MAX KADE INSTITUTE
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A Tour of the Library

Kevin M. Kurdylo

Researching at the MKI Library. Standing: Natallia Janechek, Cora Lee Kluge, Caitlin Carlson, Kevin Kurdylo; seated: Shelby Eckenrod.

INSIDE

The Max Kade Institute is proud of its library and archive collections, which are increasingly attractive to scholars and researchers. Over the years, the MKI has become known worldwide as a center for the study of the immigrant experience. We are committed to collecting, documenting, preserving, and making accessible materials that reveal the experiences of German-speaking immigrants and their descendants in North America. Such materials not only reflect their unique history, literature, and culture in the New World; they also illuminate European events and conditions affecting migration and help to position this significant immigrant group within American society in general and within the development of the United States. Our library is the heart of our institution, and we open it to all visitors and draw upon it for all our outreach activities.

Our collections include unique German-language items produced in America, ranging from cookbooks and religious works to poetry and literature, from family histories to diaries and letters, from advertis-

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Greetings, Friends and Readers!

We approach the end of the fall semester and of the year with feelings of hope and energy. It will not be long before we move to the fourth floor of the University Club, and we look forward to being in the central campus area, near the Memorial Library, the Library of the Wisconsin Historical Society, and a number of humanities departments and research institutes.

The pieces are all coming together. The UW College of Letters and Science has demonstrated its commitment to us and its confidence in the MKI's bright future by making available this large area at the top of the University Club. We are aware of the size of this gift—and the value of this pledge of support. In addition to the property itself, the College is willing to undertake some basic renovations.

Nevertheless, this is not enough. We want to get it right, designing and preparing our facilities to an appropriate standard before we move in. After all, our Library and Archives have special needs. Some of our precious and delicate collections require special shelving and climate control; visiting scholars and students need modern and functioning office technology to help them gather and manage the materials they find; and we all need well-appointed reading and study rooms, as well as more spacious and better work areas than we have had for many years.

The MKI Library and Archives are central and basic to all parts of our mission: (1) research into the story of German-speaking immigrants and their descendants in a global, multicultural, and interdisciplinary context; (2) preservation of German-language American print culture and personal documents; and (3) programs and projects to share our resources through publication, community outreach, and educational programming. We are proud of what we have and are delighted that researchers and scholars send questions—and come—from all over the world. We know that we have a treasure in our unique North American German Dialect Archive, which contains and makes available several thousand hours' worth of digitized recordings of German dialects spoken in North America, some going back as far as the 1940s. Our Published in America collection contains over 3,000 individual items; our Pamphlets, Family Histories, and Subject collections are extensive; and we have developed an excellent online catalog and more. Scholars, students, genealogists, local historians, and members of the general public find the MKI Library and Archives to be a source for information not available elsewhere.

We have begun a serious fundrais-

View from the front steps of the University Club, future home of the MKI.

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

Kevin Kurdylo
Friends of the Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies
901 University Bay Drive, Madison, WI 53705
Phone: (608) 262-7546
Fax: (608) 265-4640
kkurdylo@wisc.edu

mki.wisc.edu
maxkade.blogspot.com

ing campaign to benefit the MKI Library and Archives and are appealing to private foundations and applying for federal grants for major assistance. However, we will also need the support of individuals who are interested in our work: our Friends, our Friends' Friends, and all who are willing to help. Our MKI Library Project (a capital campaign) will be used exclusively to support the MKI Library:

- to create a state-of-the-art library facility in our new quarters in the University Club;
- to purchase new acquisitions to fill gaps in our collections; and
- to endow a position to support library staff.

Many of you are acquainted with our present situation and will understand what big steps forward we are envisioning. Our current space is far from being a modern library of any kind; our collections have come exclusively from private gifts and donations; and our librarian's salary comes largely from soft money, such as projects and grants.

We appeal to you for donations to our MKI Library Project; the time has come when your contribution will do the most good. Our overall goal is high, but it can be reached: we hope to raise one million dollars over three years. Gifts can be made either through the Friends or through the UW Foundation—but in either case, they should be clearly labeled "For the MKI Library Capital Campaign." As always, all donations are tax deductible.

We are grateful for your help and support. It is in large part because of your generosity that we have come so far and accomplished so much. We look back with satisfaction on the past year and our 25th anniversary celebrations, and we look forward to working on the new challenges ahead. You will be hearing more from us in the coming months about the role you can play.

Our best to you for the rest of the fall season and for the coming holidays. We wish you health, happiness, and hard work in the coming New Year. Do keep in touch!

—Cora Lee

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ing brochures to report cards and business ledgers; we also have secondary source materials essential to research in the field of German-American immigrant studies. In addition, we house a singular collection of recordings—the **North American German Dialect Archive**—documenting the German language as spoken in America, which dates from the late 1940s—a resource of extreme interest to linguists and historians. Some of these materials have been examined extensively by researchers, while others await consideration, evaluation, and interpretation. The variety of approaches that can be taken to investigate these materials is a continual surprise—academic researchers from such diverse fields as history, linguistics, political science, German studies, immigration studies, and ethnic studies have contacted us, not to mention the many genealogists and local historians.

Any tour of our collections should begin with what is known as the **Published in America** (PIA) collection. As the name suggests, it is composed mainly of German-language books printed in the United States, although there is also a smattering of titles from Canadian publishing houses. The more than 3,000 items of the PIA collection are arranged alphabetically by state, then city in which the publishing house was located, the publisher's name, and finally author and title. We do not know how large a comprehensive PIA collection would be, nor even the total number of American publishers who printed German-language materials, nor the histories of their businesses.

