

## CHAPTER I

# EMIGRATION

### America

*Do you know the land where your mind is free?  
No censor measures the audacity  
of words or opinions freely expressed,  
and the temple of freedom stands unharmed!  
Have you heard of it before? Over there! Over there!  
I would like to go there with you, my friend.*

Anonymous Turner poem, date unknown

*Bleibe im Land  
und nähre dich redlich.*

*Dwell in the land  
And you shall be nourished.*

Psalm 37: 3

German Bible translation by Martin Luther, 1534

# Chapter I

# EMIGRATION

## Contents

### INTRODUCTION

1. THREE HUNDRED YEARS OF GERMAN EMIGRATION TO NORTH AMERICA  
Günter Moltmann
2. THE HARDEST PART: SAYING GOOD-BYE  
Norbert Krapf, ed.
3. EMIGRATION POLICY IN GERMANY AND IMMIGRATION POLICY IN THE UNITED STATES  
Ingrid Schöberl
4. SOUTHWEST GERMAN EMIGRATION  
Michael Rehs and Hans-Joachim Haager
5. EMIGRATION ESPECIALLY FROM THE OSNABRÜCK REGION  
Antonius Holtmann
6. FROM BAVARIA TO ST. LEON, DEARBORN COUNTY (1864)  
Leo Stadtmiller
7. CHURCHES CARING FOR EMIGRANTS IN THE 19TH CENTURY  
Wiebke Henning, ed.
8. A BRIDGE ACROSS THE SEA: EMIGRANTS ON THEIR WAY  
Wolfgang Grams
9. EMIGRANT LETTERS ABOUT LIFE IN AMERICA
  - 9.1 Johann Heinrich zur Oeveste (1834)
  - 9.2 Jacob Schramm (1830s)
  - 9.3 Johann Wolfgang Schreyer (1845-1846)
    - 9.3.1 Johann Melchior Meyer's Enthusiastic Answer to Schreyer's Letter (1846)
  - 9.4 Johann Berger's Warning about Indianapolis (1854)

10. THE HOMESTEAD ACT (May 1862)

U.S. Statutes at Large

11. EMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES OF NORTH AMERICA

—INDIANA AS A HOME FOR EMIGRANTS (1864) —

Governor Oliver P. Morton

12. SINGING THEIR WAY OUT

Eberhard Reichmann, ed.

# INTRODUCTION

Beginning in the 18th century, the German-speaking areas of Europe experienced substantial emigration to Eastern and Southeastern Europe and to North America. At given periods, religious intolerance, economic misery, rigid class barriers, and political suppression and persecution became the principal “push” factors that motivated individuals and groups to leave their homeland.

Complementing these “push” factors were the “pull” factors from abroad — the promise of a better life in a free democratic country; freedom from religious and/or political persecution; economic opportunity; communities established by earlier emigrants; and

letters from America. Combined, the “push” and “pull” factors influenced the movement of people over the centuries.

When the United States and Germany celebrated the Tricentennial of German Immigration to America in 1983, there was a commonly-held belief that 1683 was the year when the first Germans arrived in America. The arrival of the ship *Concord* on 6 October 1683 in the port of Philadelphia, principal settlement of the newly chartered colony of Pennsylvania, however, marked the first *group* immigration. The group consisted of thirteen families (some 33 persons), notably from Krefeld, who soon founded the first German community in America, aptly called Germantown, Pennsylvania.



Emigrants from Salzburg. Contemporary engraving.  
(Illustration from K. Wust and N. Muchlen. *SPAN 200*, Philadelphia 1976)

The German texts (from the top down): “Pray that it may not be winter when you have to make your escape, or Sabbath (Matthew 24: 20-21)”-- “Salzburger Emigranten”-- “Nothing but the gospel/drives us into exile. /Even as we leave the fatherland/we’ll always be in God’s own hand.”-- In 1731 the Archbishop of Salzburg expelled over 20,000 Protestants from his diocese. The majority went to East Prussia. Others, with Baron von Reck and pastors Bolzius and Gronau, chose America, especially the colony of Georgia.  
Moltman: *Germans to America* (1982), 56.

Forgotten in the Tricentennial celebration were the German craftsmen — woodworkers and glassmakers — and Dr. Johannes Fleischer of Breslau, a physician, who arrived in 1608 at the first English settlement of Jamestown, Virginia, founded in 1607. The Germans' presence in the British colony was duly recognized in celebrations marking their 400th anniversary in 2008.

The 17th century was a time when the maritime powers of England, France, Spain and, to a lesser degree, the Netherlands and Sweden, captured and divided vast parts of the newly settled continent. But, where was Germany's participation in this period?

The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation (*Heiliges Römisches Reich Deutscher Nation*), unlike the colonizing powers, lacked a central government and a national fleet. Furthermore, it had been engaged in its bloodiest and longest conflict, the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), which set Catholics against Protestants, destroying the land, and reducing the Reich to a conglomerate of numerous independent principalities, all at the cost of millions of lives. Small wonder that in the early European colonization of America, Germans did not come as colonizers, but rather as settlers under the flags of other nations. Of particular note was Peter Minnewit of Wesel who is credited with purchasing the island of Manhattan from the Indians in 1626 — not for Germany, but for the Netherlands.

Up to the early 1800s, various emigration restrictions, beyond those of required military service, kept many from

leaving the homeland. But when natural disasters affected food production and led to famine and when emerging industrialization created widespread unemployment and unbearable living conditions, German principalities decided to liberalize their emigration rules. Communities soon found it cheaper and easier to help the poor pay for their voyages abroad than to keep supplying basic provisions to them at home.

The earlier and frequently used redemptioner method, also known as indentured servitude, offered free passage in return for a number of years of contractually binding employment. But, this system gradually declined and was discontinued by the early 19th century.

The weight of certain “push” factors differed from region to region. Baden and Württemberg, for example, suffered weather catastrophes and dwindling farm sizes that proved uneconomical, thanks to outdated inheritance laws that required farms to be divided among the sons and daughters. In northwestern Germany, the pre-industrial family-based weaving and linen economy became uncompetitive when machines entered the world of work.

Still, for most emigrants, especially in the days of slow sailing ships, it was not easy to leave behind family members, friends, and the homeland. But confidence in the New World's promises won out for those who dared to make the trek.

Most helpful in making the decision to move were letters (commonly known as “America letters”) from relatives and friends who reported on their new lives

Gottlieb Mittelbergers  
 Reise  
 nach  
**Pennsylvanien**  
 im Jahr 1750.  
 und  
**Rückreise nach Deutschland**  
 im Jahr 1754.  
 Enthaltend  
 nicht nur eine Beschreibung des Landes  
 nach seinem gegenwärtigen Zustande, son-  
 dern auch eine ausführliche Nachricht von den  
 unglückseligen und betrübten Umständen der meisten  
 Deutschen, die in dieses Land gezogen sind,  
 und dahin ziehen.



Stuttgart,  
 gedruckt bey Gottlieb Friederich Jenisch. 1756.

Title Page of the Book: *Gottlieb Mittelbergers Reise Nach Pennsylvanien im Jahre 1750 und Rückreise nach Teutschland im Jahre 1754.* (Gottlieb Mittelberger's Voyage to Pennsylvania in the Year 1750 and Return to Germany in the Year 1754), Stuttgart 1756. Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen.

The author of this early travel account first took an organ built in Heilbronn to Philadelphia in 1750, and was then a schoolmaster and organist in Pennsylvania for several years, before returning to Germany in 1754. He described the fate of the emigrants and conditions in Pennsylvania in drastic, monitory, and not always objective terms. His account met with great interest, but evidently hardly prevented any would-be emigrants from going to America.

Moltmann, (1982), 59

and how hard work led to success in America. Other incentives included the U.S. Congress' passage of the Homestead Act (1862), the sale of rich western farm lands by American railroad companies, and promotions by individual states, such as that offered by Indiana Governor Oliver P. Morton (1864), which encouraged immigrants to relocate.

The America experience generated a considerable travel literature. Best known among Germans was Gottfried Duden's *Bericht Über eine Reise nach den westlichen Staaten Nordamerika's und einen mehrjährigen anfehalt am Missouri in den jahren 1824, '25, '26 und 1827...* (*Report on a Journey to the Western States of North America and a Stay of Several Years Along the Missouri-During the Years 1824, '25, '26, and 1827*), published in Elberfeld in 1829. It had a tremendous impact on prospective emigrants. There were numerous guide booklets providing basic information about America; some were done bilingually to assist the emigrants in learning English during the long voyage.

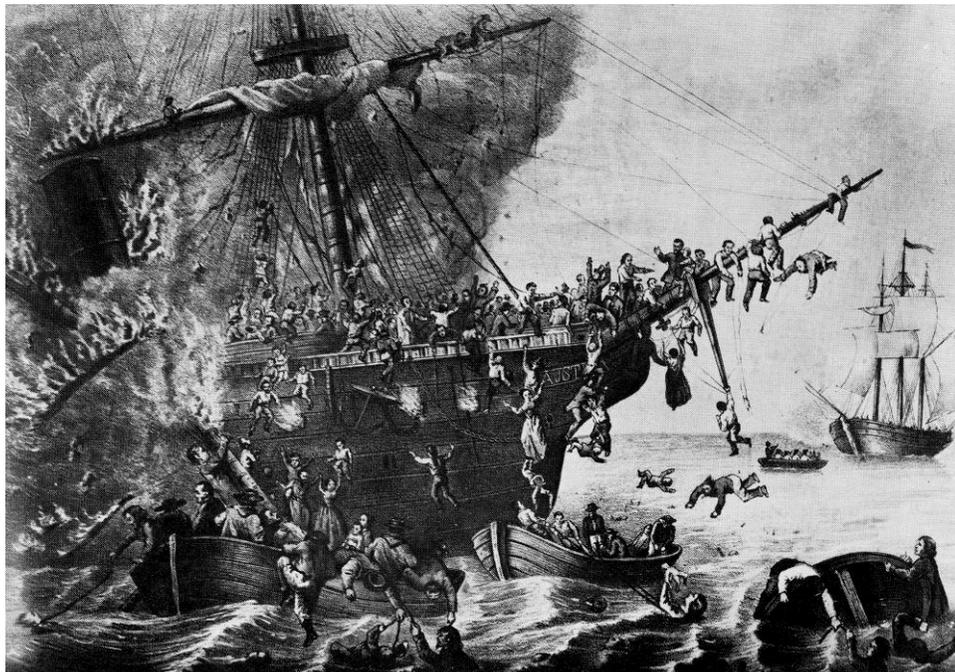
Joining others with the same intention of emigrating gave a measure of reassurance for success in resettlement. So did the preference for certain destinations, primarily places where Germans had already settled. This led to "chain migration" to both rural areas and cities where "little Germany" neighborhoods became quite common. Cincinnati, for example, served as a link in the chain for many hundreds who later chose Indiana for their homes and businesses.

The number of German emigrants to the U.S. rose steadily throughout the 19th century. During the decade of the 1820s, some 5,753 Germans arrived. Emigration increased dramatically in the 1830s when 124,726 Germans arrived in the U.S. Subsequent decades witnessed similar large increases — a 200 percent increase during the 1840s with the arrival of 385,434 people and a 150 percent increase during the 1850s when 976,072 landed in America. The largest German migration to the U.S. occurred during the 1880s when 1,445,181 Germans entered. [U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics from Colonial Times to 1970*]. These figures are but abstractions of the complexity of emigration, which also included plans by some emigration

societies to develop distinctly German areas of settlement.

Among the most influential emigrating groups of the 19th century were the refugees from the unsuccessful democratic revolution of 1848-1849. These immigrants came from the educated middle class and were politically and socially active. Once established in the U.S., they became involved in assorted American causes, such as abolition of slavery and women's rights. But, they also sought to retain German values, which they preserved through the creation of *vereins*, clubs or associations of like-minded individuals dedicated to a cause or ideal.

Emigrants traveled to principal port cities of Bremerhaven and Hamburg



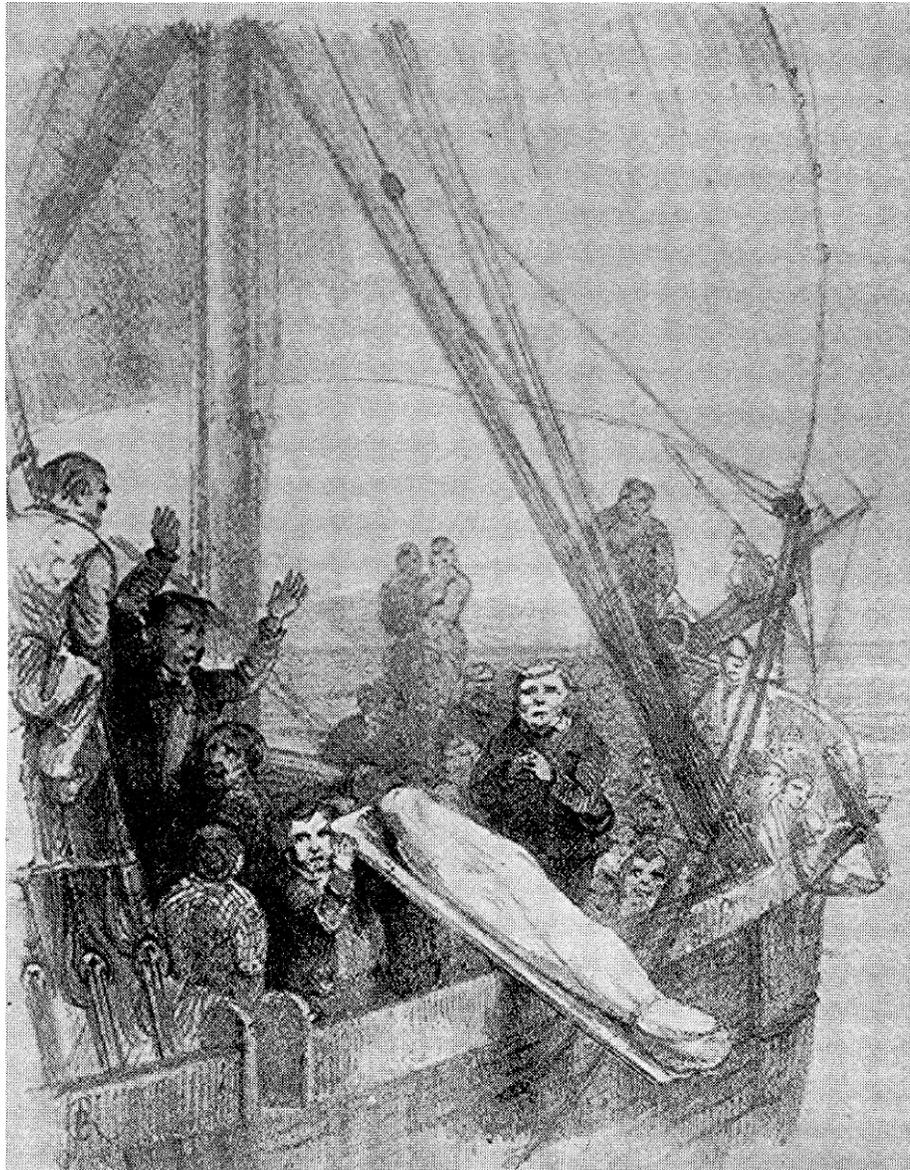
Fire on the Emigrant Steamer "Austria", 1858.  
Contemporary Lithograph. (Museum für Hamburgische Geschichte)

On 13 September 1858, fire broke out on the "Austria" on her way from Hamburg to New York. While the steerage was being smoked out with tar, the container had fallen over and caught fire. Of the 542 people on board, only 89 were saved. Moltmann, (1982), 89

where they waited to board their America-bound ships. To counter the predatory practices of ruthless travel agents and merchants, churches and charitable organizations offered assistance to the emigrants. Shipping companies located in these port cities, such as *Norddeutsche*

*Lloyd* (NDL) in Bremerhaven and the *Hamburg Amerikanische Packetfahrt Actien Gesellschaft* (HAPAG), also known as the *Hamburg-Amerika Linie*, prospered from the millions of passengers headed for America.

