

Max Kade Institute Friends Newsletter

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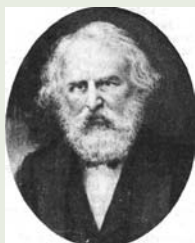
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“How German Is American?” MKI presents new outreach poster and brochure

By Mark Loudon
MKI Co-Director

Many of our Friends will recall the posters on the German heritage in the United States designed some years ago by MKI founding director Prof. Jürgen Eichhoff. Building on the popular appeal of such visual explorations of German-American culture, this year we undertook a new educational and outreach project titled “How German Is American?” This project has three components: a 36” by 48” poster, a 48-page companion brochure, and a Web page linked to the MKI Web site. The funding for this project was provided by the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Chicago. The design and production for the poster and brochure were handled by Nancy Zucker of Madison, who has designed the covers for our MKI and CSUMC monographs for the last several years.

Featured on the poster are twenty images that evoke various ways German-speaking immigrants to the U.S. and their descendants have contributed to and been influenced by other American cultures. There is a balance between historical and contemporary images, but even the older images speak to themes of cultural contact that transcend the periods from which the images came. In order to underscore the timelessness of these themes, we decided on a layout based on principles from the Bauhaus school of design, which was influential both in Europe and in this country, notably in Chicago. On the back side of the poster are captions that briefly identify the images; a more complete discus-



Photo courtesy of the
Milwaukee Turners

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Year-end announcements

By Cora Lee Kluge and Mark L. Louden, MKI Co-Directors

We are delighted to announce the publication of our new poster “How German Is American?” and its companion brochure and Web page. This project was a stimulating—and fun—focal point of our fall efforts. We believe we have created something that will educate, entertain, and stir up interest in our field. Please make note of the poster’s upcoming “opening” events, which are announced elsewhere on this page!

Hope A. Hague has joined the MKI staff. She has been in Madison for many years, as a student, teaching assistant, and lecturer with the UW German Department, and as a German teacher elsewhere in the state. We feel fortunate to have her with us—she is a most welcome addition.

This spring Cora Lee is offering German 278, “The German Immigration Experience.” Please help us spread the word about this new English-language course: all students are welcome!

We wish you a happy holiday season and a good year ahead. Stay in touch—hope to see you soon!
Cora Lee and Mark

Max Kade Institute

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World Wide Web at:
<<http://mki.wisc.edu>>.

How German Is American?

Come to the following free public events and discover for yourself!

**How German Is American?
Unveiling and Panel Presentation
Memorial Union, UW–Madison
Friday, February 3, 7:00–10:00 p.m.**

Join us for the public unveiling of MKI’s new outreach effort, an educational poster, brochure, and Web page examining the various ways, past and present, that German-speaking immigrants to the United States and their descendants have contributed to and been influenced by the American cultures.

A panel discussion on the creation of the poster and brochure, as well as on the many themes they address, will be followed by an opportunity to mingle with your friends and colleagues. Refreshments will be provided, and a cash bar will be available. Each attendee will receive a free copy of the poster.

**How German Is American?
Presentation at the West Bend Art Museum
Sunday, February 26, at 2:00 p.m.**

Mark Loudon, co-director of the Max Kade Institute at the UW-Madison, will deliver a multimedia presentation on the various ways, past and present, German-speaking immigrants to the United States and their descendants have contributed to and been influenced by other American cultures. Some of the many themes explored include language, music, religion, and community life. This presentation is based on a new Max Kade Institute educational poster, brochure, and Web page dedicated to the theme “How German Is American?” Each attendee will receive a free copy of the poster.

Board Member Tom Lidtke, Director of the West Bend Art Museum

By Hope Hague, MKI Staff

When Tom Lidtke was a child, the German ethnic character of his Dodge County home in Fox Lake was so much a part of his everyday life as to pass unnoticed. But this changed with time. As he grew older, inspired by his father's interest in genealogy, he began probing into the ancestry of his parents, eventually tracing their origins to Prussia and Pomerania. Then, as an art educator, he discovered a piece of German diaspora in faraway Australia that reminded him of home. And in his twenty-three years as director of the West Bend Art Museum, an important focus of his work has been the German-American visual arts legacy in Wisconsin.

Upon earning a degree in Arts Education from UW–Oshkosh, Tom began his teaching career in Manitowoc, WI. After two years there, overcome by what he calls “wanderlust,” he decided to apply for work abroad. As he and his wife were preparing to leave for Panama, an insurrection and civil disorder there caused a last minute change of course, and they left instead for a teaching position in Elizabeth, South Australia, a town located between Adelaide and the Barossa Valley, one of Australia's great wine regions.

Through his arts contacts, Tom was introduced

to the Barossa Valley's German community, and found it “very surprising and interesting to see how that little region mirrored the German immigration and settlement in Wisconsin perfectly, with the exception of beverages.” Although the



Tom Lidtke

Barossa Valley settlers favored wine over beer, Tom saw many other things he recognized: Lutheran churches, family names, similar histories and time frames of immigration. He even met a settler whose grandfather had studied theology in Watertown, WI, before traveling as a missionary to Australia and settling there.

Life was good in Australia, and Tom recalls that most of the American families in their circle of friends stayed and became Australian citizens.

For Tom's family, the birth of a daughter and the high cost of

family visits caused a rethinking of priorities and a sorrowful but—it was hoped—temporary departure from Australia and relocation to Hartford, WI, where Tom again taught art and headed the art department.