Possibilities for original research are almost endless: one can select any book to begin. Let us consider, for example, the first book shelved in the PIA collection, which is *Bibellesungen für den Familenkreis* (Bible Stories for the Family Circle), published in 1916 by the Pacific Press Publishing Association in Mountain View, California. Founded in 1874, Pacific Press is one of the two major Seventh-day Adventist publishing houses in North America. According to the title page of *Bibellesungen*, they also had locations in Kansas City, Missouri; Portland, Oregon; Brookfield, Illinois; Calgary, Alberta, Canada; and Cristobal, Canal Zone. A search of WorldCat, an online union catalog with access to the collections of more than 71,000 libraries in 112 countries, reveals that Pacific Press published more than 100 titles in German; no doubt they felt it was important that their message reach this segment of the American audience. The MKI owns only 17 of these titles—an indication of how much more we would like to collect—and this is not even a publishing house founded or run by German Americans!

The largest number of books in our PIA collection was published in Missouri, followed closely by Wisconsin and then New York and Ohio. Completing our collection are numerous books published in Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Iowa, and we have a fair representation of items from such states as Indiana, Minnesota, Maryland, and Nebraska; from Tennessee we have but three, and from Kansas only one! It is likely

SoundScriber machine used by Prof. Lester Seifert to record Wisconsin German dialects.

that German-language materials were published in nearly every state, and we would like to document this further. Among the major publishing concerns represented in our collections we find such names as Concordia and the Deutsche Evangelische Synode von Nord-Amerika, both based in St. Louis; Brumder and Northwestern in Milwaukee; and the Amerikanische Traktat-Gesellschaft, Benziger Brothers, Kaufmann, and Pustet in New York. Publication dates of items in the PIA collection range from 1808 to 1918, but we hope one day to acquire books published both earlier and later. Since our founding, the MKI has developed its collections on a donation-only basis—thanks to the generosity of MKI Friends, researchers, and genealogists!

The PIA collection is currently receiving attention from students in Cora Lee's class on German-American literature. For their paper projects, students are identifying and researching works by authors whose contributions to American prose and poetry remain largely unknown because they wrote in the German language. We look forward to seeing the fruits of their labors, and we plan to add copies of their papers to our Subject collection.

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Herta Müller, 2009 Nobel Prize Laureate in Literature, and the Story of Her Ancestors' Migration

Antje Petty

When the winner of the 2009 Nobel Prize in Literature was announced, many asked: "Who is Herta Müller?" Her selection may have come as surprise, but the timing was no coincidence. 2009, after all, marks the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of communism in Europe, and much of Herta Müller's work focuses on life in Romania under the repressive Ceaușescu regime. Her perspective is that of a member of the Romanian-German minority population, and she writes in German.

Herta Müller grew up in Romania in a German-speaking family and community founded by immigrants from Southwest Germany over 200 years ago. She studied German and Romanian Literature at West University in Timișoara. Her first work, "Niederungen" ("Nadirs")—a child's view of village life in the German-cultural Banat—was published in German in Romania in 1982 in a state-censored version. As a member of the "Aktionsgruppe Banat," a group of German-speaking writers who fought for freedom of speech, she soon became a target of the Securitate, Romania's secret police. In 1987, she and her husband moved to West Germany as part of the "Aussiedler" program, a German government initiative that paid Eastern European countries to let ethnic Germans "come back" to Germany.

Americans sometimes forget that not every emigrant in the world came to this country. In the eighteenth-century, the colonies in North America and later the United States seemed problematic: the voyage itself was treacherous and expensive, and new settlers had to fend for themselves. About half of the approximately 100,000 German emigrants who came to America during the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries arrived as "redemptioners"; that means they were taken across the Atlantic in exchange for years of labor as indentured servants.

At the same time, Austria-Hungary needed settlers for its swampy Danube River regions in the East. Would-be emigrants could reach these areas by traveling down the Danube; the Austrian government supported the journey; and new settlers received subsidies, tax credits, and special privileges upon arrival. During the last eighty years of the eighteenth century, over 200,000 people known as the "Donauschwaben" moved to the Banat and neighboring Siebenbürgen (Transylvania) from the Rhineland, the Palatinate, Bavaria, and Alsace and Lorraine. At the beginning, life in the Banat was dismal, and many died of malaria and malnutrition. However, once the swamps had been drained and turned into fertile agricultural land, the region prospered.

After World War I, the Banat was divided between Hungary, Serbia, and Romania. In Hungary, all ethnic minorities were subject to new magyarization policies, and many Germans left—some emigrating to America. After World War II, all ethnic Germans were expelled from the Serbian Banat; Germans in Romania were sent to Russian labor camps for several years, and their lands were confiscated. Later they returned to their Romanian communities, which continued to be islands of Danube Swabian culture and German language that were beleaguered under the communist regime.

When in the 1980s the "Aussiedler" program offered ethnic Germans an opportunity to leave Romania, most jumped at the chance. Within a few years, half the German population had left, and after the fall of communism in 1989, the rest followed. Today there are virtually no descendants of the original German settlers left in the Banat: instead, they live in their ancestors' country of origin. Herta Müller is one of them. She is among the more than three million "return-migrants" (about 300,000 from Romania) who now contribute to modern Germany's increasingly multicultural society. For them three centuries of German migration have come full circle.

In announcing the 2009 award, the Swedish Nobel Academy lauded Herta Müller for the frankness of the poetry and prose with which she depicts the landscape of the disposed. Her works are the story of her experience with oppression, displacement, and totalitarianism. At the same time, her family's history is another story of German emigration—the story of a group that did not immigrate to America.