Many Hoosier-German families have



Burial of an Emigrant at Sea.

Lithograph by Theodor Hosemann, 1855. (Illustration from F. Gerstäcker, *Nach Amerika!*, Leipzig 1855)

Deaths on board ship were a frequent occurrence. Medical care on sailing ships was poor. On ships out of Hamburg, the mortality rate between 1854 and 1858 was around 1.8 percent. If infectious diseases broke out on the voyage, the number of dead sometimes rose to alarming proportions. On the sailing-ship "Leibniz", for example, 108 out of 544 passengers died of cholera during an Atlantic crossing in the winter of 1867-1868.

Moltmann, (1982), 86

lovingly kept the trunks in which their forebears brought bedding, clothing, pots and pans, cutlery and tools. Emigrant trunks also were the carriers of mementos of sentimental value — a handful of soil from the family grave, the candlestick from grandmother, ribbons of lace, doilies, embroidery, a carved cuckoo clock, a crucifix, a Bible, a musical instrument, or a favorite book.

The vast majority of emigrants left the homeland without significant funds. There were, however, many instances in which friends and family members who preceded them sent along money that they had earned in America to pay for the passage of their loved ones. Likewise, emigrant aid societies, established by parishioners, merchants, and entrepreneurs, provided financial assistance for numerous trans-Atlantic trips as well as employment and other relief upon the emigrants' arrival in the U.S.

The voyage by sailing ship lasted six weeks or more and was often fraught with danger. Overcrowded conditions and poor supplies of food and drinking water caused sickness, even death. Fire spelled disaster for some ships. Such bad news kept many young women from following their fiancés across the sea. There also were cases where love had crossed the strictly guarded denominational line and parental permission to marry was not forthcoming. But, love proved to be inventive: many young German men who had traveled to America worked hard and saved their money in order to purchase

tickets for their sweethearts to follow.

The broad palette of emigration experiences — the decision to leave the homeland, the process of making one's way to a port of embarkation, the trans-Atlantic voyage, and the eventual settlement in America — found expression in caricatures and paintings, prose, poetry, and song — and were often accompanied by the tears of the folks staying behind.

## 1. THREE HUNDRED YEARS OF GERMAN EMIGRATION TO NORTH AMERICA

**Günter Moltmann**

How many Germans have emigrated to the British colonies in North America or to the U.S. which emerged from them? This question has no easy answer. Nationwide German statistics do not start until the founding of the Second Reich (1871). The surveys of individual German states go further back, but are inconsistent and unreliable. American immigration statistics are more useful; they start as early as 1820 and contain an enumeration of new arrivals at the ports according to nationality, but overland immigration from Canada was not recorded for a long time. Frequently, no distinction was made between Germans, Austrians, German-speaking Swiss, and people from Alsace-Lorraine. Return migration from the U.S., at times not inconsiderable, was only recorded from 1908 on.

Available documents nevertheless permit an approximate overview of 19th and 20th century migration. The scope of German immigration during the preceding centuries allows only rough estimates. Some bases for such calculations are the numbers of German immigrants who landed in Philadelphia (where ship manifests were kept from 1727), individual statistics on the inhabitants of German settlements and settlement areas as well as of church congregations, estimates of natural population increases, and the 1790 census

figures. Hence the following figures should not be accepted without reservations.

During the colonial period, about 65,000-75,000, possibly as many as 100,000 Germans may have immigrated. At the time of the American Revolution, approximately 225,000 German-Americans made up 8-9 percent of the total population. Between then and the Congress of Vienna [ending the Napoleonic era in 1815], relatively few opted for America. From 1816 to 1914, the period of German mass emigration, about 5.5 million Germans went to the U.S.; from WW I to the present about 1.5 million more followed. Altogether, the number can be set at over 7 million — an estimate which does not take into account some return migration.

In the Europe-North America migration movement Northwestern and Central Europeans were the strong early participants. Immigrants from Eastern and Southern countries arrived only from the late 19th century on, but then in greater numbers.

Total immigration into the U.S. from 1820 to the present has been over 46 million. The German share was numerically the largest and made up about 15 percent. In peak years, up to a quarter-million Germans arrived (1854: 215,000; 1882: 250,000). In the second half of the 1800s, Americans born in

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Germany made up over 30 percent of all Americans born abroad (1860: 30.8 percent) and over 4 percent of the total population (1890 census: 4.4 percent).

Such figures say but little about the emigration/immigration process itself. What did it mean to those concerned and how did they come to terms with the adventure of resettlement under the changing conditions of the time?

In the 17th and 18th centuries, even in the early 19th century, America was by no means the major destination of German emigrants. The East, especially the Southeast of Europe, absorbed many more people than did the New World. At the same time as Pastorius and the Krefeld families landed at Philadelphia, the Turkish siege of Vienna was beaten back (Battle of Kahlenberg, 1683). This re-opened the way to Hungary for German settlers.

Thus, North America was a secondary destination, attractive at most to inhabitants of the Rhine regions offering ready access to the sea. Before American independence, the British Navigation Act prescribed the use of British ships and an English port as a transit station. Many Germans in the 17th and 18th centuries responded to British advertisements.

The colonies were in many respects much freer than European states and for dissident religious groups Pennsylvania offered the prospect of a new home where each could follow his own faith unmolested.

The journey was arduous. For their voyage from Gravesend (port of embarkation in England) to Philadelphia, the Krefelders took 74 days — and even that was not excessive then. Resettlement for early emigrants was of a virtually irrevocable nature. On account of difficult travel conditions and substantial costs, one could hardly go “back home.”

The 19th and early 20th century emigration to America presented a different picture. Although fairly good numbers left before (1709, 1749-1752, 1757, 1759, 1782), it now swelled into a continuous stream that far exceeded previous departures.

Americans had cast off their English fetters and granted port access to ships of all nations. They could well use newcomers to build up their country with space to settle and opportunities for personal and economic development. In Germany, new liberal policies gradually removed emigration barriers. The individual states granted freedom of movement and emigration taxes no longer existed after the middle of the century. Only military service and social obligations toward one's family could not be avoided. Following the establishment of the *Zollverein* [Customs Union, 1834], travel within Germany was made easier.

Transportation problems were now more readily solved: sailing vessels became faster and better. They were fitted for emigrant transport and traveled regularly to America. Once

steamships were built, travel time was further shortened, transport capacity increased, and security enhanced. The construction of railways facilitated the journeys to the ports, and within the U.S. to one's destination. But even then, emigration did still involve hardship. Now, however, the old and new homelands were no longer so irretrievably far apart as in former times. The immigrant could more easily contemplate returning.

Emigration to Europe's East increasingly took second place to emigration to America. Toward the end of the 19th century, also many Russian-Germans began to emigrate to America. After emigration had at first affected especially Germany's Southwest, in the course of the 19th century all German states became participants in the population exodus. Religious reasons now only played a small part. There were major political reasons for leaving the German homeland: the persecution of the "demagogues" [outspoken liberal democrats] in the 1830s; the failure of the 1848-1849 Revolution; Bismarck's anti-socialist law [1878]. Social and economic motives were much more significant. Although there had always been agrarian crises, population growth and industrialization produced a loosening of the social structure, new crises and greater population mobility.

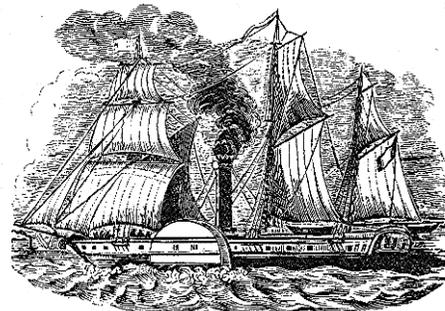
At no time had emigration to America been so much at the center of public discussion in Germany as it was around

the middle and during the last third of the 19th century. Questions of freedom to emigrate and care for emigrants, of directing them to certain desired regions, control of emigrant agents, and the pros

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für Amerika.  
Unentbehrliches Taschenbuch für Auswanderer  
nach Amerika, das über alle amerikanischen Verhältnisse,  
Reiserouten, Ansiedlung, Rechtsverhältnisse, Erwerb, Geld,  
Länderei-Käufe, Aebau, Handel und Gewerbe u. s. w. die  
genauste Auskunft und Belehrung gibt.



Nach eigenen Erfahrungen und den besten Quellen bearbeitet von  
Hans Rau in New-York.  
Vierte verbesserte Auflage.  
Mit 1 Karte von Amerika und Abbildungen der amerik. Gold- u. Silbermünzen.  
Druck und Verlag der J. Ebner'schen Buchhandlung in Ulm.

Title Page of an Immigrant Guide: Hans Rau, *Nützliches Reisebuch für Amerika*. (Useful Travel Book for America) (Ulm, c.1870). Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen.

During the period of German mass emigration in the 19th century, there appeared a plethora of publications of greater or lesser value: travelogues, emigrant guides, promotional pamphlets and brochures, edifying or warning tales, broadsheets, song-sheets, prayer books, proclamations, etc. They were much read, and also taken on the journey.

Moltmann, (1982), 79

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and cons in general were vigorously discussed. Governments, parliaments, scholars and writers, journalists and broad circles among the public saw emigration as a problem which they had to solve and on which they had to make their views known. This intensive preoccupation with the migration process is evidenced by books of advice, brochures, newspapers, novels, poems, songs, pictures, official files, proclamations and public pronouncements, placards, leaflets, etc. Parallel to all this, Germans' interest in the U.S. increased, factual knowledge often being bound up with clichés and stereotypes. The German image of America, despite many negative and positive prejudices, gained firmer contours.

German emigration to the U.S. in the 20th century presented a quite different picture again. To be sure, there were still years in which the emigration curve rose sharply — 1924: 75,000; 1950: 128,600; 1952: 104,200. These high numbers occurred after lost wars. Many Germans sought to escape difficulties associated with economic, social, and political reconstruction. Overall, the 20th century numbers remained lower than in the 19th century.

The resettlement of Germans in the U.S. between 1920 and 1980 also reflects in its disparity those destructive forces which have been so ominous for Germany, Europe and the 20th century world: National Socialism, racial hatred

and persecution, German expansionism, the war and the extermination policies of the Third Reich, and the aftermath of the war. The pre-1939 emigration of over 100,000 Germans to the U.S., 80 percent of them Jews, was not a migration of the traditional kind. It was a flight from persecution and death. The New World presented itself to many as a traditional land of asylum. Very often life in exile, as had been the case for earlier political refugees, became permanent.

After the war, many German scientists and technicians went to the U.S., so did thousands of “G.I. brides” and a large number of “displaced persons” who had lost their homes in the war, among them many ethnic German refugees and expellees from Eastern Europe.

But Americans grew apprehensive about the influx of great masses who would possibly not be easily integrated. They were also concerned about competition in the job market. Thus a country which no longer appeared as wide open to development as it had a hundred years previously, implemented restrictions on immigration and imposed national quotas which limited also the numbers of German immigrants.

The voyage was not nearly as arduous anymore. Emigrants mostly used passenger ships which operated according to regular schedules to meet the great increase in normal travel. With the end of ocean passenger traffic [1966/67], emigrants changed over to the airplane and cannot be distinguished from

passengers traveling for business or pleasure. Emigration has become an almost invisible process.

A survey of more than 300 years of German emigration to America suggests further questions. What kind of people were those who left their ancestral and familiar homeland to seek their fortune in a distant land? What were the driving forces of this mass exodus? At a high point of the migration movement around 1850, Friedrich Gerstäcker, a well-known travel writer who himself initially left with the intent of emigrating to America, described the types of people whom he met on board: “‘To America’ cries the madcap gaily and audaciously, defiant against the first sad hour which will put his strength to the test...— ‘to America’ whispers the desperate man who here on the margin of ruin was being pulled, slowly but surely, toward the abyss — ‘to America’ says the poor man, softly and resolutely, who again and again had struggled with manly strength, but futilely, against the power of circumstances...— ‘to America’ laughs the criminal after his successfully perpetrated robbery...— ‘to America’ exults the idealist, spurning the real world... hoping for a world over there across the ocean which matches the one produced in his own frantic brain...” (*Nach Amerika! Ein Volksbuch*, 1855).

The idea of going to America, Gerstäcker continues, inspired the farmer who had only a few acres, the craftsman

who was hard pressed by competition, the artist who was harassed by concerns for his livelihood and lack of freedom, and the small businessman troubled about making his accounts balance. “From the most diverse of circumstances and spheres, from all the strata of human society, we see them moving — good and bad, the profligate and the speculator, the farmer and the artisan, the scholar and the worker, the upright citizen and the furtive criminal toward a single goal.”

The spectrum might have appeared different in the 17th/18th centuries and again in the 20th century. Gerstäcker mentions neither religious dissidents nor, understandably so, persons persecuted by racial madness and homeless refugees. For his period, however, Gerstäcker rendered a fairly accurate picture.

Historians of emigration movements have from time to time opined that Swabians, Southwest Germans, or Germans in general are born with an inherent “wanderlust” and for this reason constantly venture abroad. This overlooks the fact that migrations have taken place among many peoples and often have been no smaller in scope than in the case of Germany. Today one occasionally encounters the view that there are sedentary and mobile types among people, and that this alone explains why some remain in the country while others emigrate. This too, is untenable. No doubt external circumstances such as economic crises, inadequate social welfare provisions, labor market

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problems and similar factors virtually created emigrants at certain times. Individual predispositions and external circumstances usually interacted when the decision to emigrate was made.

