dietrich switched to another vessel, the *Graf Eulenburg*, but not before leaving a parting present for the crew of the *Diana* in the form of castor oil in the soup. This earned him a citation with the Maritime Board in Bremen. The *Graf Eulenburg* headed for New York, where it arrived in March

1864. At first, Dietrich considered visiting his family in Milwaukee, but changed his mind when he learned a war was going on. He quickly enlisted in the U.S. Navy and took part in the battle of Fort Fisher, North Carolina, the last major naval battle of the American Civil War. In the summer of 1865, he left the Navy, squandered what little money he had, and now, penniless and in rags, decided to go back to Bremen as a deckhand on another sailing vessel.

Dietrich announced his return to his North German relatives and—trying to explain his appearance—made up a shipwreck story. He was touched when his family welcomed him with open arms, believed his story, tried to bring him back into their fold, and make a good merchant out of him. Alas, it was to no avail. The tedium of the trading business did not agree with Dietrich, and he lost one apprenticeship position after another. Now the family saw no other alternative but to send him to his parents in Wisconsin. They bought Dietrich passage to New York, outfitted him with clothes and travel supplies, and gave him a voucher to be exchanged for a train ticket to Milwaukee and $25 for pocket money. Thus, in May 1866, Dietrich once more arrived in New York. However, instead of heading straight to Milwaukee, he decided to enjoy the city for a while. He first spent his $25, then sold his luggage, and last but not least sold the train ticket for half price. When all of his resources were depleted, Dietrich had three options: get a job and try to make a living in New York, go back to sea, or attempt to make it to Wisconsin. Dietrich opted to head west and boarded the next train. Before long a conductor appeared and asked for a ticket. When it became clear that Dietrich had neither ticket nor money, he was pulled into the luggage car and thrown off the train at the next station. There he waited for the next train, boarded, and repeated the same game. Fellow passengers shared their food with him, and at night he slept under the stars. Halfway through his journey, luck had it that Dietrich encountered the same conductor who had accosted him on the first day of his journey. The man greeted him warmly with "Hallo little Dutchman. You are back again!" and placed him in the luggage car, but "forgot" to make him leave the train at the next station. Thus Dietrich made it to Milwaukee in "only" sixteen days.

After reuniting with his parents, who now lived in Sauk City, and with his brother and sister, who lived in Milwaukee, Dietrich explored Wisconsin "the Dietrich way." This meant doing odd jobs as a farm hand and on lake schooners, painting houses and working in a lumber mill—working just enough to get by and enjoy life. He quickly learned to speak fluent English and began giving entertaining speeches at public events, such as Fourth of July parades. Finally, Dietrich thought he had found his calling: he wanted to become a lawyer. He consulted Dr. Lachmund, a family friend and doctor in Sauk City, who agreed that Dietrich had the brains and the gift of gab necessary for that profession, but—pointing out that Dietrich lacked a formal education—suggested that he should get a teaching license first. Being a teacher was the last thing Dietrich would have imagined for himself, but after visiting his teacher-sister in her classroom, he warmed to the idea and attended a local teachers institute in the summer of 1870. After only six weeks, he took the exam, barely passed, and received a teacher's license third class.

In November, Dietrich began his first teaching assignment at a rural school in Sauk County. For $37 a month, he taught fifty students, all children of local Swiss farmers, who ranged in age from four to sixteen years. When the school closed in March for the farming season, Dietrich had to find other jobs, and he decided to go back to school to receive a higher-level teaching license. In 1873, after passing the next exam, he got a job as a German-language teacher at the Douglas School in Milwaukee's 8th Ward. Dietrich proved to be a popular teacher. His students appreciated his teaching style of mixing intensive studying with plenty of outdoor activities, singing, and fun.

Possibly looking back to his own childhood, Dietrich's philosophy was not to give up on any child: "It is not particularly challenging for a person to teach children from good homes, who grow up in an environment of love, patience, and discipline. […] A true educator is someone who can teach the so-called 'bad' child. No child is born 'bad,' and it is up to the teacher to counter adverse circumstances in a child's life, poor parenting, etc., […] and to find and develop what is good in every child." Dietrich continued his training, eventually passed the principal's exam, and in 1878 became a tenured school principal at both Jefferson School and

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intellectual environment. The new club was named Schlaraffia, alluding to the fabled land of plenty. *In Arte Voluptas* (pleasure lies in art) became its motto. Members were selected not by social status, wealth, religious affiliation, or occupation, but solely by their appreciation of humor and art and their willingness to contribute to the club's entertainment program with poems, songs, artwork, or humorous speeches and skits. In mockery of feudal customs and the claims of the aristocracy, a pseudo-medieval hierarchy, language, dress, and ceremony was established and eventually codified in the "Schlaraffenspiegel."