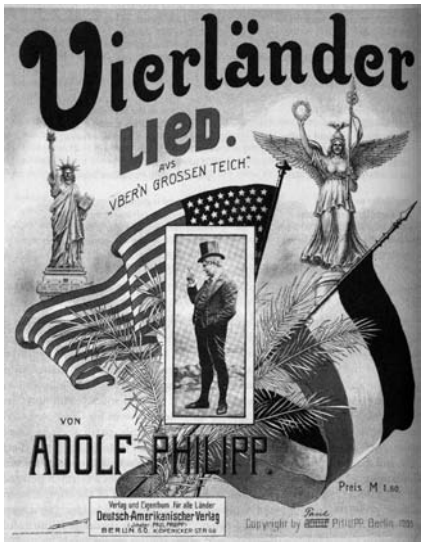
Music in German Immigrant Theater: New York City, 1840–1940

by John Koegel. Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2009.

Cora Lee Kluge

This volume of nearly 600 pages, which appears in the Eastman Studies in Music series, is a major contribution to the topic of German theater and particularly German musical theater in New York City. Its three parts are I. Musical Theater in Little Germany; II. German-American Performers and Characterizations; and III. Adolf Philipp and the German American Immigrant Ritual. Koegel's topic has essentially not been dealt with in scholarly literature, though its scope and importance is huge: by his conservative estimate there were probably at least 40,000 to 50,000 German-language performances of 4,000 individual works in Manhattan in the century between 1840 and 1940, and a total of at least 200,000 theatrical performances within the German-American community in the United States.

Adolf Neuendorff (1843–1897) and Adolf Philipp (1864–1936) are the central figures in Koegel's story—particularly the latter, to whom he devotes more than 150 pages. Philipp, who concentrated on popular musical theater, had become a successful singer and writer of libretti and plays in Europe before he was brought to New York in 1890 by Gustav Amberg, the long-term director of New York's Thalia Theater. In this country he developed into one of the most successful writers of ethnic musical comedy, and during a brief period he spent in Berlin (1903–1907), he



From the Music Division, Library of Congress. Koegel, p. 288.

Sheet music for a Low German dialect song from Adolf Philipp's *Über'n großen Teich* (Across the Big Pond), produced in Berlin.

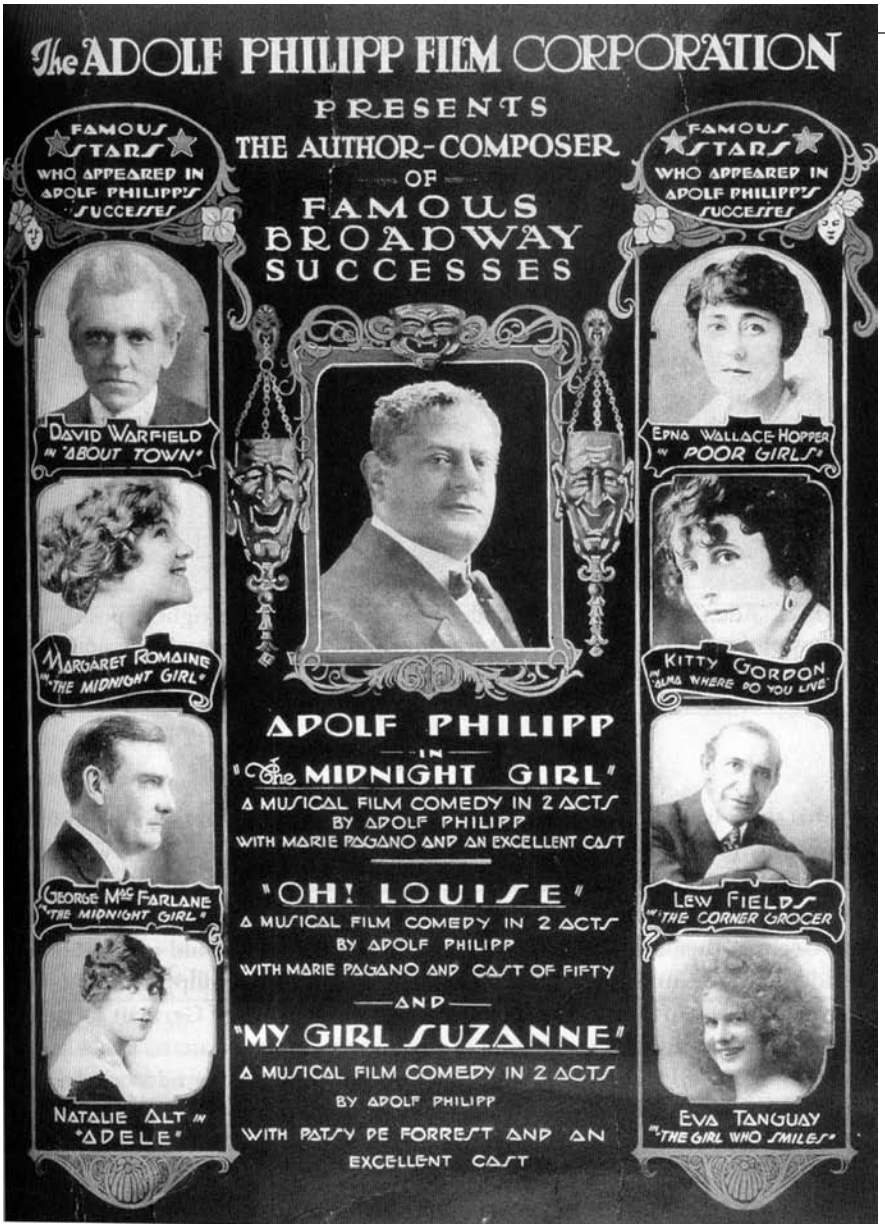
even brought his works from the New York immigrant community to his Deutsch-Amerikanisches Theater in the Köpenicker Straße. In 1919 he formed the Adolf Philipp Film Corporation, producing three "musical film comedies" that were probably not a financial success; but he continued to be a celebrated and productive impresario through the 1920s. Scholars—even recent ones—have bemoaned the loss of Philipp's works,[1] but Koegel provides information about where many of them can be found.