All social strata took part in the resettlement in America, but the great majority of emigrants, right into the 20th century, was made up of members of lower and middle population groups. So long as the system of “indentured servitude” existed — that is, working off the cost of the passage through an obligation of service in America — it was relatively easy for people without means to cross the sea for a new start. After the 1820s, this opportunity no longer existed; one had to have his passage money ready prior to departure. Thus, 19th century emigrants were for the most part not entirely without means. They were often people who, due to unfavorable conditions, were afraid of becoming poor. They sold off their last material possessions in order to get money for the voyage.

Poorer Germans, too, still had some chances to go abroad. Relatives and friends could help them to get their passage money together; family members already in America could buy them tickets (“prepaid”); and in times of great distress emigration also took place at the expense of municipalities who were pleased to be discharged from their obligations to the poor. After the Civil War, the so-called contract worker emigration scheme was also a temporary

possibility: American firms advertised for European workers, then paid their passage against later deductions from their wages. This, however, evoked the resistance of American trade unions.

Anyone studying the motives of emigrants to America is confronted with a complex phenomenon. In an 1851 book which was widely disseminated, *Hand- und Reisebuch für Auswanderer* [Handbook and Travel Guide for Emigrants], Traugott Bromme described the reasons for the departure of many Germans: “The innate human urge to forge ahead, to improve one's position, as well as distress, dependent situations, pressures from all sides, often among the best of the most highly placed persons, are reasons why thousands are leaving their fatherland, seeking a new homeland, thousands more are preparing to follow them, and hundreds of thousands are dejectedly and longingly watching the emigrants whom they, for lack of funds, are unable to follow, even though they desire a change, an improvement in their situation just as ardently as the fortunate ones.”

In the 1973 study of German 19th century emigration overseas by Peter Marschalck, *Deutsche Übersee-wanderung im 19. Jahrhundert*, one reads: “There is a natural outflow from areas containing too many people in a space toward those with too few people in a space. Space is the (not only material) possibility of existence (e.g. political oppression is too small a space for the possibility of

political existence; overpopulation is too small a space for the possibility of economic existence)... The relationship between people and space, whenever it is not in equilibrium, strives for equilibrium in the long term by adaptation and in the short term by migrations.”

Both formulations are in accord on this — namely that emigrants went abroad in order to achieve an “improvement in their situation.” They followed the “natural outflow” to the more open spaces of America, where in many respects there appeared to be better possibilities. The precondition was always an image of America which corresponded to these emigration goals. Whether from utopian exaggeration or from very sober reflection, emigrants saw in America a thoroughly desirable destination. An 1851 emigrants’ song went like this:

*Mein Vetter schrieb noch kürzlich mir  
aus diesem schönen Land  
Und ich bleib’ wahrlich nicht mehr  
hier, will hin zum schönen Land  
Rosinen, Mandeln isst man da, wie  
hierzuland das Brot  
Denn in dem Land Amerika hat man  
gar keine Not.*

My cousin wrote me just a while ago  
from this beautiful land  
And I really won’t stay here much  
longer, I want to go to the  
beautiful land.  
Raisins, almonds are eaten there as  
in this country one eats bread

For in the land of America there is  
no want.

This was illusionary thinking. Many who wanted to leave Germany did not judge rationally but rather exaggerated the image of their dream homeland into unreal proportions. However, there were many others who sought the New World knowing that America, rather than being a land of milk and honey, demanded hard work, great industry, perseverance and efficiency of everyone. The “natural outflow” did exist, and the striving for an “equilibrium” between “people and space” manifested itself in the emigration to America.

Emigration researchers have prepared lists of motives which state that it was religious, political, socio-economic, and individual-psychological reasons that took Germans across the sea. Yes, it is true that many religious dissident groups emigrated during the early period of the migration process in the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries, that political refugees went to America at certain times in the 19th and 20th centuries, and that socio-economic and perhaps individual-psychological motives were also of great importance. However, in most cases, decisions were based on complex motives. In the case of religious dissident groups, economic distress was often at the root of the decision to go. Economic problems were for their part frequently bound up with political problems. Germans who were in distress were

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protesting, by moving away, explicitly or implicitly against bad social policy in their homeland. Political refugees were fleeing not only political pressure but also the futility of trying to establish an economically secure existence in view of their opposition to the ruling political system. If these and similar complex combinations of motives are taken into account, decisions to emigrate are more readily comprehensible.

Motives also cannot be understood independently of the immigrants' region of origin. Southwest Germany — Baden, Württemberg, the Palatinate and Southern Hesse — was for a long time the major region of the migration movement. Until the 1830s, by far the largest number of emigrants to America came from there. By the middle of the century, the emigration movement had spread into Bavaria and Western Germany, and in the second half of the century to Northern and Eastern Germany. The state of agriculture, economic developments and social relationships promoted or inhibited the emigration movement. For instance, the principle of estate division in South German inheritance law produced petty farms which lent an impetus to emigration. The ruination of cottage industries, caused by the rise of factories and industries, was another factor which drove people away. The concentration process in farming East of the Elbe in the second half of the 19th century was the prelude to the emigration of members of the rural lower classes. In the age of

advanced industrialization, with its economic market fluctuations and labor market crises, workers looked to America. And the great population increase in the 19th century led to an increase in emigration.

Where did the Germans go to in America? Most immigrants had a need for mutual support and aid in a strange environment. This gave rise to German settlements in the countryside, German quarters in the cities, and regions heavily settled by Germans. Moreover, immigrants were frequently inclined to go where the climate and landscape were relatively similar to those of their homeland. In the colonial period, Pennsylvania with its principle of religious tolerance held a particularly strong attraction for Germans; but German settlements arose in other colonies as well.

In the 19th century, German immigrants were distributed over wide areas. In his two-volume work, *The German Element in the United States* (1909), Albert B. Faust states: "The last Census Report (1900) shows that the German population is not only widespread, but is more equally distributed over the territory of the U.S. than any other foreign element." Nevertheless, the Germans did have preferred regions. From New York through Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois to Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Missouri and Kansas ran a

“German Belt.” Further, but smaller, centers existed in Louisiana, Texas, California, Washington and Oregon. In the 20th century, finally, Germans moved into every part of the U.S. One still encounters German immigrants everywhere, meets descendants of earlier immigrants and finds traces of them in names, inscriptions, museums, architecture, linguistic islands, customs and habits.

To be sure, the German-Americans form a group which, in comparison with many others, Americanized itself relatively rapidly. This was due less to the First World War with its anti-German sentiments than to the Germans’ own willingness to adapt themselves to American conditions and to American society. However, Americanization and the awareness of a specific immigrant heritage are not mutually exclusive, and so the German-American element today still plays its part in the multicultural structure of contemporary America.

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Source: Günter Moltmann, ed. *Germans to America: 300 Years of Immigration--1683-1983* (Stuttgart: Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations, 1983), 8-15 [abr.]. Moltmann, a historian at the University of Hamburg, was a contributor to the Tricentennial volume. He was a repeat visitor to Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana.

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## 2. THE HARDEST PART: SAYING GOOD-BYE

Norbert Krapf, ed.

Separation from family, friends, and the accustomed homeland environment was a deeply felt emotional experience affecting those who left and those who stayed. In the earlier phases of emigration the chances for a reunion, a *Wiedersehen*, were not good. The two poems of farewell *To Fridolin Schmiedle and Miss Anne Marie Schmiedle, Upon Their Emigration to America (1836)* are representative for numerous such heartfelt verses of saying good-bye forever.



Emigrant's Farewell.  
From a 19th Century Children's Book.  
(Sammlung Hümmerich, Berlin (West))

The picture shows emigrants in the churchyard of their hometown. The pain of parting and musing, perhaps also regret, about their plans can be read in their faces.  
Moltmann, (1982), 69

### I.

So you want to part from us after all,  
Want to leave us forever?  
Want to turn away from your homestead,  
Bringing sorrow to your host of friends?  
Want to venture into a foreign country,  
Turning your back on mountain and valley  
That were the cradle of your youth?  
Will you regret this choice?  
Oh, bold wishes, bold hope!  
How many were already deceived;  
How many saw the skies open,  
And returned disappointed?  
Yet so be it, you have so chosen,  
Thought through your new life's plan,  
Trust the Lord who steeled you  
With courage to start on the new course.  
So farewell to you! May God's hand  
That guides securely through darkness  
Accompany you to the distant land,  
And not permit you any bad luck!  
May the ocean waves carry you  
Over there into a safe port  
And a golden morning dawn there  
And make you happy forever!  
May an eternal spring smile,  
A serene sky cover you,  
A soft zephyr fan you gently,  
And untroubled happiness blossom.  
Don't forget us who stayed home,  
Don't forget your many friends  
Who are made sore of heart forever  
By this agony of separation!

Arlesheim [Switzerland], 15 August 1836  
Anna Maria Dobler

**II.****Forget Me Not**

1. Oh you dear of my heart,  
I think of you with sweet pain,  
Till death breaks the eye,  
Fare well, forget me not.
  
2. Oh how hard it is to part,  
Fare well till we see each other again,  
Fare well, you dearest, fare well,  
Fare well till we see each other again.
  
3. Here and in a foreign land,  
Changes friendship, love's ties,  
Changes friendship, love's obligation.  
Fare well, forget me not.
  
4. Should it ever turn out  
That we don't see each other again,  
Auf Wiederseh'n on Judgment Day.  
Fare well, forget me not.

A souvenir from your girlfriend

Maria Anna Leuthart

Arlesheim, Switzerland, 15 August 1836

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Source: Norbert Krapf, ed. *Finding the Grain. Pioneer German Journals and Letters from Dubois County, Indiana*. Max Kade German-American Center & Indiana German Heritage Society Publications, Vol. 9 (Indianapolis: Indiana University Printing Services, 1996), 273-274, translation.

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### 3. EMIGRATION POLICY IN GERMANY AND IMMIGRATION POLICY IN THE UNITED STATES

**Ingrid Schöberl**

Up to the promulgation of the Imperial Emigration Act in 1897, there were no uniform regulations governing emigration matters in Germany. Problems of this nature had to be solved by the individual states; in early times their princes all reacted in a similar manner to population losses: up to the beginning of the 19th century, they made repeated attempts to impede or entirely prevent the migration of their subjects.

They acted along the lines of the mercantile school of economics, with the object of procuring more revenue for the state with the help of the labor force and taxes. In times of religious persecution, economic distress, and political suppression, however, many people regarded migration from their homeland as their last resort.

Where there was persistent dissatisfaction, a tiny initial spark often sufficed to trigger a migration. Especially the southwest German area, with its predominantly agricultural structure, was repeatedly affected. Following the first big wave of migration in 1709, the stream of emigrants persisted almost without interruption throughout the 18th century.

In this early period of migratory movements, the currents followed no main course as they did later in the 19th century. True, many people already moved to America, but hordes of emigrants also followed the official

recruiters of various European countries such as Great Britain, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Russia, and Hungary. The German princes repeatedly blamed government emissaries from those countries for the increase in emigration. Hence, their countermeasures were mostly directed against specific, alarming emigration processes; ordinances were designed to stop increased migration to a specific country.

An ordinance issued in the Palatinate in 1724 was directed against the manifest emigration to Pennsylvania and threatened confiscation of property. These regulations were made more stringent in 1739, and further Palatine ordinances followed in 1752, 1753, 1764, 1766, 1767, 1769, 1770 and 1779 “to counteract with the necessary vigor the evil whose injuriousness grows the longer it persists.”

The very abundance of such interventions — Württemberg, for example, issued 18 similar rescripts between 1709 and 1815 — was an indication that the regulations were not observed or at least could not have had any enduring effect. For this reason, some of the Rhenish princes called upon the imperial sovereign, at that time Emperor Joseph II, to promulgate a ban on emigration applicable to the entire empire. The monarch complied with that urgent request with his edict of July 7,

1768. He prohibited “all migration by German imperial subjects to foreign countries having no connection with the empire.” For fear of losing subjects fit for military service, the edict contained strict regulations, and severe punishments were imposed for nonobservance. It not only called for the immediate arrest of secret emigration aspirants and recruiters; to prevent the spreading of the “epidemic,” the emperor even imposed a ban on assemblies.

Like all earlier attempted restraints by individual states, the imperial prohibition had no appreciable influence on emigration movements. For all that, the sovereign princes continued to apply the same method. They regarded their subjects as their personal property, whose way of life they were entitled to ordain. Economic pressures which left no other choice than to leave one’s homeland were unimaginable to them. A 1766 document from Upper Hesse reads: “The alleged reasons, namely a great burden of debt and insufficient food supplies, are not enough to justify the supplicants fleeing in such arbitrary manner from their hereditary sovereign and from the country in which they were born, brought up and hitherto nourished; on the contrary, it is their bounden duty to remain in the country and... to hope for the return of better and more blessed times...”

The object of emigration policy in the 17th and 18th century, therefore, was solely to keep people in their homeland.

The means used to attain that end ranged from admonitions and warnings, and the temporary imposition of high emigration fees, via bans on the sale of real estate and on attempts to promote emigration, to the prohibition of emigration itself.

The establishment of the German Confederation in 1815 marked the beginning of a more liberal emigration policy. Article 18b of the *Bundesakte* (Confederation Act) permitted migration from one state of the confederation to another. The new conception of law influenced by French constitutional thought also found expression in the fact that various individual states included the principle of freedom of emigration in their constitutions or granted that freedom by ordinances or statutes. A start had been made by Baden as early as 1803, Württemberg followed in 1815, Prussia in 1818, and Hesse in 1821.

Despite the gradual increase, not everyone could leave at his own pleasure. First, an emigration permit had to be obtained from the authorities. That permit granted official release from the community of subjects, but the applicant surrendered the right to later reintegration as a citizen of the state. The governments wanted to protect themselves from destitute returnees. Furthermore, up to mid-19th century, permission to emigrate also involved the obligation to pay a 10% emigration tax on all exported assets.

These conditions notwithstanding, emigration policy in the 19th century was a step forward. The reasons for refusing a

permit were laid down by law so that there were limits to arbitrary action by the authorities. In nearly all states of the Confederation, permission to emigrate was granted under the following conditions: a male applicant had to have completed his military service, fathers with families needed the consent of their wives, outstanding debts had to be paid.

Undoubtedly, despite the general freedom of migration, there were still ways to prevent the undesired emigration of subjects. On the other hand, in times of great economic distress, the authorities adopted an emigration-promoting attitude. Poverty and unemployment could be ameliorated if the population was reduced by migration. There were then fewer poor to be a burden on public welfare. In the 1840s-1850s, several southwest German governments went so far as to support emigration with public funds. The one-time payment of traveling costs to America for impoverished subjects was cheaper than relief that might have to be granted for years.