Then, in 1982, Tom joined the staff of the West Bend Art Museum. At that time there was great interest all over the country in the establishment of regional arts museums, and, as museum director,

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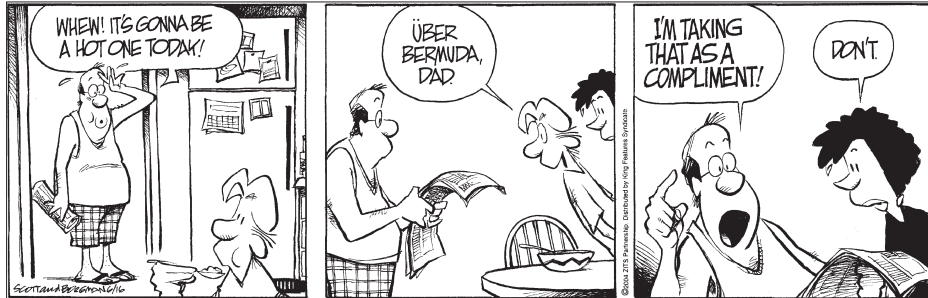
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sion of the images and the themes they evoke is contained in the companion brochure and on our Web site.

The images themselves are quite diverse, ranging from a boy jumping on a trampoline at Milwaukee's Turner Hall to an album cover for a Texas conjunto trio to the Oscar Mayer Wienermobile. While observers often note that a distinct German-American cultural identity has faded over the last few generations, we aim in this project to emphasize how influences deriv-



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ing from German-speaking Europe endure in the United States, often in almost invisible ways. One image, for example, shows a recent comic

strip that makes reference to the German-derived prefix “über-” (meaning “super” or “excessively”) now common among younger speakers of American English, most of whom do not know German.

The “How German Is American?” interpretive essay in the brochure and on our Web site is divided into four sections: “Settling in America,” “Building Communities,” “Growing into the Nation,” and “Shaping Culture.” Throughout the essay we use the twenty images as touchstones for a broader discussion of the transatlantic ties that have connected Germany and America, in the past and today. The discussion is also situated against the larger backdrop of American culture; even

though the images we discuss derive from a specifically German-American context, the issues they raise apply across cultural groups in this country.

On Friday, February 3, at 7 p.m. in the Memorial Union we will present “How German Is American?” to the public. We extend a special invitation to you, our Friends, to attend. The four of us on the design committee (Cora Lee Kluge, Kevin Kurdylo, Antje Petty, and myself) will participate in a panel discus-

sion on the project. Each attendee will receive a free copy of the poster and brochure, and all are invited for to stay for re-

freshments after the program. We are planning to incorporate “How German Is American?” into our regular outreach offerings, so we encourage you to suggest public venues where such an event might be appropriate. We are eager to share this project with a range of community members, especially teachers and students.

While the “How German Is American?” poster and brochure represent finished products, we want the Web page to evolve as we continue to explore the questions raised by the twenty images, as well as others that we will add in the future. We welcome your feedback as you consider with us “How German Is American?”



Photo © by Chris Strachwitz,
<www.arhoolie.com>



Photo courtesy of Kraft Foods, Inc.

Language, patriotism, and poetry: How Gertrude Bloede became an American

By Dieter Lange

Brodentown, N.J., August 10, 1857—Twelve-year-old Gertrude Bloede, who immigrated with her family from Dresden in August 1850, starts keeping a diary. Only one year later, on July 3, 1858, she makes this entry:

I don't like to write German in this book; it always seems to me as if my words were selected very carefully and I think they are like stiff wires; but when I write English it just seems as if I was talking to somebody. Yes, tomorrow it will be 82 years since the United States have been declared independent. I fancy I hear the shouting of the happy people and the sound of the old bell in the statehouse.

The last sentence says it all: for Gertrude, the use of language and growing patriotism seem to go together. Previously, when the family had assembled for one of its regular evening gatherings to study Julius Froebel (a political radical and participant in the failed revolution of 1848/49, who had to flee to the United States and lived as a journalist in New York until 1857), father Gustav Bloede would want to discuss whether patriotism or love of freedom had priority. He himself had had to answer this question in Germany many times before. For Gertrude, the young immigrant, there was no doubt:

I always thought that all nations have a right to hate the Germans, because they made an attempt to free themselves from the chains of aristocratic slavery and still allowed themselves to be put in shackles again. I love only the American people, because it was they alone who have placed freedom onto its shining throne. I will not hate the Americans if they should hate the Germans in the end. They would have a good reason for it, and I despise the Germans, too.

[Ich denke immer dass alle Völker ein Recht hätten die Deutschen zu hassen, denn sie haben schon einen Versuch gemacht sich von den Banden der Sklaverei der Könige zu befreien und haben sich doch wieder neue Fesseln auflegen lassen. Ich liebe nur das amerikanische Volk, denn dieses allein hat die Freiheit auf ihren glänzenden Thron gesetzt. Ich hasse die Amerikaner nicht weil sie am Ende die Deutschen hassen, denn sie haben einen guten Grund dazu, und ich verachte die Deutschen auch.]