Koegel's study concentrates on music in the German immigrant theater in New York City, but his 100 pages of appendices provide a much wider range of information, including:

- a list of the locations of ethnic theaters in the United States;
- a list of the 20 principal professional German-language theaters in New York City, together with the years, locations, and histories of the buildings themselves;
- dates of opera and operetta premieres in German and other languages in New York, 1842–1893;
- the opera and operetta repertory performed in German, by seasons;
- a list of European singing star Marie Geistinger's tours with members of the Thalia Theater Company, 1881–1883, which included over 40 communities, some as far away as Salt Lake City and San Francisco;
- lists of Adolf Neuendorff's and Adolf Philipp's stage works.

By far the largest appendix is a list of German-language works or translations into German that were performed between 1840 and 1894 in New York City, essentially a view into the complete nature of the repertory for those years. 72 composers and 131 librettists and playwrights are listed, as well as the dates of known premieres and the seasons when the individual works were performed. Koegel gathered this information from a wide range of sources, such as various histories of the New York stage and newspapers.

We can no longer argue that materials for investigating the German-American musical theater have disappeared. Koegel's work, together with the digitized bibliography of the Milwaukee Public Library's Trostel



From the New York Public Library for the Performaing Arts. Koegel, p. 351.

An advertisement of the Adolf Philipp Film Company.

Collection of German Theater Scripts (more than 1500 items!),[2] which was developed two years ago as a project of the Max Kade Institute in Madison, provides us with access to treasure troves of important German-American theater materials.

There is much to praise in Koegel's work. It is well written and both easy and entertaining to read. The illustrations include photographs, maps, posters, advertisements, programs, music scores, and more; and they succeed not only in providing useful information and evidence, but also in stimulating the interest of the reader. A CD that comes with the volume is a gem; it contains 20 individual songs by Adolf Philipp, Carl von Wegern, Adolf Neuendorff, and Rudolf Bial, recently recorded by five singers (Patricia Prunty, Aram Barsamian, George Sterne, Nicole Baker, and Robert Istad) and a pianist (Grant Rohr). Among others are fascinating titles such as "Ein New Yorker Kind" (A New York Child) from *Der Pawnbroker von der East Side* and "Was kostet Amerika?" (What Does America Cost?) from *Zwei Lots in the Bronx*, both by Adolf Philipp.

The perennial problem for German-American cultural topics—the foreign-language issue that often restricts the number of people who can read and understand studies about our American heritage—is adequately resolved here, as the libretto texts are given in the original German and also translated into English. Other quotations are given only in English, with no indication that the original was in German; but this will not bother most readers.

We greet with enthusiasm the appearance of John Koegel's *Music in German Immigrant Theater* as a work that will contribute to our field of study in many ways. It covers far more than the German-American music situation in New York City, although this is its focal point; and we hope that it will lead to further endeavors in this area.

Notes

[1] See, for example, Peter Merrill's *German-American Urban Culture: Writers and Theaters in Early Milwaukee* (Madison, Wisc.: Max Kade Institute, 2000) 28.

[2] See <http://www.mpl.org/file/tools_trostel.htm>.

Bill Hammer: Otto Ruppius's Adventure Story from Civil War Missouri

Cora Lee Kluge

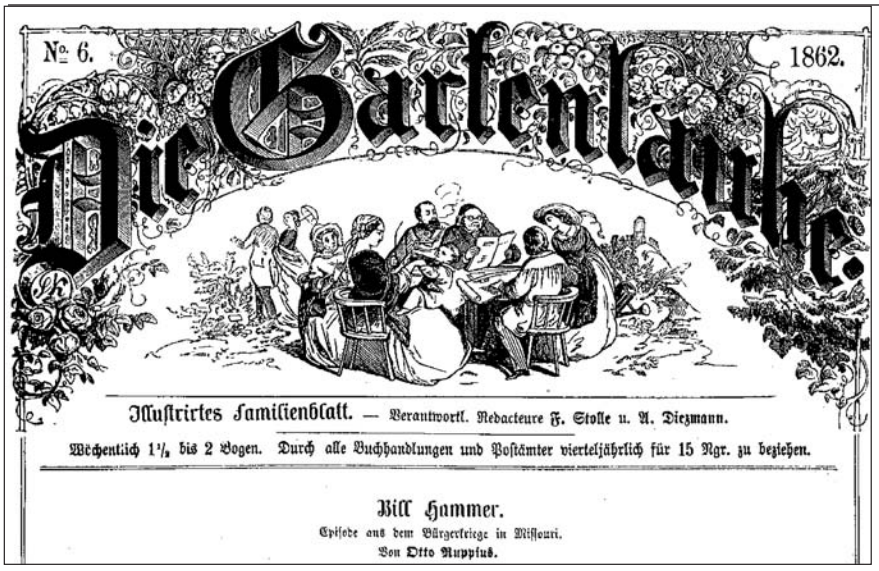
Front cover, showing Bill in the hands of the seccessionist gang.