A spectacular example of this policy was the Grosszimmern affair in 1846. Grosszimmern, a community in the Grand Duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt with 3,000 inhabitants, sent about 700 of its impoverished members to America with public funds. However, the operation was very badly organized. The emigrants had no means to support themselves after arriving in America. In New York, no one had been informed of the group's arrival. The "deportees" reached the New

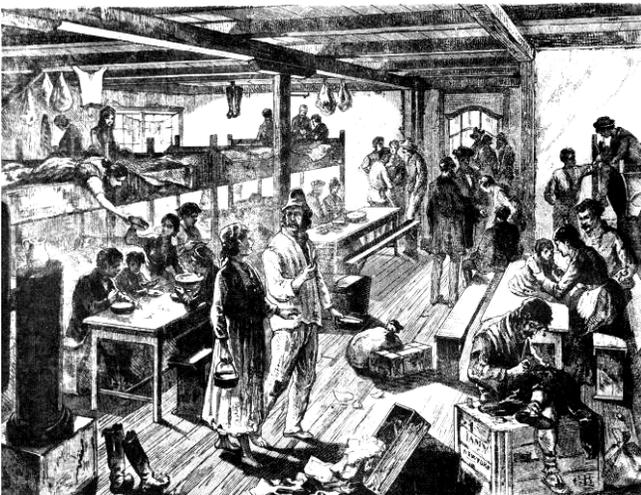
World completely destitute, and the great majority of them had to be consigned to the poorhouse immediately. This event caused furious indignation in American circles. The Hessian authorities were accused of lack of responsibility. German governments also got rid of other undesirable elements by sending them abroad; this included, for example, political revolutionaries and occasionally also convicts.



Caricature of the Abuses of Agents. Woodcut by Eduard Kretzschmar, 1848. (Süddeutscher Verlag)

Dealers, agents and swindlers of all kinds attempted to make money from emigrants. In this picture, agents are depicted as wolves, persuading those tired of their homeland to conclude passage contracts. Beneath the picture are some lines from the poem "The Emigrants" (1832) by Ferdinand Freiligrath: "O speak, Why travel ye hence? / The Neckar valley has wine and corn; / The Black Forest is full of dark firs, / In the Spessart the mountaineer's horn resounds.- How, amid the alien forests, / You will feel drawn to the green of your native hills, / To the yellow wheat fields of Germany, / And to its sloping vineyards!" Moltmann, (1982), 66

Thus emigration was sometimes restricted and sometimes encouraged, depending on what governments thought would be of greater benefit to their countries. In isolated cases, however, even in the first half of the 19th century efforts were made to afford emigrants government protection. The city state of Bremen took the initiative in 1832 with an emigration ordinance. This brought emigrants substantial benefits by protecting them from bad treatment. At the same time this ordinance reflected the city's economic interests. The growing stream of emigrants gave ship owners and forwarding agents, inns and ships' chandlers an opportunity to make money.



In the Third Class of an Emigrant Hostel. Woodcut in the *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung*, 1882. (Museum für Hamburgische Geschichte)

Those who had little money, or did not wish to use up their traveling money too soon, could stay in mass accommodations. Many families lived here in primitive conditions, in large rooms, making their final preparations for the voyage.

Moltmann, (1982), 76

Previously, ships out of Bremen often had to carry ballast on their overseas routes, which considerably impaired their profitability. This disadvantage could now be offset by accommodating emigrants in the holds of the freighters and thus turning hitherto unutilized capacities to good account. An influx of emigrants to Bremen was therefore very desirable. The Bremen senate, whose interests largely coincided with those of the local shipping and commercial circles, considered the emigration traffic so important that government protection seemed essential.

Bremen's attractiveness as an emigration port was thus intentionally cultivated. For the majority of those bound for America, who at that time came mainly from southwest Germany, Rotterdam, Antwerp and Le Havre were located more favorably than the German city on the North Sea coast. Consequently, Bremen had to offer emigrants clear advantages, if it wanted to beat its competitors. This was done by special steps undertaken by the Senate. The ordinance of 1832 was intended to afford emigrants protection at the port of departure that was unknown elsewhere up to that time; it was also intended to protect the government from the burden of financial support for impoverished emigrants, and also to promote the interests of Bremen's shipping lines.

For the first time, this ordinance set forth for the shipping firms, guidelines for passenger transport. Ship owners

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were required to keep passenger lists, to have food supplies for 90 days on board, and to submit proof of the seaworthiness of their vessels. Particularly the regulation calling for adequate food supplies made Bremen attractive to emigrants. In 1851, a Nachweisungs-Bureau for emigrants was set up, i.e., an advisory office where emigrants' questions were answered and information provided.

Later on, these protective regulations were extended. From 1837 onwards, there were similar ordinances also in Hamburg. In the German inland states, the authorities paid more attention to the proliferation of agents and their activities. As in the case of the recruiters earlier on, many a swindler was to be found among the agents. More strict supervision of their activities benefited the emigrants. In the 19th century, agents could pursue their calling only if they had an official license. There were laws to that effect in nearly all German states.

On a number of occasions in the 19th century, efforts were made to achieve a uniform emigration policy for Germany. But they failed repeatedly. Perturbed by the great wave of emigration in 1846-1847, the Frankfurt National Assembly undertook such an attempt, but the bill never attained the force of law. In 1878, Friedrich Kapp, formerly an immigration commissioner in New York, presented a new bill to the Reichstag, but again without success. Both the North German Confederation of 1867 and the German

Empire of 1871 had constitutions which vested jurisdiction in emigration matters in themselves. But since no regulations on the subject were issued for a long time, the inadequate ordinances of the individual states remained in effect. Manifestly, the imperial government attached no great importance to the emigration problem.

Finally, following renewed efforts in the 1890s, a uniform, imperial ruling was achieved in June 1897. The Imperial Act on Emigration placed the main emphasis on questions of emigration organization. It contained detailed regulations for agents and entrepreneurs engaged in the transport of emigrants. Transport overseas was dealt with thoroughly. Under the provisions for the protection of emigrants, emigration matters were placed under government supervision. Above and beyond welfare measures, the act was intended to provide a basis for directing the stream of emigrants to certain territories in line with what the then government considered to be Germany's economic and national interests.

In the final analysis, however, the imperial statute did not contribute to influencing German emigration in the intended manner. There was a lack of areas which were suitable for emigration and the settlement of which might simultaneously serve the interests of the empire. Moreover, emigrants were more inclined to be guided by their own wishes than by those of the state. In any case,

towards the end of the 19th century, the annual emigration figures were only just over 20,000. The idea of steering emigration was raised again with the increase of emigration in the Weimar Republic. But no corresponding bills were passed. Nor did a government emigration office, established in 1919, prove effective in this respect.

It was only in the very recent past that in the Federal Republic of Germany the imperial act of 1897 was superseded by a new act on the protection of emigrants. Its provisions came into force on 26 March 1975. They contain no attempt whatsoever to restrict or steer emigration. The entire statute is based on the principle of freedom of migration. The government has a say only in an advisory capacity.

To sum up, it can be said that over the course of centuries German emigration policy has developed progressively. A phase of strict prohibition was followed by a period of less restrictive impediments. Then general freedom of migration gained acceptance, and finally protective regulations for emigrants were issued.

The influx of large numbers of people into America and their heterogeneity almost necessarily gave rise to social problems. Were they wanted? Should their welfare be a matter of concern? Or should they be fended off? So at an early date, politicians concerned themselves with immigration, and laws and ordinances on the subject were

promulgated. New settlers were mostly welcome in that great continent. Workers from overpopulated Europe were received with open arms by the inhabitants of the still sparsely settled country. In 1790, liberal regulations were passed which enabled immigrants to obtain citizenship after only two years. In 1798, in connection with the Alien and Sedition Acts passed to meet the requirements of the times, that "probationary period" was temporarily increased to fourteen years. New regulations in 1802, however, reduced the waiting period for naturalization to five years, a requirement that is still in effect today.

It was not until 1819 that Congress passed further regulations affecting immigration: An Act Regulating Passenger Ships and Vessels. This act laid down that any ship entering or sailing from an American port was not permitted to carry more than two passengers per five tons. For ships sailing from America to Europe, it prescribed minimum quantities of provisions. Over and above that, it required every captain of an incoming vessel to submit to the customs authorities a list containing the name, age, sex, vocation, country of origin and country of destination of each passenger.

The object of the act was to protect both the immigrants and the country of immigration. The underlying cause was the deplorable state of affairs during the great tide of immigration in 1816-1817.

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On some vessels, immigrants had been badly treated and exposed helplessly to the whims of the crews. Ship owners had often transported too many people in an extremely confined space and had not taken sufficient quantities of food aboard. During the Atlantic crossing, passengers were starved and epidemics broke out; there were large numbers of sick and dead. Frequently, immigrants arrived at American ports in a wretched state, with the result that the local inhabitants, especially fellow-countrymen who had immigrated earlier, protested vehemently against the inhuman conditions on the ships. The act of 1819 improved the conditions for passengers, but could not prevent the continued occurrence of a great variety of abuses on board the ships. Again and again, avaricious ship owners tried to extract the highest possible profit from the transport of emigrants.

In the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s, there was repeated violent, nativist agitation in the U.S., which was directed mainly against Irish and German Catholics and reflected the fear of American society being flooded by foreigners. However, that had no influence on federal legislation. In 1847 and 1848, Congress passed new acts on the accommodation of passengers on ships. But since all measures of this nature failed to achieve the envisaged effect, in 1853 the Senate appointed a committee of inquiry to investigate conditions on vessels carrying immigrants. The outcome was an act of

Congress in 1855, which superseded those of 1819, 1847 and 1848. It contained provisions on the space to which each immigrant was entitled during the crossing. The issue of at least one hot meal per day was prescribed for steerage passengers. But these regulations, too, failed to achieve the effect envisaged by the legislature. In the final analysis, there was hardly any means to combat violations that took place outside the country's sovereign territory.

The fact that immigrants were mostly welcome in the United States was demonstrated by the next federal statute. It was An Act to Encourage Immigration, which passed in 1864. Never before in the history of the U.S. had interest in population growth been so great. The act of 1864, which marked the beginning of an immigration-promoting era also in the individual states, provided for the appointment of a Commissioner of Immigration responsible to the State Department and the encouragement of contract labor.

Under the contract labor system, immigrants were advanced their traveling expenses, but had to repay the loan from their earnings within one year at the most. The object of this arrangement was to engage workers to farm uncultivated land and to build up industry. They were also granted exemption from military service as long as they retained their foreign citizenship and did not voluntarily apply for American

citizenship. In the port of New York, an immigration office was set up, whose employees negotiated with railroad companies and related agencies on the further transport of immigrants, and informed new arrivals of employment opportunities in other states.

The intention of the act was to gain labor for the American economy, which was stagnant as a result of the Civil War. However, coordination between the federal and state governments was lacking. And soon, Congress was no longer prepared to appropriate sufficient funds for measures provided for by a wartime law. Four years after its promulgation, the act was repealed. But in the individual states, measures to encourage immigration continued to be implemented, and there was even competition among various states in recruiting new citizens.

In the latter half of the 1870s, a change became evident in the hitherto liberal American immigration policy. The end of the pro-immigration era was ushered in by an act of 1882. It called on every immigrant to pay a poll tax of 50 cents, which, though also intended to support needy immigrants, had the effect of abating immigration as a result of subsequent increases. The restrictive character of the act also found expression in the refusal to admit marginal groups. The latter included convicts, the mentally defective and persons not in a position to provide for themselves. A law of 1885 prohibiting contract labor and another of

1887 providing that offenders should be sent back to their country of origin immediately were of even greater significance.

What brought about this change in immigration policy? The main reason was the changing composition of the immigrants. Whereas they had previously come chiefly from northwest, central and northern Europe, from the early 1880s onwards the countries of origin lay to an increasing extent in eastern and southeastern Europe. The “new” immigrants were predominantly in the big cities, where they formed communities akin to ghettos. With their conspicuous appearance and alien customs, they seemed difficult to assimilate. Moreover, on the labor market they were competition for the domestic population. American labor unions feared a decline in wage level. The new immigrants were also blamed for social problems in towns. Nativist groups gained increased influence. Many Americans reached the conclusion that it was no longer possible to integrate millions of aliens.

These views manifested themselves in new measures to regulate immigration. Acts of 1891, 1903 and 1907 imposed stricter standards of admissibility and excluded further groups from immigrating. The prime object was to keep untrained workers and anarchists out of the country. In 1917, Congress passed a new restrictive immigration act, which prescribed a literacy test. This

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meant that from then on entry could be refused all persons who could read neither English nor any other language. The struggle to pass this act had lasted ten years. On several occasions, bills which had passed both houses of Congress were thwarted by the president's veto. Now the immigration critics triumphed. The act of 1917 affected primarily eastern and southeastern Europeans. Numerous commissions of inquiry had been appointed from the 1880s on to work out proposals on the best way to check the new immigration.

The economic crisis following World War I provided new arguments for the opponents of immigration. In 1921, Congress passed a further act, which created a completely new basis for immigration. From then on, all immigration was regulated by a quota system. Only a prescribed maximum number from each country was permitted to immigrate in any year. The quotas were limited to 3 percent of the share of the nationality concerned in the total American population, as determined by the census of 1910.

This measure was manifestly directed against the new immigration. For some opponents, this still did not go far enough. So in July 1924, a more stringent quota act was passed. The permissible population share was reduced to 2 percent per annum and the calculation basis was the census of 1890. In that year, the proportion of immigrants from

eastern and southeastern Europe had not been so high as later on, so this calculation method favored the "old" immigration countries much more. In summer 1929, a new calculation method brought still more severe restrictions. The decision as to who could and who could not immigrate rested with the American consuls in the countries of emigration. In the granting of visas they had a strong instrument to control immigration.

From the onset of the Great Depression, more and more voices were raised in America in favor of a complete ban on or at least more far-reaching obstruction of immigration. This was done by way of ordinances. The consulates were instructed to adhere more strictly to a provision of the act of 1917, which prescribed that no entry permit should be given to persons who would probably become a burden on the state. Consequently, in autumn 1930 the number of visas granted dropped to about 10% of the permissible quota. The quota legislation also had an impact on German migration to America. The maximum number of immigrants laid down for Germany was 68,051 in 1921, it dropped to 51,227 following the act of 1924, and was reduced by nearly 50 percent to 25,967 in 1929. In 1923, Germany exhausted its quota within six months. The strict implementation of the American regulations after 1930 almost completely stopped German migration to the U.S.