Meetings called "Sippungen" were held once a week at a club house or "Burg." Members called themselves "Ritter" (knights) and adopted humorous new Schlaraffia names. The meetings were conducted according to strict rules, the so-called Scharaffisches Spiel, which, as the name suggests, gave the proceedings the character of a well-rehearsed play and probably reflected the founders' background in theater. Any potentially controversial topics such as politics, religion, nationality, or business were banned. As Sigmund Krausz describes it in his article "Schlaraffia: A World Society" (*Appleton Magazine*, Vol.#10, New York, 1907): "From the moment a Schlaraffe [member] entered the castle, he was supposed to leave behind him all his profane cares of existence, to step, for the time being, out of his mortal shell, and to live solely for the enjoyment of humor, art, and friendship among men." Indeed, only men could be members, and while they did not have to be German, they had to speak the German language. In Prague, a city with equally prominent German and Czech populations, this meant that the Schlaraffia from its early days was inseparably tied to German culture and ideas.

For six years, the Prague Schlaraffia remained a local affair until one its members, the author Eduard Schmidt-Weißenfels, moved

to Berlin where he founded a new Schlaraffia. In 1867, this group became the first official branch or "Reych" of the organization. As word spread, new chapters were added in other German and Austrian cities, and in 1883, the first United States chapter was founded in San Francisco by a traveling German theater troupe. A year later, the Schlaraffia Milwaukia opened in Wisconsin as "Reych" No. 67. One of its early members was the painter Friedrich Wilhelm Heine, who immigrated to Milwaukee from Dresden, Germany, in 1885 to become the lead artist of the American Panorama Company. In his diaries* Heine described his introduction to the Milwaukia. He was ecstatic when he and a friend received invitations to visit the society on 13 January 1886 from an established "Ritter," Mr. Guttmann. At 9 p.m. they arrived at the "Dachsburg" (badger castle), the Milwaukia's meeting place, and were introduced to the Schlaraffen, who donned silly medieval-looking costumes complete with wooden swords and "helmets" that were made of colorful fabric and resembled fools' caps more than actual armor. The guests were asked to wait outside while the members gathered to sing "Schlaraffenlieder," songs specifically composed by and for the Schlaraffen. Next, the guests were led into the main chamber, a large hall decorated like an over-the-top medieval castle. They had to bow at the altar "Lulu," a blinking *Uhu* (horned owl), the mythical bird of wisdom and satirical deity of the Schlaraffia. Then they were introduced to the "Herrlichkeit,"

*The Friedrich Wilhelm Heine diaries (written between 1879 and 1921) are housed in the Milwaukee County Historical Society (MCHS). Quotes and images from the diaries are used with permission. The MKI is collaborating with the MCHS and the Museum of Wisconsin Art on a multi-year project to transcribe the diaries from old German script and to translate selected passages into English. For more information on the "F. W. Heine Diaries Project" and the Panorama movement, see the Winter 2008 issue of the Friends of MKI Newsletter.

D. C. Luening, "Großfürst von Markstein," undated.

the leader of the group, "whose word is law," and drinks were passed around. A hearty meal of goulash followed, and the evening concluded with more songs and a skit initiated by a second "Herrlichkeit," Director Welb from the German theater. Heine soon joined the Schlaraffia, and in April 1895, after nine years of rising through the ranks, he became Ritter "Wippchen der Wasserscheue."

When Heine temporarily moved to San Francisco in 1898 to prepare the production of a new panorama of the "Battle of Manila," he immediately sought out the local Schlaraffia. However, a "Schlaraffe" cannot just spontaneously show up at another "Reych"; he first needs a "Schlaraffenpass" (passport) from his own organization. In San Francisco, Heine realized that not all chapters are the same. On 26 November 1898, he was invited to the 15th anniversary celebration of the Schlaraffia Franciscana, a big event and dinner where members brought their spouses and other guests. Heine was surprised about the dress code (tailcoat), and the "emphasis on appearances," but at the same time a certain lack of proper Schlaraffia protocol. When a fellow "Schlaraffe" asked him for his honest "outsider opinion" of the event, Heine summarized: "'Sendboten' (visitors) were not properly acknowledged, the 'Stammrolle' (membership roll) was not read, too few songs were sung, the program wasn't followed, the beer was flat, but overall I had a good impression."