The 150th anniversary of the Civil War is approaching, and there are signs of increasing interest in this period in American history. Those who engage in German-American studies are involved, and we find that the MKI Library and Archives collections are a rich source of neglected primary material related to the era. One example is a short story entitled *Bill Hammer*, written by German-American writer Otto Ruppius (1819–1864), a Forty-eighter who spent the years between 1849 and 1861 in the United States—in Nashville, Lexington, Milwaukee, New York, Louisville, and St. Louis—and then returned to Europe. First published in 1862 in serialized form in the Leipzig magazine *Die Gartenlaube*, the story later appeared in book form in several European publishing houses, either separately or together with other stories. Our copy is a rare item published by W. Düms in Wesel (1895 and 1899); it contains five color illustrations by the German watercolor artist and lithographer Wilhelm Schäfer (1839–?), who is also known for his illustrations of a German-language edition of James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*.

Set in the border state of Missouri in the year 1861, *Bill Hammer* is a suspenseful adventure story. Though a slave state, a Missouri convention had decided against secession from the Union before the outbreak of the war; but the opposing factions established both pro-Union and pro-Confederate governments, and hostilities between them were intense. Ruppius carefully lays out this historical background, stressing that the secessionists, mainly Anglo-Americans, found themselves at odds with Missouri's German immigrants, nearly all of whom aligned themselves with the Union supporters. He describes how the pro-Confederate Governor Claiborne F. Jackson was counting upon three things as he tried to bring the state into the Southern camp: "the roughneck spirit that is a basic trait throughout America, the southern feeling of the slaveholders and their supporters, and the instinctive hatred of the numerous German immigrants who were eager champions of 'free labor' and now enthusiastic supporters of the endangered Union…." All these elements play important parts in Ruppius's tale.

In the course of the narrative, Bill Hammer, a young German-American boy, takes on two extremely dangerous missions as he attempts to prevent a secessionist gang consisting of "all sorts of abandoned, unemployed, and lawless rabble" from terrorizing citizens of his area who were loyal to the Union. His peaceful community of Pleasant Grove is under siege by these secessionist outlaws, whose crimes include arson, robbery, and murder. Fred Minner, an somewhat older friend, asks him to undertake an all-night trek from Pleasant Grove to Jefferson City to request that the Union troops there send reinforce-

Otto Ruppius.


№ 6. 1862.

Die Gartenlaube.

Illustrirtes Familienblatt. — Verantwortl. Redacteure F. Stolle u. A. Diezmann.

Wöchentlich 1½ bis 2 Bogen. Durch alle Buchhandlungen und Postämter vierteljährlich für 15 Ngr. zu beziehen.

Bill Hammer.

Episode aus dem Bürgerkriege in Missouri.

Von Otto Ruppius.

Front cover of *Die Gartenlaube*, 1862, showing Ruppius's *Bill Hammer: Episode from the Civil War in Missouri* as the lead story.

ments. But Bill cannot get through: he barely escapes with his life when he is caught and the letter he was to deliver is found in the lining of his hat. Dejected over having failed, he makes his way back home, nearly falling into a brook on the way because secessionists have destroyed a bridge. But it is too late: early in the morning he finds the town of Pleasant Grove in flames.

Bill's chance to redeem himself comes later the same day in the form of another—and even more perilous—task. News comes that Fred Minner has set out himself for Jefferson City and is returning with a trainload of Union troops. From reported secessionist conversations, Bill learns that the beams of a railroad bridge on the train's route have been cut through; and he sets out as dark falls to stop the train, crossing the dangerous river under extreme time pressure, with only a hastily fastened rope as security. Though pursued by the secessionist Mr. Anderson, who falls to his death, Bill reaches the tracks before the train arrives at the bridge, swinging his lantern in desperation, running down the tracks, and jumping out of the way of the oncoming train just in time to prevent disaster. It is a terrifying scene, which Ruppius describes with great skill: the train thundering along with all the troops aboard, nearer and nearer its catastrophic plunge into the river, the young boy filled with fear, a young David opposing the train, the modern, mechanical Goliath.

Fred and Bill return to Mr. Anderson's place, where the robber band is relaxing, drinking, playing cards, and awaiting further developments. Fred now saves Bill's life by killing their watchman, and Fred and Bill together succeed in capturing the band in an action to which Ruppius ascribes great importance: "The capturing of this secessionist band was the first blow of the Missouri Union troops outside of St. Louis, and it introduced the beginning of a murderous war in the state that is far from over. But the Southern sympathizers found it wise not to come near the stronghold of the German volunteers again."

Ruppius's story, first published in Europe in 1862, appeared relatively early in the Civil War. Its intent is to inform European readers of the situation in Missouri and the position taken by the German immigrants there. It thus belongs to an influential group of works written by German Americans such as Mathilde Franziska Anneke, Ottilie Assing, and others, whose contributions informed the European reading public about the situation in America and the position of German immigrants in their new homeland. Through these writers Europeans became familiar with problems facing German Americans in the 1850s and 1860s: the widespread xenophobia among Anglo-Americans, the rise of the nativist American Party, their growing sense that the situation was becoming more desperate from day to day, their fear that civil war might be unavoidable, and the Civil War itself.

Fred Minner saves Bill's life.

Online Bibliographical Resources for German-American Studies: Part II

Sonja Mekel

An examination of useful resources currently available for German and German-American history and culture (conclusion).