The immigration restrictions of the 1920s remained essentially in effect up to 1965. Then, following decisive preliminary work by John F. Kennedy's administration — he himself was a descendant of Irish immigrants — new regulations came into force which placed all countries of origin on equal footing. An annual upper limit of 20,000 immigrants per country was laid down; altogether, however, not more than 290,000 persons may be admitted annually, 170,000 from the eastern and 120,000 from the western hemisphere. Visas are granted on a priority basis. The top category, for example, comprises children and spouses of American citizens, who are accord preferential treatment. If a prospective immigrant belongs to a lower priority group or to none at all, he needs a certificate from the Secretary of Labor to the effect that there are insufficient qualified American job applicants in his field, and that he does not constitute a burden on the American labor market.

The act of 1965 established more just immigration conditions than the nationality quota system. However, in contrast to the 19th century, the total number of immigrants per year remained restricted. Only in special cases, where individuals or even large numbers desired to enter the country, exceptional arrangements were made. The tide of immigrants from Europe was no longer so great as in earlier years. On the other hand, Mexicans, for example, sought

entry in large numbers or entered the country illegally; and of the Vietnam refugees roughly 450,000 were admitted.

On comparing the development of American immigration policy with German emigration policy, it can be said that the erstwhile "land of unlimited possibilities" closed its gates in the face of many who craved entry in the 20th century, while in Germany emigration policy became increasingly liberal and finally all barriers were removed. But this should not lead to the erroneous conclusion that in the Old World progress prevailed and in the New World growing narrow-mindedness. There is a difference between giving unconditional permission to leave the country to inhabitants who can find happiness elsewhere and whose departure possibly brings relief to their country of origin on the one hand and, on the other, unconditionally admitting immigrants who require social integration, demand jobs and, in certain circumstances, give rise to social and economic problems which are not easy to solve. For all the freedom of migration, in Germany, too, barriers are quickly set up for immigrants when economic conditions are unfavorable and the number of incoming persons gives grounds to fear integration difficulties. Undoubtedly, at the present time no mean effort is being made in both countries to find humane solutions, but such endeavors must not be diminished, let alone discontinued, in the future.

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Steerage Passengers Arrive in New York. Illustration from *Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*, late 19th Century. (Museum für Hamburgische Geschichte)

The Statue of Liberty in the harbor of New York, erected in 1886, gave promise of ready acceptance: “Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!” cries she with silent lips. ‘Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift the lamp beside the golden door.’” (from *The New Colossus* by Emma Lazarus, 1883) Moltmann, (1982), 91

#### 4. SOUTHWEST GERMAN EMIGRATION

##### Michael Rehs and Hans-Joachim Haager

A first mass emigration from the Southwest came in 1709: 13,000 Germans, generally called "Palatines," settled in the Hudson Valley and in the Carolinas. The Elector of the Palatinate and the Duke of Württemberg had issued edicts to prevent emigration. However, such state regulations were not very successful. Up to 8,000 persons left between 1710 and 1727. Passenger lists from 1730-1740 show some 13,200 German arrivals in Philadelphia. In 1749 alone, according to shipping company archives, 25 ships arrived with 7,050 passengers. And from 1750 to 1752 the count was 18,000. In 1757, 6,000 Württembergers arrived in Pennsylvania. In 1759, there were 22,000 German newcomers from the Palatinate, Baden and Württemberg. By 1775, the 110,000 Germans of Pennsylvania constituted nearly one third of its population. Many of them migrated to other states, esp. to Virginia, Maryland, the Carolinas, also to the Midwest.

By mid-19th century, emigration from Middle and Northern Germany increased and by 1860 surpassed that of the Southwest. After the ill-fated 1848/49 Revolution almost half a million Germans left their land and came to the USA. Numerous academics, engineers, artists, and professional officers were among them. After 1866, highly qualified workers saw their chance to profit from the rapid technological and industrial

development of the USA.

Almost a million people from Württemberg, Baden, and the Pfalz (Palatinate) found a new home in the New World. Looking at the mass emigration around 1850, poet and revolutionary Ferdinand Freiligrath penned these rhymes:

*Oh say! Why did you move away?  
The Neckar Valley has wines and grains,  
The Black Forest is full with spruce  
and fir,  
The Spessart resounds with the herder's  
horn.*

The politically engaged poet could have known the answer; the reasons were economic distress and political suppression.

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Source: Michael Rehs and Hans-Joachim Haager, *Wurzeln in fremder Erde. Zur Geschichte der südwestdeutschen Auswanderung nach Amerika. [Rooted in Foreign Soil: History of the Southwestern German Emigration to America]* (Stuttgart: DRW Verlag, 1984), 15, 38-40, 65-67. This beautifully illustrated book is out of print. Translated by Eberhard Reichmann.

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## 5. EMIGRATION ESPECIALLY FROM THE OSNABRÜCK REGION

### Antonius Holtmann

At the beginning of the 19th century Germany's rural northwest faced an economic crisis. Places rented by the landless farm hands were owned by "Colons," the class of farmers who, for generations, had permanent leases from worldly and ecclesiastic aristocracies but were obligated to make payments and render services. The underprivileged farm hands suffered much hardship in this hierarchy of dependencies, payments, and services. The land they were able to rent was too small for a sufficient harvest and livestock. Many families were forced to augment their meager income by engaging in cottage industry and handyman's work. The dissolution of a community's commons land (around 1800), on which the poor had the right to pasture and firewood, benefited only the "Colons," not the poor "Heuerleute," as they were called. Population increase added to an increase in poverty and misery, like in other European countries.

In northern Germany, farms usually passed on to the next generation, either to the oldest or the youngest son. His siblings had to look for other sources of income. The right to marry was granted only to those who either owned or rented an abode. There were only few new opportunities for farm hands and rural handymen. The labor market in towns was equally inaccessible. The craftsmen there, still organized in guilds, kept job seekers out. Manufactural or industrial

production had hardly been heard of. In the 18th century, many men began to perform seasonal work in the neighboring Netherlands. This temporary guest worker practice came to be known as "Hollandgängerei" (going to Holland). Some stayed there or even emigrated to Dutch colonies. The name of the Dubois County town of Holland reminds us of this former northwest German tradition.

When at mid-19th century industrialization progressed with the appearance of factories, the cottage industry and the crafts suffered severe setbacks. In Great Britain, in the 1840s, mechanization of spinning and weaving took a strong upturn. Cotton replaced the traditional linen because it was better suited for mechanized production, and consumers liked it and its lower price.

Around 1845-1847 drought conditions and potato rot completed the picture of catastrophic conditions in the rural regions of northern Germany. Emigration increased considerably and included some fighters and sympathizers of the 1848-1849 Revolution. Above all, there were the landless farm hands and non-inheriting sons and daughters of farmers who wanted to improve their lives, away from restricted chances on the labor market, restrictions on getting married, and a general lack of social and political freedom. There were also private reasons for wanting to leave: quarrels in the family, avoiding lengthy military service,

but also just seeking adventure.

These so called “push-factors” had their correlation in the “pull-factors.” America promised better economic conditions and was actively seeking foreign labor. Positive and negative reports to those back home were most influential in making, postponing, or even dropping the decision to emigrate. In addition to letters with personal experiences in the New World, there were numerous brochures from both German and American sources, books, newspapers, ads of travel agencies and reports from state governments with useful facts and advice for immigrants.

Hanover did not promote emigration and did not appreciate advertisement for it but, depending on the socio-economic situation, tolerated it more or less benevolently.

Since 10 September 1826 men between ages 20 and 30 needed the so-called emigration consent to prevent them from avoiding military service. But it was not difficult to leave illegally.

Forced emigration, paid by communities or the state, was also practiced in the Kingdom of Hanover. It was offered to criminals, vagrants and poverty-stricken or otherwise undesirable persons. The marriage restriction for a poor couple and for the unemployed was waived if they wanted to emigrate. The County of Vörden recommended weddings in Bremerhaven, shortly before departure, in order to prevent such marriages in the Kingdom of Hanover.

No doubt, the number one reason for massive emigration was and still is today around the globe — the lack of economic opportunities.

Although preceded by hundreds of Germans who came to America ever since 1608, the arrival of 13 Mennonite and Quaker families from Krefeld arriving on the *Concord* at Philadelphia, 6 October 1683, is considered the beginning of German group immigration. The sect of the Mennonites is named after Menno Simons (1496-1561) of the Netherlands. They were tolerated since 1578 and enjoyed religious freedom in the Netherlands since 1626, but in the Krefeld area, under pressure from the Reformed Church many reverted back to established Protestantism. The 12 or 13 Krefelder families fled the “Babylon” of state-controlled religion in Germany.

1709 marks the beginning of mass emigration: 13,000 Palatines moved first to England; 20 percent continued to America.

Between 1787 and 1820, 30,000 fled conditions of starvation in Baden and Württemberg. By 1854 more than half of European emigrants were German. The peak of German emigration was reached between 1881 and 1885: almost a million of them left for America. From 1820 to 1990, the total amounts to 7.5 million. They form the largest ethnic immigrant group.

Early in the 19th century, Allemans [from Alsace, Baden, Württemberg, German-speaking Switzerland, western

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Austria] and Palatines were the largest emigration groups. From 1830 to 1850 life on the emigrant ships was dominated by Germans from the west and northwest of the country: Westphalians, Rhinelanders, Oldenburgers, and Hanoverians. In the 1860s-1870s, Mecklenburg, Pomerania, Saxony, Silesia, and Prussia's eastern regions caught up with emigration. After 1870, industrial workers and craftsmen took a chance on America. Many returned: more or less successful and unsuccessful "guest workers," people who were homesick or were ill, heirs notified of an unexpected inheritance, and people who just could not get a footing in America. A good third of European immigrants returned. The Germans' return rate was only one-sixth. Those who stayed looked for countrymen; those who followed to America found ethnic neighborhoods and organizations that, while helping the "greenhorns," were strengthened by this chain migration.

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Source: A. Holtmann, "Deutsche America-Auswanderung, insbesondere aus der Landdrostei Osnabrück," in A. Galema, W. Grams, A. Holtmann, eds., *Van de Ene en de Andere kant: Noordnederlandse en Noordwestduitse migratie naar de Verenigde Staten in de negentiende eeuw*, [From One to the Other Side: North Dutch and North German Migration to the United States in the 19th Century] (Groningen: Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit Groningen and Stadtmuseum Oldenburg, 1993), 39-45. Translated and abbreviated by Eberhard Reichmann.

## 6. FROM BAVARIA TO ST. LEON, DEARBORN COUNTY (1864)

### Leo Stadtmiller

Adam John Stadtmiller and Mary Eva Bischoff were married in 1863, in Schimborn [Bavaria]. When their first child, Adam George, born February 1864, was but three months old, the family departed for America. Accompanying them were Grandmother Bischoff, her two sons Leonard and Adam, and their sister Hannah. They traveled third class on a sailing vessel that had a large passenger list in addition to cargo.

The voyage started from Hamburg to London, by train to Liverpool. To their surprise the train traveled on trestles, making it seem that they were riding on the roof-tops of houses below. They saw colored porters for the first time on this train.

At Liverpool they boarded a sailing ship for America, and for two weeks they sailed rough seas. Thinking that America must be near, the captain sighted land, but to their chagrin, it was the coast of Ireland. They now realized what unspeakable hardships and suffering they were to endure. Hunger and thirst were driving them almost to madness. Their young son became ill. All they had to live on was a small supply of dried fruits and Zwieback which some of their party had brought with them.

One day, the captain ordered all passengers to be unusually quiet and to stay off deck. The reason was two large whales were seen lying on the surface of the water, and it was feared that they

would attack the ship if disturbed. Forty-five days from the time they left Liverpool, an American ship was sighted, from which a supply of food and water was obtained. After three more days they reached New York, in July 1864.

They were so starved that their first thought was food and a hotel. The first course of that initial meal in America was soup. One party asked for a second helping. The soup was so hot, and he so hungry, that as he gulped the soup he burned himself severely. To cool himself he drank ice water. Thinking that it was fresh well water, he said, "Oh, what frisches Brunnen Wasser."

After a few days in New York, they started for Indiana by way of Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Columbus, Cincinnati. They traveled by train and had many stopovers.

As they did not know the location of St. Leon, they were advised to go through Lawrenceburg and Guilford, Indiana, and then to St. Leon. This part of the trip was made in an ox-drawn covered wagon.

Aloys, Eva Mary Bischoff's son, was at the store in St. Leon. When he saw the wagon drive into town, he remarked, "There come some Germans." To his happiness and surprise he found them to be his beloved mother and other relatives. He took them to his home where they stayed until they established their own.

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Source: Leo Stadtmiller, "Stadtmiller History," from Bernadette Stenger, ed., *Through the Years in St. Joseph's Parish, St. Leon, Indiana, 1841-1991* (St. Joseph's Parish,

## 7. CHURCHES CARING FOR EMIGRANTS IN THE 19TH CENTURY

Wiebke Henning, ed.

The two Christian churches [Protestant and Catholic] provided assistance to emigrants quite early in the 19th century.

The beginnings of *evangelisch* care date back to 1830 when the Verein for the Propagation of Christian Tracts in Bremen (founded 1821) produced one *Für Auswanderer* [For Emigrants]. Thereafter, several Evangelical Mission societies were founded for sending preachers, called *Sendboten* [messengers], to countries receiving immigrants.

The Hamburg *Verein für Innere Mission* [Verein for Home Mission] began its work in 1848. By 1867 it provided for special church services for emigrants, and in 1870 it got a harbor missionary for work among emigrants and sailors. By 1868, Protestant pastors traveled as so-called emigrant-agents on emigrant ships leaving Hamburg. In 1875, the *Verein für Innere Mission* merged with the *Evangelisch-lutherische Auswanderermission* of 1873. The latter provided a special pastor for emigrants in 1883.

Bremen's *Verein für Innere Mission* organized a department for Emigrant Care. It offered farewell church services and gave advice to those leaving the country. Specialists were employed who could, as needed, also give written information, such as the guide booklet: *Ratgeber für Auswanderer nach den Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika*.

The emigrant mission in Bremen maintained close contact with the New

Yorker *Lutherischen Emigrantenhaus*. This made it also possible for the emigrants to deposit money at the Emigrant Mission in Bremen and cash their receipt at the *Emigrantenhaus* in America.

In 1882, the *Deutsche Nationalverein der Freundinnen Junger Mädchen*



“Urgent Warning to Emigrant Girls”. Poster by Otto Goetze, c. 1910. (Staatsarchiv Bremen)

In contrast to earlier times, many unattached women went to America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, to earn their living as servants. It was feared both in America and Germany that they might become “women kept in bondage for immoral purposes”. Moltmann, (1982), 120

[German National Association of Women Friends of Young Girls] was founded in Berlin. Its purpose was to advise and help young women headed for foreign countries. Today's railroad station missions are based on this *Nationalverein's* initiative and activities. The present Verein für *Internationale Jugendarbeit* [Verein for International Youth Work] is the successor of the *Nationalverein*.

