

Historical Perspectives

A Semi-annual Journal
of the
German American Museum,
Library and Family History Center



MILITARY POST FORT ATKINSON, IOWA

Painting by Frank Kaufman 1927

Donated by William Doubek and Mary (Hlubek) Doubek Family to Fort Atkinson Museum.

Issue # 11

Spring 2021

German American Museum

Mission Statement

Preserve the Past
Celebrate the Presence
Embrace the Future

About Historical Perspectives

We have outgrown the newsletter format. With the publication of Historical Perspectives, Historische Betrachtungen, we are focusing on articles that highlight the arts, humanities, history and literature, and the social and physical sciences.

German American Museum

Exhibit Theme Areas

Geographic features of the landscape
Indigenous Americans: removal policies and tribal revival
Why Europeans came to Iowa
Role of religion and the clergy in the community
Importance of education and the teaching nuns
Development of farming and industrial arts
Evolution of family social life
Sports: baseball, basketball and softball
National defense service and economic change
Preserving and celebrating cultural heritages

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From The Society

The German American Museum, Library and Family History Center in St. Lucas, Iowa, has reopened to the public. The Museum hours are: Wednesday from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM, Saturday from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, and Sunday from 12:00 Noon to 3:00 PM. Other days by appointment by calling Virginia at 563-778-2710. "A wonderful team of guides are ready to assist you," states Ruth Boeding Huffman, a museum volunteer.

The Spring issue of the German American Museum Historical Perspectives journal is available online at "stlucasmuseum.org" and in hard copy at the Museum office. Joyce Schaufenbuel, the editor of the Journal, says, "We hope that you will enjoy the interesting articles about the stories that make the history of our region unique. If you have a topic that you would like to share, please let us know," says Joyce.

This Spring issue of Historical Perspectives contains articles on the early history of Fort Atkinson, the many lives of Konrad and Anneliese Verlsteffen, the military trail to Fort Atkinson, the Gerleman stone house, dispelling myths and legends of World War I, surviving in the aftermath of World War II: a personal account, the Lobkowitz Palace: a Czech national treasure, "and what happened at the museum during the pandemic. We are republishing the diversity in faith article to include excellent historical photographs and the meticulous documentation."

The Journal continues to broaden its focus to include articles on artistic expression, historical research materials, and topics in the arts, humanities, history, literature, and the social and physical sciences. Your participation is most welcomed.

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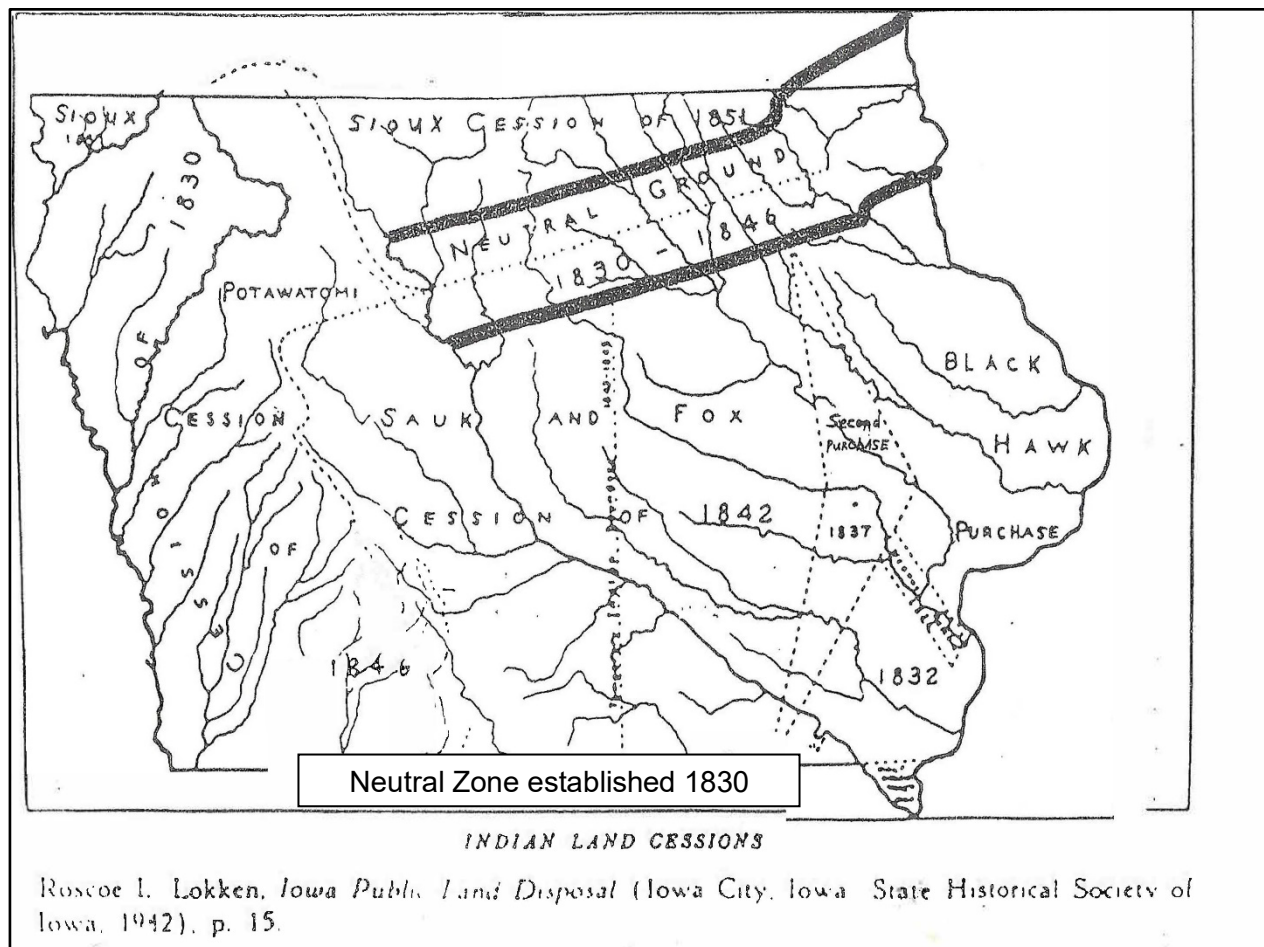