The issues of language and identity, patriotism and freedom, occupied Gertrude throughout her life. In future years she would use milder words, but she remained unwavering in her basic conviction, and expressed it in her poetry, such as this four-stanza poem, published in 1881:

* * *

*Not thine the accents, O my English tongue!
Were those that first fell on my dreaming ear,
When at my far-off cradle there was sung
The first soft lullaby, forever dear
For my sweet mother's sake; nor thine the sound
That first my stammering lips for utterance found,
Nor thine the magic word at whose command
Opened before the child's enraptured eyes
The wide-spread realms of golden fairy-land,
Too soon to sink away, no more to rise.
In all the memories close-knit with our heart
By dawning, earliest life, thou hast no part.*

* * *

It is hard to imagine more beautiful words to express the memory of one's mother and of coming into the world. Who was the woman Gertrude is talking about? Marie Jungnitz Bloede was born in



Gertrude Bloede, poet,
pseudonym Stuart Sterne
(circa 1865)

Image courtesy Victor Carl Bloede

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Karl Knortz meets with Henry Longfellow, 1876: Part I

Translated by Mark L. Loudon, MKI Co-Director

*Karl Knortz (1841–1918) was born in Prussia, received his university education in Heidelberg, and immigrated to the United States in 1863. After stints as a schoolteacher in Detroit, Oshkosh, and Cincinnati, and as a German-language newspaper editor in Indianapolis, Knortz settled in New York City in 1882, where he produced numerous works introducing America and its literature to German-speakers back in Europe. Knortz is also known as a pioneer in the field of folklore for his extensive publications on proverbs, riddles, rhymes, legends, cures, and other gems from the American oral tradition. The text presented here is the first part of Knortz's lengthy description of his first meeting with Henry W. Longfellow (1807–1882). It is taken from Knortz's *Aus der transatlantischen Gesellschaft: Nord-amerikanische Kulturbilder* (Leipzig, 1882), which is available in the MKI Library.*



Karl Knortz

“My First Visit with Longfellow” (Part 1)

It was in the spring of 1876 that literary business made it necessary for me to spend several months in Boston, the American Athens. I had looked forward to this trip for quite some time, because for many years I had been in regular correspondence with the most prominent writers there, and now I had the opportunity to meet them in person. I was especially keen to make the personal acquaintance of Longfellow, whose epic works I had translated into German and with whom I had corresponded for ten years. I thus had to call on him first. I had hardly arrived in Boston and gotten settled into my hotel before taking the streetcar to charming

Cambridge.

This Cambridge, which is actually a suburb of Boston but technically its own community, resembles a large, well laid-out garden with palatial estates that reflect the wealthy and tasteful patri- cians who own them. The innumerable trees were in full spring bloom, and the gardeners were busy bringing exotic flowers and plants out of the greenhouses and into the fresh air.

Near Harvard College was the end station of the street- car line. I got out and asked a portly resident, whose apron suggested he was a butcher, where Longfellow lived. Eager to help, this man showed me the street and told me to look for a large, old-fashioned-looking, yellow-painted house with a brass knocker on the door. I found the place right away. Soon I was standing in front of the historically notable

house, which Washington had used as his head- quarters during the Revolution. The house was no longer particularly distinctive; one could not observe anything especially old about it, except for the heavy brass knocker. On either side of the house stood a tree, of which one was dying. After I ascended the wide steps and knocked, a neatly groomed female servant appeared. I presented her with my card and asked to see the gentleman of the house. Hardly had she brought my card into the poet's study before Longfellow himself ap- proached me with youthful speed and led me into his inner sanctum. Having read numerous pub- lished descriptions of him, I expected to enter the residence of the gods; but I was mistaken. Long- fellow's study resembled those of most Harvard

professors: it contained a large, well appointed library, several statuettes, a considerable number of comfortable chairs, and other things one can find anywhere. Only out of respect for the poet is it worth mentioning these small details. The study of the famous Shakespeare scholar, Horace Howard Furness of Philadelphia, was quite different; it consisted of three sections, evoking, apart from the unique collection of Shakespeariana, imperial luxury. But Furness is deaf, and strives, since he can afford it, to create a paradisiacal space to compensate for his physical disability.

Longfellow appeared, despite his nearly seventy years, to be quite fit. Although his hair and beard were entirely gray, he was just as upbeat and lively in our chat as if he had been in the prime of his life. After he introduced me to Professor Gray, the famous botanist, who was sitting in a corner leafing through a book, he got a cigar box from the table and passed it to me, saying that he presumed I was a smoker like every proper German. I took a cigar and learned immediately that Longfellow, despite being a heavy smoker who would refrain only in the presence of ladies, was, when it came to cigars, not much of a connoisseur. He consumed the kind of tobacco only the most desperate of smokers would take, the kind of cigars generally referred to as “freemason cigars,” for the fact that you would only smoke them out-of-doors.

After several introductory questions and remarks, our conversation got into full swing: we talked about literature. At one point Longfellow posed the question, “Please tell me, sir, why did you, in your translation of my *Hiawatha*, change the spelling of the Indian words?”

Despite the fact that I had already addressed this question in the introduction to my translation of his epic poem, I was happy to outline my reasoning to him personally, even though I expected that he had concerns about my reworking of the text, based in part on a somewhat dissatisfied letter I

had received from him after the publication of my translation.

“You took,” I replied, “the Indian words used in your poem from the works of Schoolcraft, who is not regarded as an authority on the topic. Though he had only limited knowledge of the Chippewa language, he passed himself off as an expert on American Indian languages, misleading not only you, but many others as well. For that reason, in my version of the poem, I relied on the work of Bishop [Frederic] Baraga of Marquette [known as the ‘Snowshoe Priest’ of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula], whose *Dictionary of the Otchipwe Language*

I found to be immensely helpful. I immediately dispensed with the phonetic spellings of Schoolcraft because of their inadequacy in rendering the true pronunciations of words.