Immigration and Genealogy

There are a multitude of Web sites for genealogical research. Many of them, such as www.ancestry.com, require paid subscriptions for their use. A simple (and free) portal is German Americans: A Family Heritage Resource <http://www.workingdogweb.com/German-Americans.htm>, with links to timelines, genealogical resources, and maps. The Immigrant Ships Transcribers Guild allows free access to basic information about immigrants (name of the ship and immigrant, ports of departure and arrival), many of whom came from German states <http://www.immigrantships.net/>. One of its features, <http://immigrantships.net/newcompass/pcindex.html>, has a number of useful links to other resources.

An educational project of the Battery Conservancy <http://www.castlegarden.org/index.php> provides information about the nearly 12 million persons who arrived in Castle Garden, New York's main immigration center before Ellis Island opened its doors in 1892. A kind of continuation of the Castle Garden project, The Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Foundation, Inc., has its own Web site, with records of even more immigrants. Access is free, but requires registration: <http://www.ellisisland.org/>.

The *Auswandererbriefesammlung* (emigrant letter collection) of the Research Library Gotha <http://www.auswandererbriefe.de/> has put transcriptions and pictures of several letters online, arranged by region: <http://www.auswandererbriefe.de/regionalebriefe.html>. Lists of the archive's holdings are also freely accessible on the Web site.

The online German *Volksliederarchiv* features about 50 emigrant songs <http://www.volksliederarchiv.de/amerika>. Some of them address political ills in Germany, or express the emigrant's longing for his family.

The Pennsylvania German Society <http://www.pgs.org/default.asp> should not be confused with the Germantown Historical Society <http://www.germantownhistory.org/> or the German Society of the same state <http://www.germansociety.org/>. The Texas German Society <http://www.texasgermansociety.com/>, the German Society of Maryland <http://www.md-germans.org/german-society-of-maryland.html>, and several others have their own Web sites, but are often largely of local interest. Some German-American associations do not offer much in terms of serious scholarship, engaging in little more than nostalgia, clichés, or even an unwholesome form of German nationalism.

German Jews

German Jews, though very different from gentile German Americans and often not recognized by the latter as fellow Germans, are usually treated together with them in current American academic and popular literature. Since many of them read and wrote German in America, their correspondences, memoirs, and publications are a valuable source not only for American-Jewish history, but for students of German-American history as well.

The Leo Baeck Institute, with branches in New York, Jerusalem, London, and Berlin, is currently working on a project to digitize *all* of its archival collections. The manuscripts, memoirs, and letters already available <http://www.lbi.org/DigiBaeck.html> are of such inestimable value for researchers that many students of German-Jewish history will rejoice once the project is completed.

The Isaac Mayer Wise Digital Archive <http://www.americanjewisharchives.org/wise/home.php>, a project of the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati, offers several thousand easily searchable documents on and by Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, one of the most prominent American Reform rabbis. Wise (1819–1900), a driving force of Jewish education and communal organization, as well as editor of the most widely read nineteenth-century Jewish newspaper, corresponded with prominent Americans and Europeans. Many of his letters and manuscripts are in

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Home Away from Home: Volga Germans of Chicago's Jefferson Park

Daniel Pogorzelski

Photo courtesy George Valko, *The Volga Germans: Krasnojar, Chicago, Everywhere.*

The band of the Volga German Benefit Society, Chicago branch, taken in 1934.

Chicago has long been a magnet for peoples from all over the world seeking a better life. Jefferson Park, on the Northwest Side, is known as the "Gateway to Chicago," but it has not been one of the traditional areas where immigrants first settled. Such "neighborhoods of initial settlement," closer to the city center and the plentiful jobs in their industrial environs, gave rise to the famous ethnic enclaves like Greektown, Little Italy, Polish Downtown, and Maxwell Street that are deeply embedded in the social and historical fabric of the city. Nevertheless, Jefferson Park did become the original settlement location for one group of immigrants: the Volga Germans.

There are ethnic Germans in Russia, even today, and once there were many more. Spread out in clusters throughout the Russian Empire from Volhynia to the Black Sea, an estimated 1.8 million Germans were living in Russia in 1897, according to the Russian census. Beginning in 1762, Catherine the Great had encouraged Germans to settle the sparsely populated lands of Russia. Arriving with sophisticated agricultural know-how and unencumbered by the feudal obligations of Russians who still served their lords as serfs, these German immigrants prospered. One such German cluster was along the Volga River, an area first settled in 1764 that eventually grew to more than 100 colonies between Saratov and Kamyshin. Migrating mostly from southwestern Germany, these settlers came to be known as the Volga Germans (Nyemtsy Povolzhe).

While settlers were lured to Russia with promises of self-government, exemption from military service, and the right to cultivate their language and culture, these privileges were curtailed and rescinded towards the end of the nineteenth century under the reigns of Czars Alexander II and III. "Russification" policies were enacted that mandated the use of only the Russian language and also pressured all peoples in the Empire to convert to the Russian Orthodox faith. Meanwhile, other forces were in play that would eventually lead to the collapse of the Russian state.