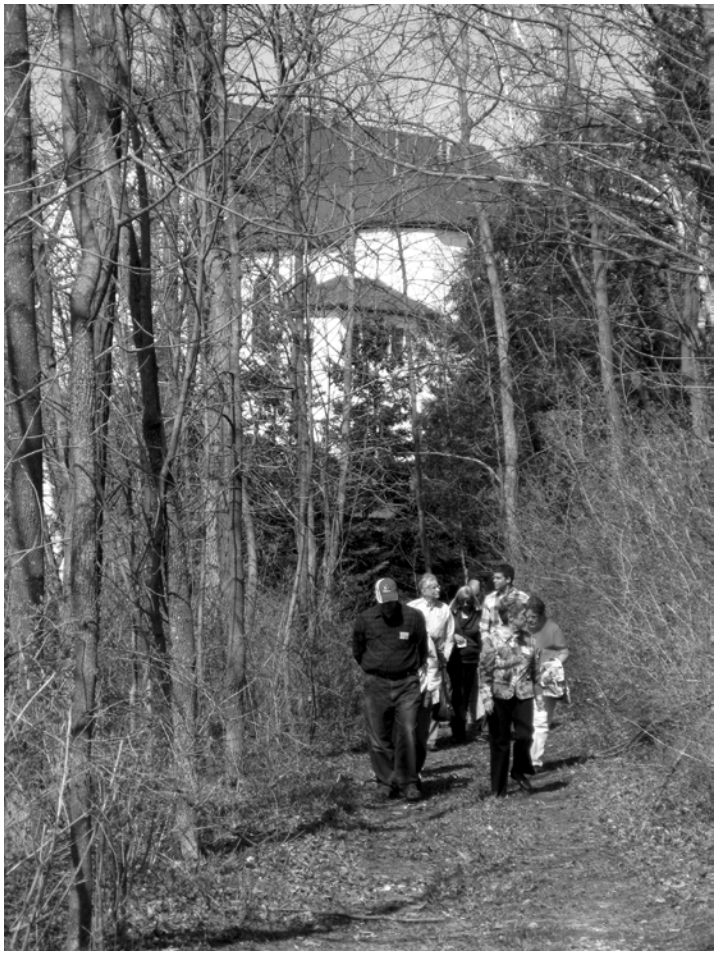
For Heine, the Schlaraffia was an important part, if not the center, of his social life and eventually a family affair. His son Hans Florian joined the Milwaukia to become Ritter "Rippchen vom Wippchen," and Hans' older brother Rudolph Ernst joined the Schlaraffia Franciscana taking the name "Auch ein Wippchen." Among the other Milwaukia members during Heine's tenure was D. C. Luening, or "Großfürst von Markstein" (see article beginning on page 4), who was the chancellor of the society for many years. Luening's son Edwin followed in his father's footsteps and became Schlaraffe "Äpfelchen nicht weit vom Stamm."

Over the years, more than 400 Schlaraffia chapters were established around the world. Many of them have since closed, but others still flourish. During the Nazi period, the Schlaraffia organization was banned in Germany. At the same time, chapters in the United States were viewed with suspicion. Although it is neither a secret society, nor secretive about its membership, purpose, rituals, or events, the Schlaraffia is a private, introverted organization, not well known outside the German-American community. Thus in 1940, the chancellor of the New York chapter felt compelled to explain the society to his fellow Americans in English. Emphasizing its focus on equality, congeniality, tolerance, and friendship, he concluded: "Schlaraffia constitutes a new approach to the recognition of the sublime values of life. Selfless devotion to one another is coupled with an ardent interest in both the fine and liberal arts, and active production rather than mere passive enjoyment is urged. A subtle, never coarse, humor floats through the air like gossamer. […] The psychologist may pronounce this an escape-mechanism, but the poet calls it Utopia."