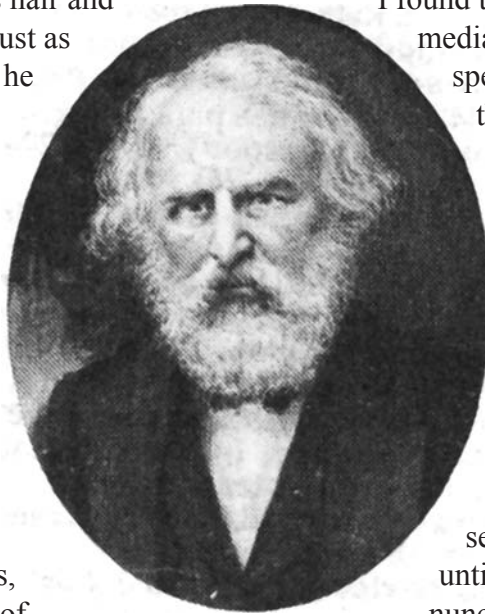
But not content with relying solely on Baraga, I decided to visit the Chippewa Indians myself. At the rapids where Lake Superior empties into the Soo River there are three charming little islands, on one of which Indians lived, among them an elderly chief. I spent several days with these people until I was able to transcribe the pronunciation and accent of their words precisely.”

“It seems that none of the world’s languages is safe from you Germans. Your task as translator was simply to render the original text in your native language.”

“I should think that you, sir, and every reader of *Hiawatha* should thank me for eliminating the linguistic errors from the poem. I’ll mention one example: *One ininiwug was standing*. You speak here of *ininiwug* as a singular form; it is in fact a plural, as the suffix *-wug* shows.”

“You may be correct, and I do not challenge your sources. But with translations I demand absolute precision, even if that means reproducing errors in the original text.”

“Well, there is no lack of errors in my transla-



Henry Wadsworth
Longfellow

Immigrants, indentured servants, and slaves in mid-nineteenth-century New Orleans

Reviewed by Antje Petty, MKI Assistant Director

Bailey, John. *The Lost German Slave Girl*. Atlantic Monthly Press, New York 2005. 288 pp.

One beautiful spring morning in 1843, Madame Carl Rouff was walking through New Orleans's Spanish Quarter on her way to visit a friend, when she was struck by the sight of a young woman sitting on the doorsteps of a rundown house. The young woman bore an uncanny resemblance to Dorothea Müller. Dorothea, her childhood friend with whom she had emigrated from Germany a quarter century earlier, had perished on the journey. Immediately Madame Rouff knew that she had found Dorothea's long-lost daughter Salomé, whom nobody had seen since the child had been taken into indentured servitude on arrival in New Orleans. There was only one problem: the young woman, who said her name was Mary Miller, was a slave.

Within hours, Madame Rouff presented Mary Miller to other members of New Orleans' German community who had known the Müller family, including Salomé's godmother. They all agreed: the young woman was Salomé Müller; and it became their all-consuming mission "to free a pure German woman [who] had been taken by an American." However, when they confronted Mary's current owner with the news, he refused to let her go. In early 1844, Sally Miller (as Mary now called herself), supported entirely by the German community, filed a petition in the First Judicial District Court of Louisiana for "the recovery of her rights" and "one thousand dollars damages on account of the illegal and vexatious treatment of the Petitioner."

Thus a chance encounter on a New Orleans street led to one of the most notorious legal cases in Louisiana. Closely followed in the newspapers of the day, the story is now retold by John Bailey in *The Lost German Slave Girl*. Bailey, an Australian lawyer and

award-winning author, stumbled onto the case while researching antebellum property and slavery laws in the American South. Based on a rich trove of available court records and other documents, *The Lost German Slave Girl* offers an unusual view into American society at a unique time and in a unique city.

As such, the book sheds light on a society that was rooted in slavery and "ownership of people,"

be it of the whole person or "just" their labor. Consequently, laws and legal procedures favored ownership rights over personal rights. Regarding slavery, the maxim *partus sequitur ventrem* applied: "Children born to an enslaved mother are themselves slaves." Thus, for Sally to gain her freedom, it had to be established that her mother had not been a slave. Her physical appearance was immaterial. Everybody agreed she looked white or "brunette," but as one witness put it, in the Louisiana of the 1840s he had seen "slaves

brighter than the plaintiff." A battle ensued: on the one side Eva Schuber, Salomé's godmother, and others in the German community of New Orleans tried to prove that Sally was German; on the other side, prominent plantation owner John Fitz Miller who had owned Sally as a child, sought to establish her descent from a "slave woman in Georgia or Alabama." In the middle stood Sally Miller, who claimed not to remember anything about her childhood.

In order for the German witnesses to make the case that Sally was one of them, they first had to prove their close relationship to the lost child Salomé. For this reason, the court documents include a fascinating collection of amazingly detailed personal accounts about the horrific experiences of a group of emigrants from South-



west Germany who departed for America in 1816. Among them were seven interrelated families from the small town of Langensoultzbach in the Alsace, including shoemaker Daniel Müller, his wife Dorothea, and their four young children. They had sold everything they owned to leave behind famine and destitution in their home region for a new life of farming in Missouri.

However, their journey did not go as expected. After walking to the Rhine river, taking a barge to a town near Amsterdam and walking for two more days to reach the city, they found themselves among thousands of other would-be immigrants who had trouble finding a ship that would take them to America. They had spent all their money by the time they were finally accepted onto a ship, crammed in with 900 other passengers for five months, only to see the ship never leave the harbor. Having no way to return home or to finance passage to America, the families were now reduced to begging on the streets of Amsterdam, some dying from hunger and sickness. Finally, they received an offer of transportation to the New World as redemptioners: having no way to pay for the passage, they had to sign an agreement that would prohibit them from leaving the ship in America until the captain had recovered their fare by selling them as indentured servants for a term of some years. In addition, the agreement stated the following: “Should any of the passengers depart in death during the journey the family of such, if he dies beyond half of the way from here shall be required to pay his fare; if he dies this side of half of the way, the loss shall go to the account of the captain.” In the Müller family both Dorothea and the youngest child died during the harrowing four-month journey.