In the face of such difficulties, one can easily understand why more than 100,000 Germans emigrated from Russia to the United States. Many headed for Chicago, which became the largest urban Volga German center in America, with well over 1,000 families finding new homes there. The beginnings were modest enough: the first colonists arrived in 1891 directly from Enders, Russia, and found employment at a farm near Dunning, working for a German-American association. Research done by members of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia (AHSGR) has shown that the first known Volga Germans in Jefferson Park came in 1894, and two decades later, a flood of Russian Germans came to this area. Most of these "Jefferson Parkers," as they are often called, came from the area of Volga German settlement called "Wiesenseite":

> *Their previous home had been on the eastern steppes of Russia near the provincial cities of Saratov*

and Engels along the Volga and Bolshoi-Karaman rivers . . . . [T]he majority of them came from the villages of Schwedt, Krasnojar, Enders, Stahl, Reinwald, Rosenheim, Katherinenstadt, Paulskoye, and Nieder-Monjou, Russia. All of these villages were in close proximity in Russia and the people were either friends, relatives, or acquaintances. They came to Jefferson Park through word-of-mouth, by letters sent home telling of jobs, and because other Volga Germans already in the neighborhood spoke the same dialect of German.[1]

Enthusiasm for Chicago arose when an immigrant who had arrived in 1903 returned to his home in Schwedt after only four years with a savings of $4,000. Within the next few years 150 families from Schwedt left the Russian steppe for Chicago. Volga Germans established themselves in a number of Chicagoland locales, including Humboldt Park, the area around Roosevelt and Pulaski Avenue, and the Chicago suburbs of Riverdale, Dolton, Calumet City, Lansing, and Thornton. Offshoots of the Jefferson Park settlement sprang up in nearby Bellwood and Maywood as people left the bustle of the city for more suburban surroundings. But Jefferson Park stood out by virtue of its size among all the other enclaves of Volga Germans. By the 1930s there were 450 Volga German families living in the vicinity of Jefferson Park and nearby Mayfair, making it a center of cultural life for Volga Germans from all over Chicagoland. The neighborhood's importance was reflected in the fact that post number 1 for "The United Order of Wolga (not a typo) Germans" was in Jefferson Park.

While most Volga Germans in Jefferson Park were Protestant Lutherans, a number of them attended the Roman Catholic, Methodist, Lutheran, or Congregational churches. In addition, many Volga Germans attended meetings of the *Bruderschaft,* a nondenominational religious brotherhood that held spirited prayer meetings three times a week, where those present would burst into song brimming with "beautiful harmonies," as one person recounted. Known for their strictness and piety, *Bruderschaft* members figured prominently in recollections of Volga German life in Jefferson Park. Most poignant perhaps are David Aul's recollections:

The women would wear black shawls, the men would have no ties. That was a sin. Theater or anything like that was a no-no. They would "admonish" on that. In 1932–33 they had a convention, the Bruderschaft over in Jeff. Groups coming in from Flint, Michigan; Sheboygan and Racine, Wisconsin; Riverdale, Illinois. They had musicians called the "Michigan Blowers." They were a brass band. The kids were just crazy over that band. . . . They had a speaker. Escaped what was going on in Russia, he made a circuit around the cities over the United States. He was telling of the atrocities. Lots of crying. They knelt down on their hands and knees and prayed. And it was like a bunch of Bumble Bees. Everybody had an individual prayer. It was the most moving thing. I never forgot it. It left an impression. They were that pious.[2]

Photo courtesy of Ed Hinsch and the Northwest Chicago Historical Society.

Lorraine and Marlene Hinsch in Jefferson Park, with the "Russian Hotel" in the background.

Volga German rites and traditions were once common in Jefferson Park. During the Christmas holiday *Belzenickel* (St. Nicholas) and *Christkindl* (the Christ child) would visit Volga German homes to bring gifts for good children, while plenty of halvah (a Turkish desert popular in Eastern Europe) was on every table. Wakes and funerals, many of which took place at the recently closed John V. May funeral home, were replete with antique customs brought over from the Old World. Wedding parties gathered after the ceremony at Cadola's Hall on the corner of Lavergne and Lawrence Streets.

"Jefferson Parkers" were different from other Volga Germans because of the late date of their arrival from Russia. Having been exposed to a more intense "Russification" than

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James Kleinschmidt

Antje Petty

Genealogy brought James Kleinschmidt to the Max Kade Institute. In fact, it was Jim's father, Audrey, who first worked with the MKI, as he traced his ancestry in Bavaria. Now Jim has joined the Friends' Board of Directors as one of its new members.

Jim's family roots go deep in German-speaking Europe and represent the different backgrounds of German-American immigrants in Wisconsin. In 1852, a Kleinschmidt ancestor came from a small town near Regensburg to Helenville, Wisconsin, where his original log cabin is still standing. A year later, family on Jim's mother's side arrived in Waterloo, Wisconsin, from Landskron (Lanškroun) in Bohemia. Other ancestors from Bohemia made their homes in the Marshall, Wisconsin, area between 1865 and 1875. Another part of Jim's family originated in Prussia, about 80 miles east of Berlin, and immigrated to Danville, Wisconsin. They eventually moved to York Township in Dane County.

Jim says what fascinates him about genealogy is making the connection to local history and to people around the world. In pursuing his family history, he discovered distant relatives in Europe and Canada and developed a strong interest in the history of the regions in Europe from which his ancestors came. In Wisconsin, Jim has been actively engaged in early immigrant and settlement history and in the preservation of historic buildings. For example, he was president of the

Island Church Foundation whose mission is the preservation of the old Island Church or St. Wenceslaus Church in Waterloo, Wisconsin. This Wisconsin-registered landmark was built as a tamarack log structure in 1863 by immigrants from Bohemia, including members of Jim's family. His great-great-grandmother, Josepha Wurtz, is buried in the Island Church cemetery.

Now residing in Fitchburg, Wisconsin, with his wife Linda, Jim attended the University of Wisconsin–Madison and graduated with an MS degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering. One of his teachers was fellow member of the Friends' Board of Directors, Peter Monkmeyer. At present, Jim is a senior project manager for Strand Associates in Madison, where he provides wastewater utility consulting services for Wisconsin communities.