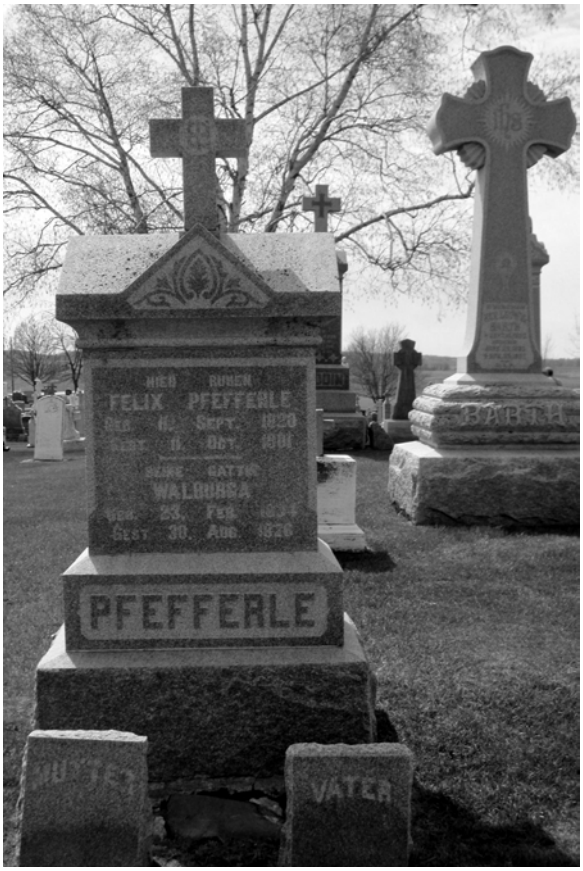
Today, following the general trend of declining membership in fraternal organizations and hampered by the strict German-only requirement, Schlaraffia chapters in the United States tend to have only a few dozen members. Worldwide the organization had over 10,000 members in 2010. The Milwaukia is one of the remaining Schlaraffias the United States. In its "Dachsburg" on Marquette Avenue, a large oil painting by F. W. Heine depicting the Castle of Prague still hangs over the altar of "Lulu."

Impressions from the 2011 Friends of the Max Kade Institute Annual Meeting in St. Nazianz, Wisconsin

Photos by Charles James, Kevin Kurdylo, and Antje Petty



A stroll through the park between St. Gregory's Church and the Salvatorian property.



One of many German gravestones at St. Gregory's Cemetery.

The old post office in downtown St. Nazianz.

Listening to one of the Historical Society's guides.

St. Gregory's Church and graveyard.

A stained glass window in St. Gregory's Church.

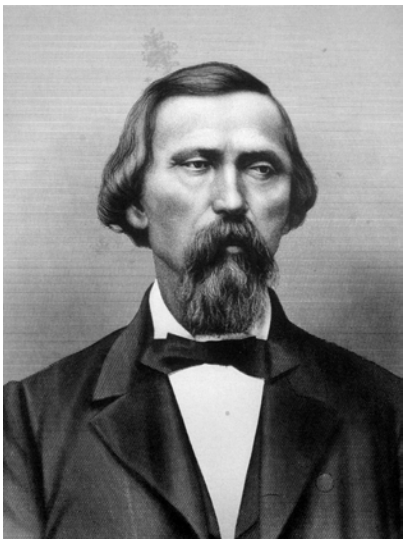
The St. Nazianz Museum and Historical Society have their home in the Old Fire House.

St. Nazianz plates commemorating the American Revolution.

MKI Friends at St. Gregory Church.

The Jacob Best Family Memorial

Peter Arvedson



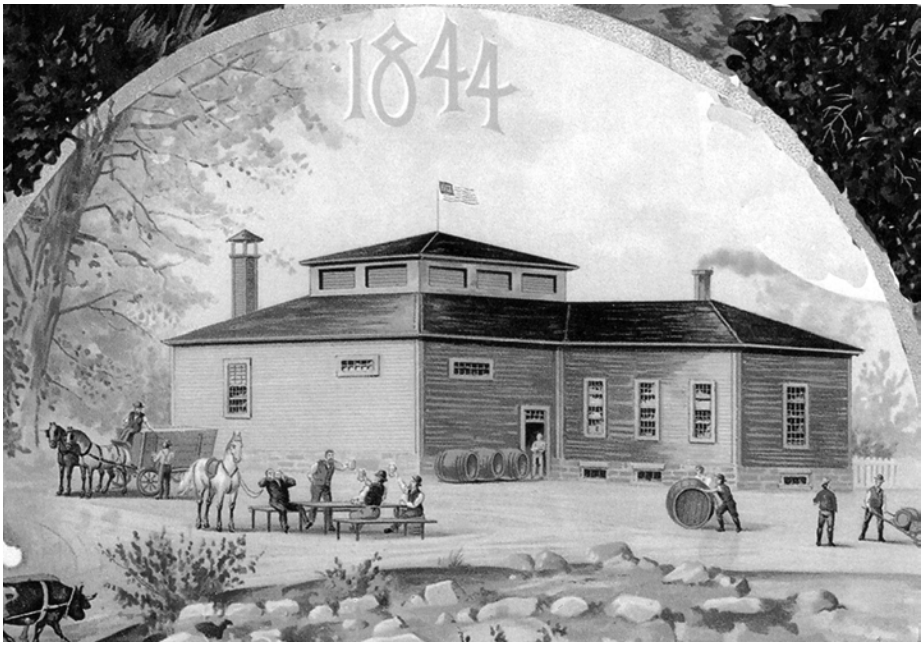
Jacob Best, Sr. From *The Pabst Brewing Company* by Thomas C. Cochran, 1947.