Several days before the arrival of the ship in New Orleans, its “cargo of several Swiss and German passengers who might be very serviceable in their capacities” was announced in the *Louisiana Gazette* to anybody looking for “servants of different ages and sexes, laborers, farmers, gardeners, mechanics, etc.” When the ship finally lay in the harbor, the passengers had to wait for buyers to choose them and bargain with the captain over their price without having any say in or under-

standing of the process whatsoever. They then had to sign a note of indenture before a notary or parish judge, without being able to read the English-language document.

Their desperate desire to remain together was crushed when the remaining members of the Langensoultzbach families were acquired separately and scattered across the state. Daniel Müller and his three children were among the very last to be purchased. Twenty-six days after their arrival, they signed an indenture document (Daniel with his signature, the children with an X) stating that they would “by their own free will and accord, bind and put themselves to [one] Thomas Grayson to serve him . . . for and during the full term and time of Daniel Müller [age 37], three years, Jacob Müller [age about 8], eleven years, Dorothea Müller [age about 6], ten years and Salemia Müller [age about 3], sixteen years . . .” The other German families never saw the Müllers again. Only later did they learn that Daniel and his son had drowned on the trip up the Mississippi river and that the little girls had been sent as orphans into servitude in parts unknown.

To support Sally Miller’s petition, her German friends introduced every piece of evidence they could find, pointing out birthmarks, providing countless witnesses, and even sending a community member back to Langensoultzbach to procure a baptismal certificate for Salomé Müller. John Miller meanwhile had trouble producing evidence that he had purchased as a slave the girl he said was originally called Bridget Wilson. As the legal case dragged through the courts, however, the prevailing legal climate was clear: “when in doubt, side with the property owner.” It thus came as a surprise when in June 1845, the Louisiana State Supreme Court ruled that “slavery is an exception to the conditions of the great mass of mankind and . . . the presumption is in favor of freedom, and the burden of proof is upon him who claims a person as a slave.” The court also stated “that the German witnesses are imaginative and enthusiastic, and that their confidence ought to be distrusted,” but since nobody could bring positive proof of the identity of Sally Miller, she should “be released from the bonds of slavery.”

Hugo Münsterberg: A German's views on America before World War I—Part 1

By Kevin Kurdylo, MKI Librarian

As MKI will soon be asking the 21st-century world to explore the question, “How German Is American?” [see cover story], we thought it would be interesting to examine how one German viewed America in the early 1900s, at the beginning of the 20th century. In our library we have two books in English by the psychologist and philosopher Hugo Münsterberg, one of which is titled *American Traits from the Point of View of a German*, first published in 1901. Münsterberg—born in Danzig, Prussia (now Gdansk, Poland), on June 1, 1863—has been described as a great intellectual with a passion for music and art, devoted to logical thinking and to recognizing beauty in all its forms. Invited in 1892 by the American philosopher William James to head Harvard’s psychology laboratory for a three-year term, Münsterberg quickly became known as a convincing and captivating lecturer as well as an able administrator. He was offered a permanent professorship but declined the offer due to a hesitation to settle in America, and returned to a position in Freiburg. However, urgent invitations from both James and Harvard’s president brought him back to America in 1897.

Among his many accomplishments, Münsterberg greatly influenced how the International Congress of Arts and Sciences at the 1904 St. Louis World’s Fair was conceived. In 1902 he wrote to the Congress planners, “[I]nstead of a hundred congresses, let us have one congress, — one congress with a hundred sections to be sure, but one congress; and let us give to this one congress the definite purpose of working toward the unity of human knowledge



Hugo Münsterberg

... of bringing to the consciousness of the world the too much neglected idea of the unity of truth.” In 1908, although he abstained from drinking himself, he wrote an article critical of prohibition, holding that moderate alcohol consumption was beneficial in that it brought relief from daily worries. The fact that shortly after his article appeared, the Busch Brewing Company donated \$50,000

for a Germanic museum Münsterberg proposed to create, led to a fair amount of scandal. A prolific writer, Münsterberg is also hailed as having published in 1916 the first serious inquiry in the field of film theory, *The Photoplay*, in which he argues that film speaks the language of the mind, equating close-ups with the act of attention, and flashbacks with the act of memory.

Although he greatly admired America, he remained fiercely loyal to his native country. Following the

outbreak of World War I, as discussed further at the end of this article, his stance became decidedly pro-German, and he was both shunned and violently criticized. Before the war he had continually sought to act as a kind of cultural liaison, believing that both America and Germany could benefit from learning about the other, especially when tensions between the two countries were running high. Trade and tariff conflicts frequently arose, there had been a dispute concerning Samoa, and before that, during the Spanish-American War, naval forces from America and Germany had maneuvered in the Philippines, leading to deepening American suspicions of Germany.

In *American Traits* Münsterberg writes that “the two nations do not know each other sufficiently,

although they are connected by innumerable ties from the past and will need each other's good will still more in the years to come." Eerily prescient, Münsterberg insists that "If Americans and Germans like one another and have sympathy for one another's character, the whole of China will be too small to cause a conflict; but if there is an antipathy between them, if neither trusts the nature of the other, the tiniest rock in the ocean may suffice to bring on a war which shall set the globe ablaze."