As a member of the Friends' Board of Directors, Jim hopes—among other things—to help build up the MKI's resources, strengthen the Institute's ability to serve the community, and assist local and family historians.

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those who had arrived earlier, they had faced intense pressure to assimilate and give up their native culture; and those arriving in Jefferson Park in the first two decades of the twentieth century had been taught Russian in school. Often the decision to emigrate was prompted by a desire to evade the dreaded twenty-year draft in the Russian army. The Russian aspect of their heritage often resulted in their having difficulties in the United States at a time when this country was gripped by the "Red Scare" following Lenin's Communist revolution. Jerry Amen, president of the Northern Illinois Chapter of the AHSGR, recounts the prejudice his family experienced because of their Russian-German background. When looking for work on the railroad during the Great Railroad Strike of 1922, his great-grandfather George Amen would regularly claim Polish heritage so that he would not be denied jobs as a subversive "Bolshevik."

One of Jefferson Park's most revered structures was the "Russian Hotel" near the intersection of Higgins and Milwaukee. This was the home of transient Volga Germans who came to Chicago to work hard and make a quick buck before returning to the Old Country. Consisting of two tenement buildings with room for ten to twelve apartments, the "Russian Hotel" is still remembered fondly by those spinning yarns about old times in the Northwest Side. It was known as a place with less than four-star accommodations—in fact, the older building had no running water at all!

The legacy of Jefferson Park's Volga German heritage is still visible in the neighborhood's landscape, from the mostly Russian-German congregation at Eden's Church to the old *Bruderschaft* building opposite Beaubien school. For Chicago's Volga German community, memories of life there are part of the story of how they acclimated themselves in this new land and became American. It is true that Gottlieb's famous shop has long been closed, but one can open the pages of any Northern Illinois Russian German newsletter to be reminded of the one-of-a-kind taste of "Gotchie's Killer" sausage, which could be found only at his Jefferson Park store.

Notes

[1]Quoted from *The Chicago Genealogist*, Fall, 1998.

[2]As shared in a newsletter of the Northern Illinois American Historical Society of Germans from Russia.

The original version of this article, with additional images, is available as a PDF at: <http://www.nwchicagohistory.org/JPHS - Jan 2009.pdf>. *Thanks to the Northern Illinois Chapter of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, which helped to craft this article, particularly Keith Weigel, Jerry Amen, and Maggie Hein. Thanks also to George Valko for the pictures and resources he has shared. This piece is also in debt to the meticulous research done by Valko in his book* The Volga Germans: Krasnojar, Chicago, Everywhere.

Daniel Pogorzelski is Vice-President and Chief Historian of the Northwest Chicago Historical Society. He has written a number of articles on Chicago history, in addition to co-authoring two books on the history of the city's neighborhoods: *Portage Park* (2008) and *Bridgeport* (forthcoming), both in the series Images of America.

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German, and most are written in the old German script.

Compact Memory <http://www.compactmemory.de/> is a valuable internet archive providing (often complete) print runs of more than 100 German-Jewish newspapers and periodicals that appeared between 1806 and 1938. Exclusively in the German language, many of the newspapers are in German Fraktur. While their focus is mainly on Germany and the German cultural sphere, several of the periodicals, such as the important *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums*, regularly covered events in the United States. The usefulness of this resource can hardly be overstressed.

Sonja Mekel is working on her Ph.D. in American History at UW–Madison. She has a special interest in German-American Jews, and her dissertation analyzes the relationship between Germans and German Jews in nineteenth-century Milwaukee and Chicago.

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The **Subject** collection at the MKI consists of scholarly contributions that examine the reasons for migration, the sometimes-harrowing Atlantic trips, contributions of German Americans in various states and regions of the United States, biographies of famous Americans of German background, and more. At present I am scanning both primary and secondary sources related to Germans in Missouri for a researcher in Colorado—in some cases even secondary sources can be difficult to obtain!

For the truly rare and unique items, we enter into our **Family History and Archives** collection. Here we find the results of arduous genealogical research, which often reveal interesting facets of American history as well as regional or local history. Here also are handwritten documents (originals or digital scans), including diaries, letters, recipes, and poems. Such items provide not only insights into everyday life in nineteenth-century America, but also access to the attitudes and thoughts of individuals.

A student from Germany is coming soon to investigate the immigration of German-speaking women; she will consult diaries, letters, and family histories held at the MKI. Indeed, our Family History collection is astonishingly rich in narratives of immigration experiences and accounts of local events. We welcome contributions to this part of our collection, as they tell the story of America one family and one town at a time. We are dedicated to preserving these stories and to making them known.

It should be noted that the MKI is in the same city as the Memorial Library at the University of Wisconsin with its comprehensive holdings, as well as the impressive Wisconsin Historical Society, whose splendid archives include a collection of American newspapers second only in size to that of the Library of Congress. With our move to the University Club in 2011, we will be only steps away from both of these first-class repositories. In addition, we will continue to make materials available on the MKI Web pages in other formats. We realize that a great deal of work remains to be done to expand our understanding of the German-American experience, but we also note that scholarship is moving forward by leaps and bounds. The research possibilities for the MKI's visitors are increasing dramatically, and we look forward to working with students, researchers, and all our Friends in the future!

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See the Director's Corner (inside) for details.

This is a three-year fundraising campaign. Tax-deductible contributions can be made to the MKI Library Capital Campaign Fund at the UW Foundation. For more information, contact Antje Petty at (608) 262-7546 or <apetty@wisc.edu>.