One of the oldest burial sites in Milwaukee is Forest Home Cemetery, and the grave markers there reflect the city's settlement history, as well as the evolution in burial traditions and even architectural design. Until recently, visitors who took the fascinating Historical Tour could see the family graves of Milwaukee's famous beer barons, all adorned with momentous memorials, except for one: the Best family site, which did not have so much as a simple marker. This changed on 22 May 2011, when a memorial stone was unveiled by descendants of the Best-Pabst families and the staff of the Milwaukee Pabst Mansion, culminating a several-year community effort. This is the story behind the monument:

In the fall of 1844, thirteen members of the extended Best family arrived in Milwaukee, coming from the small city of Mettenheim in Rhenish Hesse, where patriarch Jacob Best had owned a brewery. They had traveled to Havre de Grace (now Le Havre), France, boarded the ship *Louis Philippe* and sailed to New York City. On the ship manifest they are listed as Jacob Best and his wife Eva Maria; Philip Schmidt, Eva's 85-year-old father; Jacob and Eva's oldest son Charles; his wife Anna Margaretha and their daughter Margaretha; Jacob and Eva's second son Phillip, his wife Maria Anna, and their two-year-old daughter Maria, who later married Frederick Pabst; Jacob and Eva's third son Jacob, Jr., and his wife Elizabeth; Jacob and Eva's fourth son Lorenz; and two adult daughters of Jacob and Eva, Marie and Anna.

The *Louis Philippe* arrived in New York City on 22 August 1844. On 10 September 1844, a deed transfer of two lots (13 and 14) on block 127 in the Town of Milwaukee was signed by one Christian Rolle and his wife and Jacob Best and his son Phillip. These lots, located on the west side of Ninth Street between Chestnut and Winnebago, became home to a newly built brewery and the Best family.

However, this was not the first time a member of the Best family had set foot in Milwaukee. Jacob, Jr., had already arrived in 1842 and had immediately started a business. The following ad appeared in the *Milwaukee Sentinel* on 15 February 1843: "Vinegar! Vinegar! Jacob Best has established a Vinegar Factory in the West Ward, opposite J. A. Messinger's, near the canal and will always have on hand a good assortment of BEST CIDER VINEGAR, which he will sell



Best Brewing Company, Miwaukee, 1844. From a Best Brewing Company poster. Courtesy John Eastberg.

Peter Arvedson, Bob Giese, John Eastberg, and Leonard Jurgenson at the dedication of the Best family memorial, Forest Home Cemetery, Milwaukee, May 2011. Photo: Mark Arvedson.

at wholesale and retail, at reasonable prices." Thus the Best family's immigration to Milwaukee followed the same pattern as that of many others: one member came to America first, put down roots, and then sent for the extended family, that now had a place to stay and enough support to establish a business.

The Best family spent the winter of 1844–45 constructing the new brewery and a family home. Their first task was to acquire a steam boiler for the brewing process. Phillip Best approached A. J. Langworthy and asked him to construct the equipment. At first Langworthy was skeptical, knowing that there was not enough boiler iron in Milwaukee, Racine, or Kenosha, but then he arranged to have the special iron brought in from Buffalo, New York. When the boiler was finished, however, Phillip was unable to pay Langworthy in full. The boiler maker generously told Philipp to take the boiler and begin brewing. Phillip was surprised at this offer and promised that the first keg would go to Langworthy and that he could have free beer the rest of his life—a promise kept by Phillip's successors and sons-in-law Frederick Pabst and Emil Schandein, even after Phillip's death. The first keg of Best beer was brewed in 1845, and the business grew from there.