On the Catholic side a "Committee for the Protection of Emigrants" was founded in 1868. Of greater importance was the founding of the St. Raphael's Verein in 1871 by the merchant and parliamentarian Peter Paul Cahensly who, while working in Le Havre, had become aware of emigrant misery. The *St. Raphael's Verein* provided Catholic emigrants with counseling services and general assistance in the countries of emigration and immigration, thereby assuring continuity of help. In 1886 the Verein started its own journal, the *St. Raphaels Blatt*. Since 1976 the work of the Verein is again continuing under the name "Raphaels Werk."

Another aid organization was the *Deutscher Verband Katholischer Mädchensozialarbeit* [German Association for Social Work with Catholic Girls]. It started in Munich in 1895 and is now continuing under the name *IN VIVA* with special emphasis on Au-pair contacts.



The Archangel Raphael Accompanies Emigrants on their way to their New Homeland. 19th Century. (Staatsarchiv Hamburg)

The Archangel Raphael accompanies the young Tobias on his journey in the eponymous book of the Old Testament. Raphael was the patron saint of emigrants, both for Catholics (St. Raphael's Association for the Protection of German Emigrants) and Lutherans (Wilhelm Löhe, Raphael, *Betbüchlein für Reisende*). Moltmann, (1982), 78

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 Source: *Vom Reichskommissar für das Auswanderungswesen zum Bundesverwaltungsamt* [From the Reich Commissioner for the Emigration System to the Federal Administrative Office.] (Köln: Bundesverwaltungsamt, 1989), 38-41. Abbreviation and translation by Eberhard Reichmann.

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## 8. A BRIDGE ACROSS THE SEA: EMIGRANTS ON THEIR WAY

### Wolfgang Grams

Harbors in Rotterdam and Bremerhaven got into high gear during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Large groups of emigrants were waiting at the wharfs for embarkation to the New World. For most of them the word “Amerika” spelled promises: No doubt, this big country would offer them much more than the old Europe that, according to many, was shaking in its foundations. At times, there was a nervous bustle in the harbors: Many worried about the long journey and what the future would hold. And saying good-bye forever was hard indeed.

Traveling to the U.S. in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was an adventurous undertaking, and it was part of the greatest migration spectacle of all times. Some villages even lost most of their people. Johann Heinrich zur Oeveste and his friends from Lower Saxony spent 68 days on the *Magdalena* in steerage accommodations. And for many emigrants the trip to the harbor was already greatly fatiguing. Some made it on foot, others came on river boats, and, if one had the money, by horse carriage. In Bremerhaven, Rotterdam, and Amsterdam, the travel schedule to America was not always adhered to. The sailships were dependent on “good winds.” Sometimes the emigrants had to wait in harbors for days and even weeks, leading to additional costs for food and mostly uncomfortable shelter. And there was always the danger of epidemics. If

one got sick, that ended all emigration plans. Sickness also occurred on the ships. Death was not uncommon. Food aboard was seldom good or even sufficient. Crowded in steerage, people had little light and little fresh air. Passengers who traveled First Class enjoyed good service. They, like captain and crew, avoided steerage contact.

Prior to 1861, Germans were warned to travel via Rotterdam because of cases of extortion. In Bremerhaven, on the other hand, rules for the protection of emigrants had been in force since 1831, and by 1851, in the decade of mass emigration, an *Auswandererhaus* [Emigration Center] offered social assistance. Rotterdam did not make this move until 1893.

### Steamships and Railroads

In mid-19<sup>th</sup> century the first steamships were used for trans-Atlantic travel, and land transportation was aided by a now extensive railway system. Travel had thus been improved, but circumstances still left much to be desired. In 1857 the Bremen merchant H.H. Meier, Jr. founded the “Norddeutsche Lloyd,” which became German emigrants’ preferred steamship company. Rotterdam businessmen and W.A. Scholten followed in 1873 with what developed into the “Holland-America Line.”

In the second half of the 19th century, the economic success of these companies

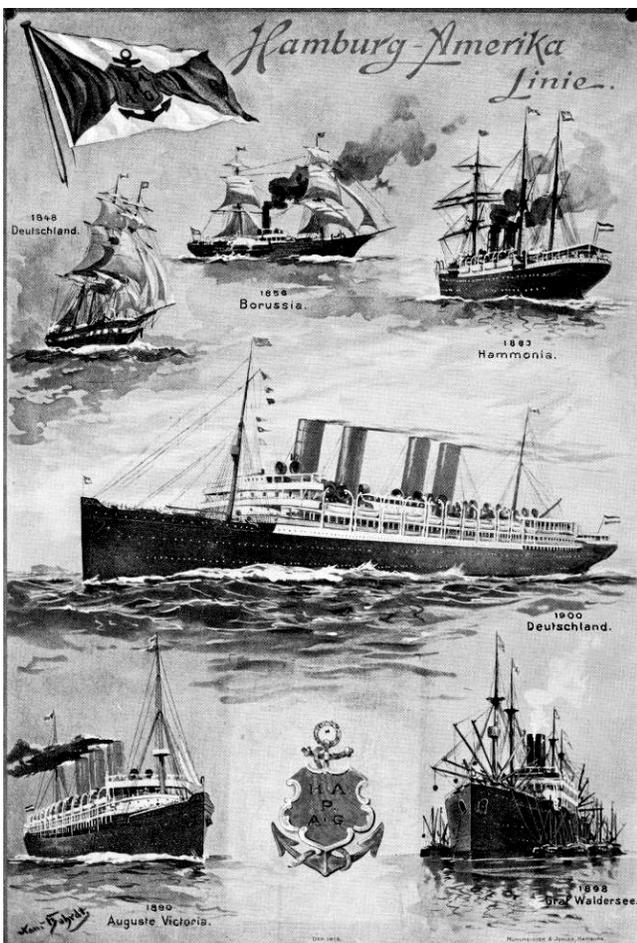
was dependent upon the transport of emigrants. Before 1860 these were primarily West Europeans, Scandinavians, Germans, Britons, and Irish. In the following decades people from the poor population segments of southern and eastern Europe headed for the big harbor towns of Hamburg, Bremerhaven,

Rotterdam, and Antwerp. Mass emigration from all of Europe made travel conditions worse again. Steerage passengers faced overcrowded quarters. Different nationalities brought about communication problems. Perishable food items the passengers had brought with them, sometimes had to last for weeks. One Peter Goustra still ate bread he had brought from home while riding the train to Chicago in 1881.

A growing number of agencies tried to sell as many tickets as possible. The competition became keen. Some of them also hired representatives in German-American areas who sold pre-paid tickets for the Ocean passage of needy relatives and friends. Unfortunately, for some travelers, not all agencies were trustworthy. The ticket price for the voyage around 1850 was considerable: usually double to triple the annual income of a laborer or craftsman. By 1890 the much lower cost amounted to about half an annual income. This made travel more affordable — except for the poor whose ticket from American relatives was the last resort. With lots of job opportunities in the U.S., eventual debts could be paid off later.

### Water, Water, Water!

The big ocean voyage left indelible imprints on the mind of most travelers. Many of them penned their experiences in letters and diaries so they could share this extraordinary experience with those who had stayed at home. Author



Advertising Poster of the Hamburg-America Line.  
c. 1904 (Staatsarchiv Hamburg)

From the 1890s on, the big German shipping lines used fast steamships for the traffic to America; these took only nine days for the crossing, and provided considerably greater comfort for emigrants and other passengers. Moltmann, (1982), 90

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Friedrich Gerstäcker's early travelogue, *Reise von Leipzig nach New York* [Journey from Leipzig to New York] (1837) contains a realistic depiction of emigrants' life in steerage.

New York became the preferred harbor destination for both Germans and Hollanders. Before 1855 many emigrants took ships to Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New Orleans. Beginning with 1820, a captain had to present, under oath, passenger lists to the customs offices. These contained personalia of all family members, that is, age, trade, nationality; also births and deaths during the voyage had to be reported and, beginning in 1855, also a ship's equipment. The majority of these lists survived. They are helpful sources for historians and genealogists.

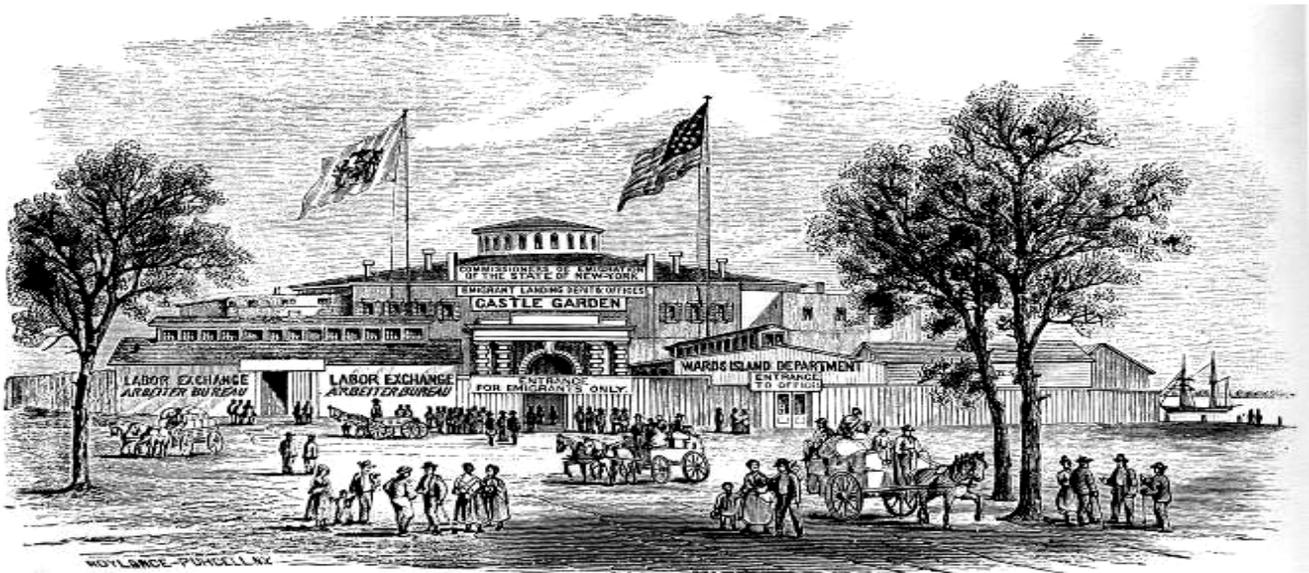
When Castle Garden, at the southern tip of Manhattan, was put into operation in 1855 as a processing center for immigrants, the vast majority of newcomers entered the country via New York (76 percent in 1888). Castle Garden protected them from all kinds of swindlers who promised boarding, food, and train tickets. After registration (name, place of birth, and destination), one would be shown to an agent of the railroad company. However, when in the 1880s much more than a million people needed to be processed, Castle Garden could not ensure the relative well-being of the immigrants anymore. The disarray increased to such an extent that in 1890, with the leadership of President Benjamin Harrison (1889-1893), immigration came under federal control, thus relieving New

York of an insurmountable task.

With the beginning of Ellis Island as clearing center for immigrants in 1892, New York became the port of arrival for 95 percent of all newcomers. Ellis Island was a place of hope and fear and joy. After a strenuous voyage, admission to the U.S. was uncertain. One worried about customs control, medical examinations, and being separated from family members in the process. At this juncture, officers and inspectors decided if one had first to be put into quarantine before entering the New World, or if a physical or psychological deficiency called for return to the homeland. So one was percussed, palpated, counted, questioned and judged, before the gate to the new land was opened.

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Source: Wolfgang Grams, "Eine Brücke übers Meer: Auswanderer unterwegs," ["A Bridge over the Sea: Emigrant Roads"] in A. Galema, W. Grams, A. Holtmann, eds. *Van de Ene en de Andere Kant* [From One to the Other Side], (Groningen: Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit and Stadtmuseum Oldenburg, 1993), 17ff.. Translation and abbreviation by Eberhard Reichmann.



Castle Garden Immigrant Landing Depot. Wood Engraving, 1870. (Illustrations from F. Kapp. *Immigration and the Commissioners of Emigration of the State of New York*, New York, 1870.)

In order to receive and channel the streams of immigrants in an orderly manner, Castle Garden, originally a fort, then a place of entertainment, located on the southern tip of Manhattan Island, was converted into an immigrant landing depot, through which all steerage passengers had to pass. It served this purpose until 1890.

Moltmann, (1982), 96



Main Building and Transit Hall of Ellis Island. (Image from J. R. Commons, *Races and Immigrants in America*, (New York: Macmillan, 1907).

With the onset of the “new immigration” from the East, Southeast, and South Europe in the 1880s, Castle Garden became increasingly inadequate. In 1892, a new depot was established on Ellis Island in Upper New York Bay, opposite Manhattan, where thousands of immigrants could be dealt with daily, and an improved check on them was possible. Ellis Island was used for immigration reception until 1943, and after the Second World War as a detention center. It closed in 1954. Moltmann, (1982), 99

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## 9. EMIGRANT LETTERS ABOUT LIFE IN AMERICA

### 9.1 Johann Heinrich zur Oeveste (1801-1871) Writes to His Folks in Northern Germany

Ohio, 30 September 1834

...Furthermore, let me write about this country as far as I know about it. Of course, I cannot touch on everything in just a letter.

It is a free country and this freedom I like in some respects, not in others. This state [Ohio] is just being developed and its oldest cities were only started 30 or 40 years ago. Its inhabitants are primarily Americans who moved here from Pennsylvania and other states; and the Pennsylvanians, for the most part, speak a fairly good German. Earlier, this state was in the hands of wild Indian nations. It looks much different from Germany. There is a wealth of wood. One sees here the finest tree trunks piled on each other and rotting away, and there are all kinds of strange kinds of wood in the forests. The soil here is rather heavy and stony. Corn is grown widely and does really well here. The other crops I have not seen to be any better than yours in Germany. Raising cattle is profitable. Horses here are quite good and there are all kinds of farm animals like in Germany.

The main language here is English. I can't write you much about Religion because it is quite different here. Many people live almost totally without it and are neither baptized nor prepared for

Holy Communion; others join a denomination of their choice as adults. Now and then churches and schools are begun, but only few parents send their children to them because attendance is not enforced, and each one can keep his religious preference. Personally, we go to the German Lutheran Church in Mehemesburg [Miamisburg] at least every two weeks. There are good German preachers here but they have very little income because the amounts of giving are up to the individual members. And because it is a free country, nobody is subservient to anybody else.

In our area no land is available anymore and it is mostly inhabited. The areas that still have land for sale are New Bremen, Wabokonette and Stalloto[w]n which was named for the bookbinder from Damme [Franz Joseph Stallo, 1793-1833]. They sell the acre for \$1.25 — all in woods. Personally and till now I have not had the urge to chop my way into the bush.