Interestingly, *American Traits* was "written for Americans, and for Americans only," looking particularly at the areas of education, scholarship, women, and American democracy, with an eye toward how "a fuller understanding of German ideals can be serviceable to American culture." Anticipating the argument that he is merely seeking to influence American prejudices without working to show how Germany might learn from American culture, he points out that he "shall soon put before the German public an entire book on American life, a book. . . . [whose] purpose is to illuminate and to defend a culture which I have learned to admire and which is so greatly misunderstood over there; it seeks to interpret systematically the democratic ideals of America. It will be written for Germans only." He did indeed publish this book, titled *Die Amerikaner*, in which he examines the political, economic, intellectual, and social life of Americans.

Because *American Traits* is fairly critical at times, Münsterberg requests in his preface that "no one, especially no German-American who agrees with me as to the need of good relations between the two countries, should quote or translate from this little book in a German paper over in the fatherland. So far as I can help it," he vows, "no copy of the book shall reach the European continent." Unfortunately, he also promises "to take pains when I publish my German book on America that none of the amiabilities I may have to promulgate over there shall recross the ocean and dull my criticism here." However, in 1904 he agreed to an English translation of *Die Amerikaner*, and this is the second Münsterberg book in the MKI library. To my knowledge, *American Traits* was never translated into German.

Münsterberg begins *American Traits* by examining how Americans view Germans, and vice versa: "No sincere observer can deny that the two people in some respects do not like each other. . . . because they do not regard one another as gentlemen: the American thinks the German servile and reactionary, narrow-minded and narrow-hearted; the German thinks the American greedy and vulgar, brutal and corrupt." The American caricature of a "Prussian sauerkraut-eater" has the following habits:

He goes shabbily dressed, never takes a bath, drinks beer at his breakfast, plays skat, smokes a long pipe, wears spectacles, reads books from dirty loan libraries, is rude to the lower classes and slavishly servile to the higher, is innocent of the slightest attempt at good form in society, considering it as his object in life to obey the policeman, to fill blanks with bureaucratic red tape, and to get a title in front of his name. Most of this genus fill their time with training parade step in the barrack courts; the others either make bad lyrical poems or live immoral lives, or sit in prison on account of daring to say a free word in politics. But their chief characteristic comes out in their relations to women and to the government . . . [they] force women to remain uneducated and without rights . . . a woman with intellectual or aesthetic interests is, like everything which suggests progress, a horror to their minds. And lastly, their government: . . . they insist on living without any constitution, under an absolute autocrat, and it is their chief pride that their monarch is an irresponsible busybody, whose chief aim is to bother his patient subjects.

And the American man? He is well-known to the German:

A haggard creature, with vulgar tastes and brutal manners, who drinks whiskey and chews tobacco, spits, fights, puts his feet on the table, and habitually rushes along in wild haste, absorbed by a greedy desire wild haste, absorbed by a greedy desire

Bloede continued from page 5

Breslau and grew up in a literary family with three brothers—one of them the revolutionary poet and songwriter Friedrich von Sallet. Later, Marie would refer to Sallet's *Layman's Gospel* every time she tried to contact American writers of her time. She herself was a writer of ballads, poems, and children's books. Her children loved her for her caring nature and humility, and because she patiently endured an unhappy marriage to Gustav Bloede. America would not bring her happiness. Suffering from tuberculosis, she died prematurely in 1870.

Gustav Bloede was a member of Dresden's liberal bourgeoisie, which unanimously supported the 1848/49 revolution. His father, editor of Gall's *Phrenology* and translator of Berzelius's main textbook on chemistry, was a determined materialist, and young Gustav followed in his footsteps.

Gustav's decision to immigrate to the United States was only in part prompted by the fact that he had been sentenced to ten years in prison. He deemed North America to be the geographic and political center for the future of mankind, and—feeling severely disillusioned by Europe's decline into the restoration of the feudal regimes—Gustav wanted to be a part of that future. Arriving in America with such high expectations, it was no surprise that he would suffer new disappointments, like many of his fellow countrymen who had trouble adjusting to the realities of American life. In the Bloede family this was a constant and recurring theme of discussion, as one finds in Gertrude's diary on the occasion of her father's 1861 birthday celebration:

After some time the conversation turned upon democracy and the Government. But whatever the Germans say about the Americans it is always against them. Even Dr. [Reinhold] Solger talks so. My opinion is, that Germans in general are angry at seeing this our great Republic, so blooming till now, when their attempt to gain liberty was vain. I can not bear any more to hear such a conversation; it seems so like trampling the holiest and best of feelings under foot.

* * *

*But thine, O tongue! the power that first lent voice
To the young, waking, fluttering soul, that learned
With thee to suffer and with thee rejoice,*

*Through thee to tell the thousand hopes that burned
In the hot heart, whose all too eager haste
Grasped at the bright fruit, bitter to the taste,
Through thee the storms it knew, and scanty gleams
Of pallid sunshine, and the dark despair
Of love, rudely aroused from joyous dreams, —
And thine the breath bearing the first faint prayer
That burst from untaught lips, confused and dim,
To cry to God my soul had need of Him.*

* * *

Originally, the burden of the Bloede children's education lay on Marie, but Gertrude and her siblings also attended The Brooklyn Institute and The Cooper Institute in the 1860s. The latter would hold a special significance for Gertrude after she accompanied her father to an anti-slavery rally there, where Carl Schurz delivered a stirring speech:

What can I say of it? What can we say of those feelings which stir up the profoundest depths of our nature, that make the heart beat wild and high with enthusiasm, and the flush of pride and pleasure mount to the cheek? What can I say of these glorious storms of applause that followed each bold word expressing sentiments of freedom?