Life, however, was not always easy. In the first few years after their arrival, several family members including infant children died. They were buried in the small German cemetery a few blocks west of the brewery on Chestnut Street. When that cemetery closed, the remains were transferred to Forest Home Cemetery, which had opened in 1850. In 1857, Phillip and Jacob, Jr., purchased Lots 13 and 14, Block 9, Section 8. Jacob, Sr., purchased Lot 8 at an unknown date. Soon a large family crypt was built into the hill on Lot 8. In 1882, the Pabst and Schandein families purchased Lot 15, Section 40, and some of the remains from Section 8 were moved there, while others remained in Section 8.

When Frederick Pabst died in 1904, the family was informed that the crypt was in a state of disrepair and would be removed. Thus the remains still there were moved, but no marker was erected at the new site, possibly because the family intended to replace the crypt with a new suitable monument. This, however, never happened, and for over 100 years there has been no memorial at Forest Home Cemetery to the Jacob Best, Sr., family;—until today.

Peter Arvedson is a docent at the Milwaukee Pabst Mansion. He has done extensive research on the families of Milwaukee brewers Frederick Pabst, Jacob Best, and Emil Schandein.

Now in English Translation: Civil War Letters from America's German-Language Press

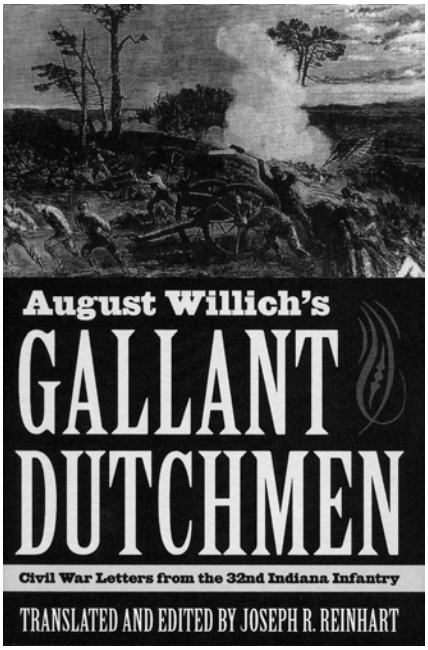
Cora Lee Kluge

August Willich's Gallant Dutchmen: Civil War Letters from the 32nd Indiana Infantry. Translated and edited by Joseph R. Reinhart. Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 2006. xiii + 262 pages. $35.00.

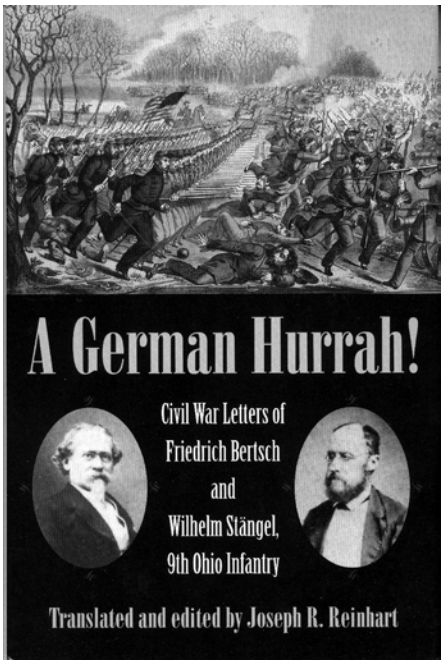
A German Hurrah! Civil War Letters of Friedrich Bertsch and Wilhelm Stängel, 9th Ohio Infantry. Translated and edited by Joseph R. Reinhart. Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 2010. xiv + 370 pages. $59.00.

As we mark the sesquicentennial anniversary of the beginning of the U.S. Civil War, we are happy to draw attention to these two volumes, which contain Joseph R. Reinhart's edited translations into English of German-language letters written by Union soldiers for publication in German-American newspapers. The letters are contemporary commentaries, essentially what we would call the work of war correspondents, that will interest the scholarly community as well as the general reading public. After all, they contain observations of German and German-American members of the military, a large group that made up nearly one-fourth of the entire Union army forces, and they were published for widespread consumption in newspapers with substantial circulation. In addition, the letters serve to remind us of the huge wealth of foreign-language documentation, a significant part of the American historical narrative, which has been (and is increasingly) hidden from view. The fact that they were written in German has relegated them to dusty archives, where they lie forgotten and ignored; and yet this fact also makes them even more valuable, as they present the views of and shed light on a specific—large—ethnic minority within the country.