So far, I cannot forget Germany and will not recommend to anyone to follow me. One has to make up his own mind. Much more money can be earned here, but things are more expensive, too. But if you stay healthy you can save more for a rainy day than back home...

Cincinnati, 31 October 1839

...I would have answered your letter long ago, but I was not here this summer.

No, I was in the State of Indiana and had no opportunity to write to you, but I bought 120 acres of beautiful land and plan to go there again in a couple of weeks and work it this coming winter. D. Pardieck and several other Germans have bought land here. Franz Schumacher just acquired the piece next to mine...

For the future I plan to work on my own land and, if God keeps me in good health, that's where I'll make my living. Although the start up requires much money, but I think it is best for me and I know I am ready now to set out on my own. Besides, it is more fun to work for myself than being a day laborer for others. I have tried various things and considered this and that, and I have met good and bad people since I took my leave from you. And, thank God, it makes no great difference to me anymore whether I am dealing with an American or a German, for now I can handle English fairly well, that language of which one hardly understands anything at the beginning...

Cincinnati, 21 February 1840

...if God keeps me in good health I think I might move away from here unto my own land. This winter I have already spent 6 weeks working on that property, for I believe I'll have a better future there than in the city. The population is growing too fast and wages have gone down. I had first planned to make the move this winter, but that area is still quite unpopulated. So I postponed it.

However, many Germans have bought land and some have already moved there. In the future it will become a nice German colony. If my brother, or one of my cousins, would be so inclined and come to America, he could move with us out in the country. But I can neither recommend nor discourage this. Each one must follow his own free will. Some are doing fine here, others not. The best thing for a German is to move right to the countryside, that is, if one has so much money. It costs quite a bit to start from scratch. But if one has achieved a basis for making a living he will have a good life. For the first 5 years there are no taxes to be paid, and thereafter the tax burden is small. They know little here about putting dung back onto the fields, although some would already benefit from it...

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Source: A. Holtmann, "*Ferner thue ich euch zu wissen...*" *Briefe des Johann Heinrich zur Oeveste aus Amerika (1834-1876)* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1995), 39f., 48f., 54f. Translation by Eberhard Reichmann.

--J.H. zur Oeveste's letters were found at the Bartholomew County (IN) Historical Society. They inspired Prof. Holtmann (Universität Oldenburg) to research the background of this North German farmer both in the Osnabrück region and in Cincinnati and Indiana. Zur Oeveste settled at the White Creek in southern Bartholomew County. He left for America in 1834. His emigrant/immigrant experience, minutely reconstructed in the edition by Prof. Holtmann and reflected in the letters, is representative for thousands: he follows the chain migration to Cincinnati, works and saves for land purchases in Indiana, and worships at Cincinnati's North German Lutheran Church, some of whose members move to the White Creek area and build their German community and St. Johannes Kirche. By 1846 this congregation had grown to 34 families — all North Germans.

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## **9.2 Jacob Schramm of Hancock County Writes on Land Sales in the 1830s**

...What people in Germany believe and what they read in innumerable articles about the newly surveyed land is not true, that is, that it sells for only \$1.25 per acre, and that a person can choose the best and finest...

When the land has been surveyed, it is described in the newspapers and notice given that on such and such a day certain lands will be sold to the highest bidder. Hundreds of people have already been roving through the unsurveyed country, choosing what they want to buy. If the land is well situated, for example, along the highway, or on streams where mills can be built, or if it is prairie, an acre sells at from \$5 to as much as \$20, especially where the prairie adjoins woodland, so that the cleared land can be fenced and there is no lack of firewood. If the prairie is too big, however, and has no woods near, it is not habitable, and is not purchased even if the soil is of the finest. The best and finest of the surveyed lands go first, and at a fairly high price to the highest bidders; later the less desirable lands are sold at the land office at \$1.25 per acre. Although perhaps a third of the lands is not sold, everything is gone that is particularly good or well situated. Last

November when the auction was held in the La Porte land office the receiver sent \$400,000 proceeds of the sale to the bank at Indianapolis; the expenses of survey are subtracted and the remainder sent to the government at Washington.

On November 17 [1835] we started for the north on horseback, by way of Indianapolis. It had been raining, and the road was not the best. There is a highway from Indianapolis to the boundary of Michigan Territory, 40 German miles long, 89 feet wide, with a 24-foot ditch on each side. It only slightly resembles our improved roads, for since stones are lacking, no stone roads are being built, but railroads, instead..... When we finally reached South Bend we heard that the land office at La Porte would not be opened for sale of government lands until December 7. The country in this district did not appeal to me especially, because it was sandy, so we turned back...

When we got back to the neighborhood of Indianapolis, where the country had attracted me especially, we took a man with us who lived on the [Michigan] road, and was well informed about the neighborhood. He took us around in the woods and showed us which lands had been sold, and which had not. We looked at the land on both sides of the road, and I purchased 1 1/2 sections on each side a 1/4 of an hour from the road, altogether 3 sections of 620 [640] acres each. In all it amounted to 1,920 acres or 2,930 Dresden Scheffel. I had taken a mattock into the scrub, and found the soil good

everywhere. It is possible to tell by the trees, too, whether the land is good. Where sugar maples, walnuts, red elms, and dense shrubbery grow, the earth is splendid. Such trees were thick there, so I did not hesitate to buy. It cost \$2,400. I paid \$35 for the surveying of each 40 acres. The whole outlay came to \$2,671, or about 3,900 thaler price current. If it is ready for cutting in 5 years, I expect to sell it, and get at least double for it. With the rest of my money, I hope to buy stocks that will pay 10%, and see whether I can't farm as well, or possibly better, without much outlay of money....

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Source: *The Schramm Letters, Written by Jacob Schramm and Members of His Family from Indiana to Germany in the Year 1836* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1935), Vol. 11, No. 4, 271-274. Abbreviation by Eberhard Reichmann.

### **9.3 Johann Wolfgang Schreyer of Marshall County Writes to Germany (1845/46) Donald F. Carmony, ed.**

Johann Wolfgang Schreyer and family emigrated from Bavaria and settled eight miles northeast of Plymouth, Indiana, in 1843. Three years after coming to Indiana the Schreyers sent a letter to their homeland. It is a detailed account of life in an early German settlement of Marshall County and exhibits the love of liberty and an appreciation of freedom which burned in the hearts and minds of many of our early German immigrants. One wonders how many Germans came to America as a result of such letters.

...A farmer with 40 acres of cleared land needs and keeps no hired man, for

hired men are expensive and cost at least 100 dollars a year. The work, too, is very simple; and a man with such a farm can easily look after it himself. Work is more remunerative in this country than in Germany, and therefore men are willing to work. If the farmer wishes to put some man into his place, it will cost him 50 cents a day besides board, I know farmers who own 300 acres of land who work with their men at all times, even though they make a clear gain of 1,000 dollars a year. All men dress alike here and no one thinks that he should have greater respect shown him or that he should enjoy some higher title than his neighbor; it is all the same whether he fills some office or lives by hard work.

All men stand on a common footing; officials are chosen for 1 or 2 years from among the people; just like the president of the country is elected for 4 years. Every man, after he has lived here 5 years, can become a citizen of the United States. It costs him 1 dollar and he can vote on all questions and be elected to public office.

There are two political parties, democrats and aristocrats — the latter are known as Whigs. There is great excitement when there is a governor to be elected. The excitement becomes even greater at the time of a presidential election, for the election depends on the majority of the votes. Since you all know what democracy means, you may know that the greater number of immigrants here are democrats, because they have

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never been aristocrats anyway. There was a presidential election in the autumn of the last year in which the democrats were the victors by a considerable majority. It was said during the campaign that if the Whigs should gain the victory, no immigrant shall hereafter become a citizen with less than a 20-years residence. Indeed the views of the Whigs are such as to violate often the principles of freedom; the motto of the Democrats is: "My country is where freedom reigns supreme..."

### **9.3.1 An Enthusiastic Answer to Schreyer's Letter**

Haag, 22 September, 1846

Dear brother-in-law and sister-in-law!

Your letter, dated June 22, 1846, we received well prepared on the 11th of August and to our very great joy we have noticed that you are in good health, just as your letter found us all well.

Now first of all, I must report concerning the excitement which your letter created in all the country around. The mail carrier from Redwiz came to my house and said: "I have a letter addressed to you and to Mrs. Neidhardt in Seussen. Is some friend of yours in America? I replied: "Yes, but we have always thought that they are all dead, because we have heard nothing at all of them during these long years of absence." "Well," he said, "here is a letter, but there are charges amounting to 9 florins and 3

krz." I immediately saw your handwriting, dear brother-in-law, and stood as if petrified at the sight of the letter. I ran at once to our cousin, Neidhardt, at Seussen, and together we repaired to the post office at Redwiz, paid and took the letter with us. We broke the seals quickly and cousin Neidhardt took the precious letter, dear sister-in-law, and said to me: "She wants you to send your daughters." I looked and when I saw this, I wept like a child for joy and said: "O, if my dear deceased wife might only see this!"

Then we went to Christopher Schöbel's Tavern at Redwiz for a beer and there many people assembled and each one wished to hear what my brother-in-law had written. We would read nothing, however, and went to the schoolmaster at Wolsan to have him make a copy, so that we could send the original letter to cousin Hagen at Nordhausen, Prussia, and up to this time there have been some 20-odd copies made of your letter and I have had more than 7 florins which people forced upon me to pay for the extra postage. Many persons of superior rank and education have come and expressed their great admiration, and have spoken of the good style used by the writer and of the excellence of the detailed descriptions, and they all think that probably no better letter has yet been sent from America...

On account of your letter, many desire to leave Arzberg and come to America; but it is difficult to sell property, because so many are anxious to leave. For three

or four years the situation in Germany has been very distressing because all bread and other provisions are so very high. This year will be the very worst of all, for the grain harvest has turned out badly, and the potato crop will be almost a complete failure. This disease of the potato plant prevails not only in Germany, but is spreading all over Europe...

Many thousand greetings to you from me, my children, and my friends as well as yours. My dearest wish remains that we may soon meet.

Your brother-in-law  
Joh. Melchior Meyer

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Source: 8.3 & 8.3.1, Donald F. Carmony, ed., "Letter Written by Mr. Johann Wolfgang Schreyer," *Indiana Magazine of History*, Vol.40, No. 3 (1944): 283-306. Abbreviation by Eberhard Reichmann.

#### 9.4 Johann Berger's Warning about Indianapolis

Indianapolis, July 29, 1854

I want to warn the folks of Weilderstadt [near Stuttgart] about America. Remember the adage: "Stay in your homeland and make an honest living!" You won't find pigs and heads of calves on the streets. But meanness is so bad that they will burn down your house just because you said something one didn't like. Going out at night is like having to pass through a bunch of robbers...

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Source: Emigrant Letter Collection at Heimatmuseum Weilderstadt, Württemberg. Translation by Eberhard Reichmann.



A Letter from America.

Engraving in "Nieritz deutscher Volkskalender für 1856". ("Nieritz German popular Calendar for 1856") (Sammlung Hümmerich, Berlin (West))

Letters from America were read with great interest in Germany. People followed the fate of the emigrants with sympathy, wondered whether they would succeed in starting a new life, and whether they themselves should go over to America. Letters contained important information about the New World and often encouraged people to emigrate. Even in the early 19th century, letters calculated to promote the desire to emigrate were occasionally confiscated by the authorities.

Moltmann, (1982), 62

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## 10. THE HOMESTEAD ACT (May 1862)

### U.S. Statutes at Large

#### **AN ACT to secure homesteads to actual settlers on the public domain.**

*Be it enacted,* That any person who is the head of a family, or who has arrived at the age of twenty-one years, and is a citizen of the United States, or who shall have filed his declaration of intention to become such, as required by the naturalization laws of the United States, and who has never borne arms against the United States Government, or given aid and comfort to its enemies, shall from, and after the first of January, 1863, be entitled to enter one quarter-section or a less quantity of unappropriated public lands, upon which said person may have filed a pre-emption claim, or which may, at the time the application is made, be subject to pre-emption at \$1.25, or less, per acre; or 80 acres or less of such unappropriated lands, at \$2.50, or less, per acre, to be located in a body, in conformity to the legal subdivisions of the public lands, and after the same shall have been surveyed:

*Provided,* That any person owning or residing on land may, under the provisions of this act, enter other land lying contiguous to his or her said land, which shall not, with the land so already owned and occupied, exceed in the aggregate 160 acres.

**Sec. 2.** That the person applying for the benefit of this act shall, upon application to the register of the land office in which he or she is about to make such entry,

make affidavit before the said register or receiver that he or she is the head of a family, or is twenty-one or more years of age, or shall have performed service in the Army or Navy of the United States, or that he has never borne arms against the Government of the United States or given aid and comfort to its enemies, and that such application is made for his or her exclusive use and benefit, and that said entry is made for the purpose of actual settlement and cultivation, and not, either directly or indirectly, for the use or benefit of any other person or persons whomsoever; and upon filing the said affidavit with the register or receiver and on payment of ten dollars, he or she shall thereupon be permitted to enter the quantity of land specified: *Provided, however,* That no certificate shall be given or patent issued therefore until the expiration of five years from the date of such entry...or if he be dead, his widow; or in case of her death, his heirs or devisee;...shall prove by two credible witnesses that he, she, or they have resided upon or cultivated the same for the term of five years immediately succeeding the time of filing the affidavit aforesaid, and shall make affidavit that no part of said land has been alienated, and that he has borne true allegiance to the Government of the United States; then, in such case, he, she, or they, if at that time a citizen of the United States, shall be entitled to a patent, as in other cases

provided for by law: *And provided, further,* That in case of death of both father and mother, leaving an infant child or children under twenty-one years of age, the right and fee shall inure to the benefit of said infant child or children; and the executor, administrator, or guardian may, at any time within two years after the death of the surviving parent, and in accordance with the State in which such children for the time being have their domicile, sell said land for the benefit of said infants, but for no other purpose; and the purchaser shall acquire the absolute title by the purchase, and be entitled to a patent from the United States, on payment of the office fees and sum of money herein specified....

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Source: Homestead Act, 20 May 1862. *U.S. Statutes at Large*, Vol. XII, 392 ff. [abr.]. In 1852, 1854, and 1859, the U.S. House of Representatives passed homestead legislation, but on each occasion, the Senate defeated the measure. In 1860, Congress passed a homestead bill to provide Federal land grants to western settlers, but President James Buchanan vetoed the legislation. Following the secession of southern states in 1860-1861, the U.S. Congress adopted the Homestead Act in 1862, which President Abraham Lincoln signed into law on 20 May 1862.

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## 11. EMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES OF NORTH AMERICA — INDIANA AS A HOME FOR EMIGRANTS (1864)

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**Governor Oliver P. Morton**

### GENERAL ADVANTAGES

The inducements offered to emigrants by the United States of North America have long been:

1st. Citizenship with every right and privilege of the native born citizen, after a residence of five years.