The speaker's enthusiasm for the principle of universal freedom made a deep and lasting impression on Gertrude, but she was also searching for something less abstract:

But I know not whether I could be so proud even in this case without a living example before my mind's eyes. I am afraid I am too much a woman to labor even in a great cause without an individual representative of the same to love and admire.

Gertrude found her hero in Charles Sumner, a senator from Massachusetts, reading all his speeches and everything she could find that had been written about him. In time, she fell into "deep and everlasting" love with this man she had never met. Love from afar made her suffer, but also gave her insight into some basic issues of humanity.

Ralph Waldo Emerson became another of her teachers when the whole family read his *Essays*. Gertrude certainly understood what was meant by "individualism" and "self-reliance," but she thought, incorrectly, that Emerson was talking about both genders. However, she seemed subconsciously to accept his male prejudices, and her determination

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German Slave Girl continued from page 9

The German community broke into joyous celebration. A grand ball was held in the *Kaiser Tanz Hall* in Lafayette with Sally as the center of attention. Not long afterwards, however, Sally moved to California. John Fitz Miller, on the other hand, his reputation as an “honest and moral businessman” thoroughly ruined, was not about to give up trying to find “the truth and uncover the imposter.” Eventually he indeed not only found Salomé’s sister Dorothea and learned what really happened to the child Salomé, but also found the mother and grandmother of Bridget Wilson/Mary/Sally Miller. His attempt to appeal the verdict, however, failed.

It is interesting that while the “Sally Miller case” was widely publicized and discussed in abolitionist publications (German and English), abolition or any discussion of the slave system itself did not come up in the court proceedings. The case was fought strictly on the basis of the legal norms of the day. Writing *The Lost German Slave Girl* in an almost novelistic, courtroom-drama style, Bailey succeeds in making it suspenseful throughout. At the same time he gives his readers plenty of food for thought concerning the many intersections of immigration, settlement, slavery, servitude, race, identity, language, and culture in American history, as well as revealing the overpowering human desire for freedom and improvement of one’s situation.

Bailey succeeds in bringing to life the New Orleans of the 1840s, its mix of people, precarious location, colorful sights, sounds, and smells. After hurricane Katrina we all know about the city’s dangerous proximity to water. The same danger preoccupied New Orleans citizens in the mid-nineteenth century. When John Fitz Miller filed his appeal in 1849, the Mississippi had flooded wide areas, levees had broken, and parts of the city had been evacuated. For the first time in years, people lost interest in the story of Sally Miller. When the Supreme Court announced its rejection of Miller’s appeal, the decision was barely noticed. There was only one piece of important news that day: that the breach in the main levee had been repaired.

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for the dollars of his neighbors. He does not care for education or art, for the public welfare or for justice, except so far as they mean money to him. Corrupt from top to toe, he buys legislation and courts and government; and when he wants fun, he lynches innocent negroes on Madison Square in New York, or in the Boston Public Garden. He has his family home usually in a sky-scraper of twenty-four stories; his business is founded on misleading advertisements; his newspapers are filled with accounts of murders, and his churches swarm with hypocrites.

Münsterberg saw himself as a cultural ambassador, seeking to correct these stereotypical impressions, but unfortunately his efforts came to naught with the outbreak of World War I. Part two of this article will appear in the Spring issue of the *Newsletter*, and will discuss Münsterberg’s views of German Americans—particularly his belief that they had not lived up to their potential—as well as his critical examination of American education, scholarship, women, and democracy.

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tion, namely typographical errors, and there are some there that would exceed those found in [Ludwig] Uhland’s works. But if one lives in the far western reaches of America, it is rather difficult to proofread a text appearing in Germany.”

In our further discussions, which, I should mention, took place in English, since Longfellow spoke only a little German, he expounded on his views on translation. His main expectation was, as already indicated, a maximally literal reproduction, even at the expense of the poetic style of the original. That he applied these rigorous principles to his translation of Dante is well known. Just as well known is the fact that he robbed the original of its lyric beauty, producing a work that does not do justice to the Italian’s classic work.

To be continued in the Spring issue of the Newsletter.

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to become a poet and a writer made her life difficult. How could she address the biases of her time that considered women writers to be “scribblers,” “sentimentalists,” or simply “sweet singers,” when she herself suffered from a considerable lack of self-esteem? After all, it was men such as Sumner and Emerson, whom she had glorified as heroes and geniuses. Gertrude eventually found her answer in a belief in individual goodness and a personal God. Considering that her father—steeped in the culture of Enlightenment and contemporary German philosophy—had declared God obsolete, Gertrude’s beliefs seem to be a step backward in history. She, however, found solace in her beliefs.

* * *

*Thine all the deeper life, the riper thought
Of golden later days, when storms are past
And patience with unfading sunshine fraught,
And white-winged peace through God are
gained at last.*

*Thine all of these, that ever grow’st more dear
And more familiar with each passing year.*

*O matchless tongue! whose power and beauty sprang
From two great peoples, perished long ago;
Whose voice is strong as the broad war-club’s blow
Wherewith of old the dusky forests rang,
Yet tender as a maiden’s whispered breath,
To speak the griefs and joys of life and death.*

* * *

Although Gertrude desperately wished to marry, she never did. Instead, writing became her primary passion. In 1865 Gertrude started publishing under the pen name of Stuart Sterne, realizing that neither her German name nor the fact that her parents were part of the German “Bildungsbürgertum” (educated middle class) was of any advantage for her career as an American writer. Instead, she had to gain access somehow to the (in)famous New England literary network.