In his introduction to *August Willich's Gallant Dutchmen*, Reinhart provides background information about Willich's career, both in Europe and in America, the history of the 32nd Indiana Infantry Regiment, and the 60 letters whose translations he includes. The letters and also several reports can be found in chronological order throughout the volume's twelve chapters, interspersed with editorial comments by Reinhart, which, together with his copious notes, allow the reader to understand easily the course of events. Most of the letters were written between August 1861 and December 1863, and all of them were published in one of three newspapers: the Democratic *Louisville Anzeiger*, the Democratic *Cincinnati Volksfreund*, and the Republican *Freie Presse von Indiana* (Indianapolis). Some appeared unsigned, or were signed with nothing more than an initial or initials, or a penname; but Reinhart reveals the identities of ten of the writers, and in his Epilogue he provides information about the fates of nine of these ten. The largest group of letters—17 of the 60—were written by an unidentified infantryman from Cincinnati who called himself Artaxerxes.



The second volume, *A German Hurrah! Civil War Letters of Friedrich Bertsch and Wilhelm Stängel, 9th Ohio Infantry*, contains 98 letters by Lieutenant Friedrich Bertsch that were published in the *Cincinnati Volksfreund* and an additional ten letters written by Chaplain—later Captain—Wilhelm Stängel that were published in the *Louisville Anzeiger*, all from the period between 1 June 1861 and 5 September 1862. As in *August Willich's Gallant Dutchmen*, Reinhart provides editorial comments interspersed throughout to fill in the details. Bertsch (1823–1904) was born in Stuttgart, trained as a lithographer, and became an enthusiastic Turner; in 1852 he emigrated to the U.S., where he settled in Cincinnati. He



enrolled as a three-month volunteer on 8 May 1861, joining the Ohio 9th, and changed his enlistment to three years later that same month. Promoted to first lieutenant in February 1862, he returned to Cincinnati for health reasons in January 1863 and finally mustered out together with his regiment in June of 1864. Stängel (1826–1880) was born in Schwäbisch Gmünd, studied law in Tübingen, participated in the 1848 Revolution, and fled to the U.S. in its aftermath. A prominent member of the German community in Louisville, he joined the Ohio 9th in the summer of 1861, when the regiment was operating in western Virginia. Stängel's checkered career in America included work as a journalist, a portrait painter, an art teacher, and a Turner. His letters confirm that he was bitter and angry because of American nativism, was not hesitant to praise the German soldier as a "much better soldier" (*German Hurrah!* 202), and finally was dismissed from the army in August of 1862 because of disrespectful public criticism of the leaders of the war effort, including President Lincoln. He moved to Cincinnati and then on to St. Louis, where he worked as an assistant editor and political writer with the *Westliche Post*. There is some overlap between Reinhart's two volumes, both in the Introductions and in the Epilogues, as the translator/editor himself points out.

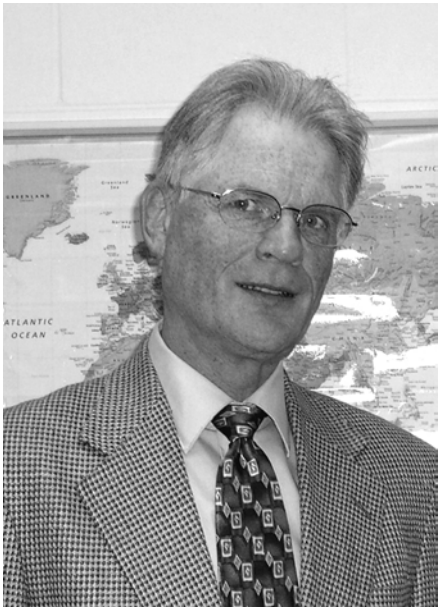
The letters included in *August Willich's Gallant Dutchmen* and *A German Hurrah!* make available information concerning the war experiences of two German regiments; and they succeed in illustrating the problems and the feelings of German and German-American soldiers as they dealt with the period's widespread nativism. The first collection provides a broadly drawn perspective on life within and the activities of the 32nd Indiana Infantry Regiment, because it includes letters written by a number of correspondents. The second volume is different, in that it includes letters by only two writers: one a Forty-eighter and the other very much a kindred spirit, both Turners, both religious liberals who opposed prohibition laws as well as nativism and slavery, both officers in the war, and both openly critical toward much they found in American politics and society. Thus, while not providing a cross-section of the attitudes within the Ohio 9th, it does offer a clearly drawn picture of one outspoken and often disapproving group.