2d. Abundant labor at high wages, by which industrious emigrants have always been enabled to lay up money and acquire property.

3d. Cheap lands, which have afforded home, farms, and landed estates on terms that a few years of industry and economy have enabled the emigrant to meet, and to become a landed proprietor.

4th. Light taxes, which have allowed the emigrant to retain all he has been able to make.

5th. Abundant facilities for changing residences, if any be found unpleasant, unhealthy, or unremunerative.

6th. Cheap provisions, which have made expenses light compared with the wages of labor.

7th. Numerous and cheap schools; most of the State affording the advantages of education free of cost.

To sum up all in a few words, the highest wages with the cheapest lands, living, and education, and the highest

political privileges, that laboring men ever received in any country.

The homestead law has, within a few years, added to these advantages that of *free homes*, or farms of 40 to 160 acres, free of cost, to all settlers in good faith upon any of the lands belonging to the Government. In many of the older States these lands are all taken up, but in the new States and Territories there are still many millions of acres.

The war has now added to all the inducements enumerated that of the highest wages ever known even in the United States. The drain of labor into the armies has been immense. More than a million of the farmers, manufacturers, mechanics, and other laboring classes, have been drawn from their farms and shops, and it has been impossible to supply their places. For years to come the most rapid emigration will be insufficient to do it. Wages have consequently gone up to a figure never known before, and must remain there till the waste of the war has been supplied. But even if rapid emigration should supply it within a few years wages can only fall back to the point at which they started, and that was far higher than any country in Europe has ever known.

These inducements are held out by all States alike, but there are others, as the extent, excellence, and cheapness of land, healthiness, character of climate, amount of population, facilities for manufactures, for agriculture, for transportation of produce or manufactures to markets, minerals and mines, and the facility of working them, cheapness of education, varieties of products, and so on, in which necessarily some states are superior to others. Indiana, the following facts will show, is equal to the best, and offers every possible inducement, except the accidental and doubtful one of mining for gold and silver, that any country can do.

### WAGES

The wages paid to skilled mechanics in Indiana have always been good and remunerative. Careful and industrious workmen have never failed to accumulate money enough to buy themselves comfortable homes, and establish themselves in business, if they desire it....

The following table of wages paid to mechanics and laboring men in the leading trades, will show better than any statement what emigrants may look for:

#### *Builders* (per day)

Bricklayers.....	\$3.50
Hod carriers.....	2.50-3.00
Laborers.....	2.00
Carpenters.....	2.50-3.00
Plasterers.....	3.00-3.50
Painters.....	2.50

Stone masons.....2.50-2.75

#### *Machinists* (per day)

Blacksmiths.....	2.50-3.00
Finishers.....	2.75-3.00
Moulders.....	2.75-3.00
Boiler makers.....	3.00

#### *Shoemakers* (per week)

Ladies' wear.....	8.00-10.00
Men's wear.....	9.00-11.00

#### *Saddlers* (per week)

Saddle hands.....	16.00-20.00
Harness hands.....	12.00-15.00

#### *Tailors* (per day)

Skilled workmen.....	2.50-3.00
Foremen.....	3.00

#### *Stone and Marble Cutters* (per day)

Skilled workmen.....	3.00
Laborers.....	2.00

#### *Hollow Ware and Stove Founders* (per week)

Hollow ware moulders....	25.00
Stove moulders.....	25.00
Casting moulders.....	18.00
Laborers.....	9.00

#### *Gas Fitters* (per day)

Gas Fitters.....	2.75
Coppersmiths.....	2.75

#### *Plumbers* (per week)

Plumbers.....	10.00-12.00
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#### *Tin and Coppersmiths* (per week)

Workmen in tin.....	12.00-18.00
" in copper.....	12.00-18.00
" in sheet iron.....	12.00-18.00

#### *Brass Founders* (per day)

Workmen of all kinds.....	2.50
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#### *Watch Makers and Jewelers.* (per week)

Workmen of all kinds....	25.00
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**Woolen Manufacturers** (per day)

Spinners.....2.00

Weavers.....2.00

Finishers.....2.50

Dyers.....2.50

Laborers.....1.50

**Paper Manufacturers** (per day)

Machine tenders.....2.25

Engineers.....2.00

Foremen.....3.50

Laborers.....1.50

**Rolling Mills** (per day)

Puddlers.....5.50

Heaters.....6.50

Rollers.....4.00

Hookers and Catchers.....3.00

Rail straighteners (cold)...5.00

Laborers.....1.75

**Millers** (per month)

2d. & 3d. millers.....40.00-50.00

Head millers.....60.00-75.00

**Furniture Makers** (per day)

Cabinet makers.....2.50-3.50

Chair makers.....2.50-3.00

...Such wages, with the certainty that about one-half can be saved by a single man, and one-third by a man with a family, are one of the inducements offered by Indiana to mechanics and laborers in manufactories, to emigrate to that State.

**Population**

The entire population of Indiana in 1860, as shown by the official census of

that year, was 1,339,600 whites, and 11,428 blacks, a total of 1,350,428. In 1850 it was 988,416....

Of this population 1,232,244 were native born, and 118,184 foreign born. The following table shows the nativity and number of the principal portions of the foreign born population:

Germany.....66,705

Ireland.....24,495

England.....9,304

France.....6,176 \*

Switzerland.....3,813

Scotland.....2,093

\* [The majority were ethnic Germans from Alsace, eastern France]

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Source: *Emigration to the United States of North America. Indiana as a Home for Emigrants. Prepared and Published under the Direction and by Authority of Oliver P. Morton, Governor of Indiana.* (Indianapolis: Joseph J. Bingham, State Printer, 1864), 42pp. [abr.].

A German-language version translated by Prof. C.J. Beleke, *Die Auswanderung nach den Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika. Indiana eine passende Heimstätte für Emigranten*, also appeared in 1864.

## 12. SINGING THEIR WAY OUT

Eberhard Reichmann, ed.

The emigration process, filled with its motivations, expectations, heartaches, and ironies, found expression in numerous verses and melodies.

1. “*The Harmonists’ Travel Song*” (1803) by their leader Johann Georg Rapp sees the Christian pietist separatist group’s destiny firmly anchored in biblical prophecy. America is equated with the “promised land,” while their homeland Württemberg and all of Europe are left to the coming doom:

Let us go! Let us go!  
In America the great sheep pasture  
we shall find.  
There the sunwoman is to flee  
that at the time of evil safe she shall be.  
Then judgment will strike to avenge.

Onward to America,  
there is our Father’s land...

Brethren, the time is at hand,  
to North America, the promised land!  
Come on, you friends, with trust and  
courage.  
Do not tarry, God will carry  
and strengthen your spirit.  
Soon better days we will enjoy,  
without the pains we face today.

Happy day, with Babel behind us,  
in America, God will govern us  
with His hand....

Brethren, dear brethren rejoice.  
Sing new songs unto the Lord.  
He will build His new Kingdom in  
America  
and destroy all of Europa.  
Brethren, hurry!

Now fare well, you Württembergers.  
Your Day of Judgment  
in the sinister prison of fire  
will not harm us,  
but will destroy you altogether...

2. The melancholy of parting is captured in “*Morgen mue ich fort von hier*” by Friedrich Silcher (1789-1860) of Schnait, a prolific German composer of genuine folksongs — in many ways a kindred spirit of America’s Stephen Foster (1826-1864).

Tomorrow I must leave from here  
and must say farewell.  
Oh, thou wonderous beauty,  
parting brings such grief.  
Truly, truly did I love you,  
more than words can ever tell.  
Now, I must leave you,  
now, I must leave you.

Fr. Stiller. 1927.



Mor-gen muß ich weg von hier



und muß Ab-schied neh-men. O du al-ler-



höch-ste Zier, Schei-den das bringt



Grü-men! Da ich dich so treu ge-liebt,



ä-ber al-le Ma-ßen, soll ich dich ver-



laß-sen, soll ich dich ver-laf-sen!

2. Wenn zwei gute Freunde sind, die einander kennen, Sonn und Mond bewegen sich, ehe sie sich trennen. Noch viel größer ist der Schmerz, wenn ein treu verliebtes Herz |: in die Fremde zieht! :

Wandervogel, (1928),124-125

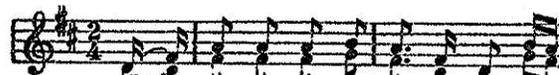
3. "Nun ade, du mein lieb Heimatland," composed by August Disselhoff of Soest (1850), was not only popular with emigrants but captured heart and soul of most Germans for nearly a century:

Now farewell to you, my dear homeland, my dear homeland, farewell.

I am bound now for that foreign land, my dear homeland, farewell.

And so I sing along in a joyful mood, as one 's singing when the hiking's good, my dear homeland, farewell.

Ab-schied



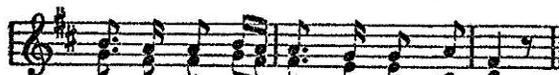
{ Nun a-de, du mein lieb Hei-mat-land, lieb  
Es-geht jetzt fort zum fremden Strand, lieb



Hei-mat-land, a-de! } Und so sing ich  
Hei-mat-land, a-de!



denn mit fro-hem Mut, wie man sin-get, wenn man



wandern tut, lieb Hei-mat-land, a-de!

2. Wie du lachst mit deines Himmels Blau, lieb Heimatland, ade! Wie du grüßest mich mit Feld und Au, lieb Heimatland, ade! Gott weiß, zu dir steht stets mein Sinn, doch jetzt zur Ferne ziehst mich hin: lieb Heimatland, ade!

3. Begleitest mich, du lieber Fluß, lieb Heimatland, ade! Bist traurig, daß ich wandern muß, lieb Heimatland, ade! Vom moosgen Stein am waldgen Tal da grüß ich dich zum letztenmal: mein Heimatland, ade!

August Disselhoff. 1850.

Wandervogel, (1928), 130

4. The popular emigrant song, “*Jetzt ist die Zeit und Stunde da*” (c. 1840s), represents the optimism of those determined to start a new and successful life across the sea. The translation is based on a handwritten version found in the Black Forest town of Pfaffenweiler, the sister city of Jasper, Indiana. The song is known in slightly different versions elsewhere.

Now is the time and hour here,  
We travel to America.  
The wagon’s at the door awaitin’,  
With wife and child, no hesitatin’.

Dear friends, please don’t you cry no  
more,  
good-bye for now and evermore.  
Come, brother dear, go shake my hand,  
We’re moving to a foreign land.

America is good and fine,  
there we will have that champagne wine.  
This champagne wine is real good wine,  
with it we’ll have a grand ole time.

America, you’re the noble land  
and Europe is the beggars’ land,  
and once we’re in America,  
We’ll sing a loud “Victoria!”

#### 4. A German Emigrants’ Song

*Jetzt ist die Zeit und Stunde da, wir fahren nach Amerika. Der Wagen*

*steht schon vor der Tür, mit Weib und Kind marschieren wir.*

*The time and the hour are now,  
to America we will go.  
The wagon’s ready at the door,  
with wife and children we march off.*

As remembered and penned by Eberhard Reichmann



An Emigrant Family Takes its Leave. Drawing by Johann Moritz Rugendas, 1826. (Museum für Hamburgische Geschichte)

In early times, an onerous journey was often necessary to reach major rivers and ports. The emigrants set off on foot or in horse-drawn vehicles, accompanied by relatives and neighbors, perhaps the whole village. Moltmann, (1982), 70

5. The balladesque “*Schorsch du mu et jetzt nach Amerika*” treats the taboo governing the denominational love-and-marriage fence with farcical disrespect that includes the intentional misspelling of *evangelisch* and *katholisch*:

George you must now go to  
America,  
said my father once to me,  
‘cause you’re in love with that big  
Lina, (pause, pause)  
to which never, never, never I’ll agree,  
two, three, four,

‘cause you’re in love with that big  
Lina  
(pause, pause)  
to which never I’ll agree.

‘cause Lina was evigelical  
and her George was a catholicker,  
both their parents and the clans  
said “no, no,” (pause, pause),  
“they can never be a pair, we figure,”  
two, three, four...

Then there was that farewell boozing  
at the railroad station restaurant.  
Everybody had a prairie schooner

'xept Lina, she'd double that much  
sooner,  
two, three, four...

It'd be much nicer in America  
if I had with me my Lina here.  
two, three, four,  
oh my heart's agetting weary, weary,  
miss you very much, my dear,  
two, three, four...

Therefore, kiddiou, let me tell you,  
hold your fire before you kiss.  
two, three, four,  
ask if it is evigelic or cath'olick  
what she is, what she is,  
two, three, four...

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Sources: Karl J.R. Arndt, *Georg Rapp's Separatists, 1700-1803: the German prelude to Rapp's American Harmony Society: a documentary history* (Worcester, MA: Harmony Society Press, 1980), 442.

--"Jetzt ist die Ziet und Stunde da,"/"The Time has come...," (anon.)

--"Schorsch du muet jetzt nach Amerika,"/"George you must now go to America," in *Der Kilometerstein. Eine lustige Sammlung* (1939), 14-15.

--"Nun ade du mein lieb Heimatland"/"Now farewell to you" and "Morgen mue ich fort von hier"/"Tomorrow I must leave from here," in *Wandervogel Liederbuch*, (Leipzig 1928), 130; 124-25. All translated by Eberhard Reichmann.

6. A little-known treasure of songs from the homeland is the pocket-size booklet of *Soldatenlieder* [soldiers' songs]. They came with the revolutionaries of 1848 and accompanied many of the more than 175,000 Civil War soldiers and officers,

born in Germany and serving in the Union Army.

The booklet — without melodies — was printed by the Deutsch-Amerikaner Gesellschaft of St. Louis with a telling address: 1848 Freiheit Gasse (Freedom Alley) referring, of course, to the failed democratic German Revolution of 1848.

Among its 32 songs are traditionals like: "Ich hatt' einen Kameraden," "Morgenrot, Morgenrot," "Die Wacht am Rhein," "Die Gedanken sind frei," "Der Gott, der Eisen wachsen liee," "Wohlauf Kameraden," "Gebet während der Schlacht," "Was blasen die Trompeten," "Steh ich in tiefer Mitternacht," "Es, es, es und es, es ist ein harter Schlue" — all of them popular throughout the 19th century and beyond.

Songs of the 1848 Revolution include: "Badisches Wiegenlied," a cradle song, fine-tuned from the original "Schlaf, Kindlein schlaf," for the defeat of the Baden revolutionaries by the Prussian Army, but with the undefeated hope for freedom, ending in "scream, my little one scream/the Prussian out there is dead." "Fürstenjagd" is about hunting the princes with swords and guns, shooting the princely foxes all over the Fatherland.