Her father, by contrast, had made little effort to prove himself as an English-speaking American. Like other German Americans, he published on esoteric and philosophical subjects in German-language magazines, and eventually became co-editor of and contributor to the *New Yorker Demokrat*’s weekend edition, *Der Wächter am Hudson*. At the same

time Marie was making acquaintances among the American literary scene, such as Bayard Taylor and the Genteel Circle. Unfortunately, Taylor, who was well known for his knowledge of German literature and his translation of Goethe’s *Faust*, was more interested in the well-educated German family itself than in making Marie his protégée.

Meanwhile, it took Gertrude ten years to publish her first independent volume of *Poems* in 1874. To her own surprise, the collection was favorably reviewed in *The New York Times* and *The Galaxy*. Now Bayard Taylor came to offer his patronage. Gertrude, however, already disappointed when Longfellow refused to be her literary patron, decided to remain independent. A *New York Times* critic encouraged her to publish the narrative poem *Angelo* with a well known Boston publisher, and in 1878 Stuart Sterne became recognized as an American poet. Although Gertrude herself was not yet satisfied with her poetry, the public was convinced of her talent. She had received recognition and acclaim without revealing her identity. She had achieved her goal.

* * *

*And should it fall some cruel destiny
Ordained for me to choose, renounce, forget
One of the two—my mother-tongue or thee—
Even as of all the world my heart is set
On thee, O land! beyond the Western tide,
Where freedom rolls her currents deep and wide,
So would I turn from her who taught me speech,
What though with tear-dimmed eyes
and heart that bled,
And with each fiber of my being reach
And cling to her who is forever wed
To me by thousand bonds than death more strong,
Love of my soul, to thee who gave me song!*

* * *

[Dieter Lange, Professor Emeritus of Art History at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts in Hannover, Germany, has lived in California since 2002. His research into liberal German politicians of the 19th century led him to the story of Gustav Bloede (1814–1888) and the very recent discovery of the Gertrude Bloede papers, including ten of her journals. He is working on a biography of the American poet and writer in the context of her family’s immigration and life in Brooklyn, NY.]

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Tom worked to expand the collection—previously dominated by works of Milwaukee’s famous son Carl von Marr (1858–1936)—into a center for regional art.

Tom estimates that, up to the 1950s, the great majority of Wisconsin artists were first- or second-generation immigrants with vibrant connections to Europe. Many came from art academies in Düsseldorf, Weimar, and Munich. Milwaukee was a beacon that drew many talented artists, whose local students, until the outbreak of WWI, often returned to Germany to continue their training.

Tom encourages a multiple-perspective approach to the WBAM collection. An example he uses is the Milwaukee-based American branch of the worldwide nineteenth-century panorama movement. Perhaps 80% of its painters were “imported” from the Munich art academy. These artists, settling in Wisconsin, “had a huge impact, socially, economically, politically, and artistically, so the collection cannot be isolated in the way it is understood.” In the graduate courses Tom teaches every summer, students learn about the ways the aesthetics and practice of art are linked to time and place.

The museum is currently developing on-line resources to broaden its reach. Requests for information already come from as far away as Ukraine and Japan. It is not surprising, given the German origins of so many Wisconsin artists, that many queries originate in German-speaking countries.

Like the Max Kade Institute, WBAM serves specialized researchers while also providing important educational outreach to the public. Tom believes that contact between such institutions helps “establish the connections and collaborations that increase the vital flow of information” and are part of “weaving a fabric of culture.” With this in mind, Tom hopes to take part in several projects now under discussion that will widen the impact of both organizations across the state, increasing public awareness of both Wisconsin’s visual arts legacy and the state’s German heritage.

When not at work, Tom can be found traveling, kayaking Wisconsin waters, flying radio-controlled aircraft, or gazing upward with a former aviator’s eyes at “anything that flies.”

Historical note: German emigration societies in the U.S.

by Karyl Rommelfanger

When one thinks of German migration in the mid-nineteenth century, the most common image is of people leaving Europe to come to the American Midwest. It is surprising, therefore, to find advertisements for *Auswanderungsvereine* (emigration societies) cropping up in American newspapers to promote emigration from those very places.

The passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854 allowed the citizens of these two new territories to choose whether slavery would be allowed or not. As a result, both pro- and anti-slavery sympathizers began populating these areas, each intent upon influencing the final vote.

Thus Germans in Cincinnati, Louisville, Chicago, Milwaukee, and even smaller communities like Manitowoc, Wisconsin, began forming *Auswanderungsvereine*, whose ostensible intention was to obtain inexpensive land on which to establish German towns, but whose more secret purpose, perhaps unbeknownst to some members, was to populate the territories with freedom-loving abolitionists. Many of the members of these societies were immigrants already living in the U.S. who were “emigrating” from one part of the United States to another. Others were new immigrants, eager to establish themselves in their adopted homeland.

Each member would buy shares of stock in the society, thus raising money for the purchase of a large piece of land in one of the territories. Stock was often transferable from one emigration association to another, so that if the community built by a person’s particular society was not to his/her liking, it was possible to trade stock and join a different community. It is unknown how many Nebraska and Kansas towns were settled in this manner.

The settlement of the Nebraska Territory went smoothly, but convincing Germans to migrate to strife-ridden “bleeding Kansas” was another matter. In Cincinnati the members of the *Kansas Ansiedlungsverein* (Kansas Settlement Society) changed their minds completely and decided instead to go to . . . Wisconsin!

Karyl Rommelfanger is a retired teacher of German, an avid Manitowoc local historian, and an active member of the MKI Friends.

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