These volumes bring the reader close to the Civil War. One finds expressions of frustration over its conduct—"One sees…all too clearly… that no practical field soldier stands at the head of the troops" (*German Hurrah!* 279)—or annoyance over the way events are reported—"The American correspondents are bestowing especially over exuberant praise on the generals, none however thinking about investigating the reason for the sudden attack by the enemy, which resulted in the useless deaths [and] maiming of thousands of men" (*August Willich* 86). Statistical reports of the dead and the wounded do not give the same perspective as statements like "[Lieutenant Sachs] was surrounded by six enemy soldiers and would not surrender, and so was shot down" and "[he] died in my arms" (*August Willich* 47, 46). The German soldiers felt they were better citizens, remarking "...we [German citizens] hasten in the hour of danger to do our duty, regardless of what may be, and even if others, that is just those nativists, hesitate so much, to risk body and life, to save their '*beloved country*'" (*German Hurrah!* 100). But there are also occasional humorous situations: "A field guard called…'*Hold! Who comes there?*' and…fired and a poor cow, who had still not understood field service, fell to the ground dead. Likewise it went with a nice horse of a major…; certainly a soldier's horse should have known" (*German Hurrah!* 172).

There is much to praise here: Reinhart's research and his translations are done meticulously, and his indexes provide good assistance. These volumes will join the other collections of German letters from the Civil War era, of which there only a few (listed in Appendix C of *August Willich's Gallant Dutchmen*), as significant sources of information.

Johannes Strohschänk

Antje Petty



The Friends welcome Johannes Strohschänk to the Board of Directors. Originally from Germany, Johannes came to the United States in 1974 to study German language and literature at the Universities of South Carolina and California Davis. He now lives in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, where he teaches German in the Foreign Languages Department at the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire.

Among Johannes' most popular classes is an honors seminar in German-American studies, co-taught with William Thiel. Every year, around 20 students learn about German immigration to America and collaborate with professors on a variety of research projects. Students have helped with the cataloging, transcription, and translation of immigrant letters; researched German communities in the Chippewa Valley; taken an inventory of un-cataloged German-American documents stored at the Milwaukee County Historical Society; and done a survey of German graves at local cemeteries. Many of the students are of German heritage themselves.

Johannes makes it a point to connect German-American history with the experiences of new immigrants today. Last semester, for example, his students organized a successful university-wide panel discussion on the topic of "Heimat" or "home" with panelists from regional Hmong, Somali, and Latino communities. Johannes hopes that these interactions will build bridges among communities and will eventually lead to collaborations in migration studies across the state.

Johannes credits his good friend (and former member of the Board of Directors) Bill Thiel with getting him interested in German-American studies. Bill, whose ancestors hail from Schleswig-Holstein and were among the earliest Wisconsin settlers in—where else?—New Holstein, introduced Johannes to the rich German history of the state. Over the years, Johannes and Bill have collaborated on a number of research projects and publications. Their monograph *The Wisconsin Office of Emigration 1853–1855 and Its Impact on German Immigration to the State* was published in 2005 by the Max Kade Institute. Now the two are working on a comprehensive history of German immigration to Wisconsin for the years 1836–1861 and an annotated translation of the diary of Johann O. Kröhnke, a founding member of the town of New Holstein.

Johannes sees his membership on the Board of Directors as an opportunity to increase his involvement with people from across the state and beyond. He is particularly interested in expanding the German-American immigration discussion beyond the nineteenth century and to other ethnicities. As a German immigrant himself, he sees parallels to his own experience in both the stories of nineteenth-century immigrants and the lives of contemporary immigrants of other ethnicities. Says Johannes: "I believe our research of German Americans will be hugely enriched if we conduct it with an eye to other ethnicities and within the discourse of global migration in general."

Welcome aboard, Johannes!

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another school in Milwaukee, an appointment he held until his retirement in 1922.

Dietrich's personal life moved forward, too. He married Franziska Louise Stupinski in 1874 and had three children, only one of whom, his son Edwin, survived into adulthood. In the 1890s, Dietrich decided to go back to his original plan and study law, passed the Wisconsin bar in 1899, but never practiced law. He had realized that teaching was his true calling. Dietrich Luening, now going by the initials D. C., was a member of numerous clubs and charitable organizations in Milwaukee, the city that had become his home. There are many stories of immigrants who purposefully came to America with well-thought-out plans and goals in mind. D. C. Luening's "colorful career," on the other hand, is the story of an accidental immigrant, whose attempts to find himself are closely connected to his experiences in a new country, and who—with pluck, humor, and determination—contributed significantly to his adopted community in most unexpected ways.

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