View of German American Museum and St. Luke Church, St. Lucas, Iowa, Spring 2021

History Of The Military Post Fort Atkinson, Iowa

Alan Becker and LuAnne Becker

This overview of the story of the military post of Fort Atkinson is a story of the United States' government policy to remove native Americans from the east side of the Mississippi River over to the west side. In the narrower context the story is about the life of the inhabitants of the 'Neutral Zone' of the northeast Iowa Territory from 1840-1848.



The idea of the 'Neutral Zone' was established in 1830. It was surveyed by Nathan Boone, son of Daniel Boone. The Neutral Zone was located in the northeast Iowa Territory. It was a strip of land running east to west that was 40 miles in distance from north to south. With the expansion of white settlement into Wisconsin and Illinois, the federal government made a series of treaties in the 1820s and 1830s in which the Winnebago (Ho-Chunk) Indians east of the Mississippi River gave up the rights to their lands for a temporary reservation west of the Mississippi River.

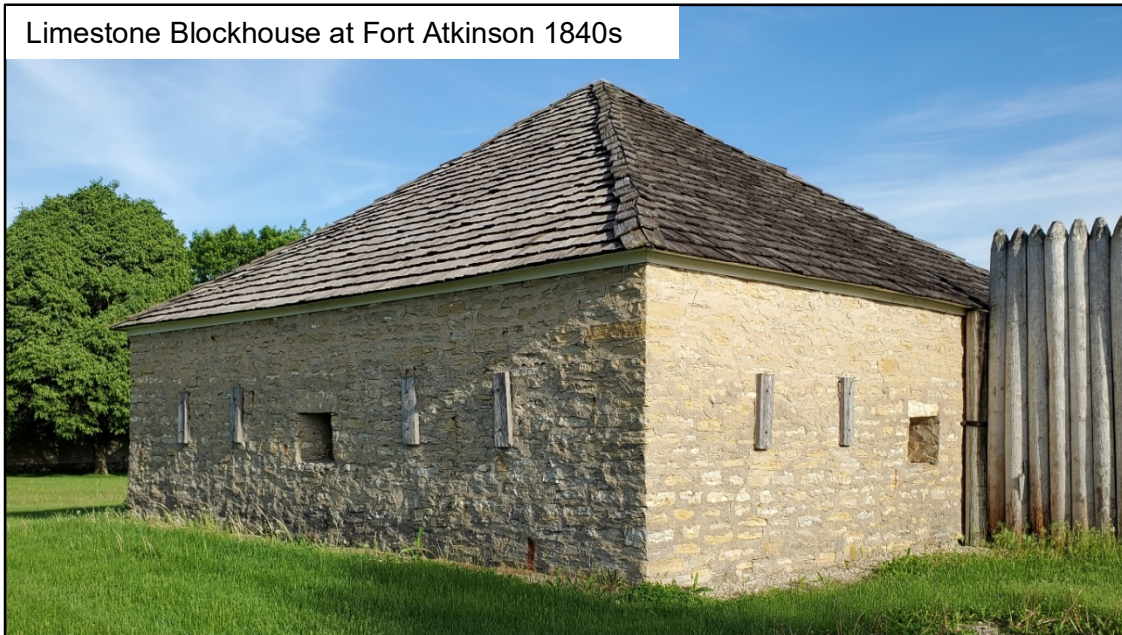
Many of the Winnebago Indians were reluctant to leave their homelands. They fought to remain east of the Mississippi because they viewed the treaties as invalid.

The Wisconsin Winnebago Indians were forced westward into the strip of ground called the 'Neutral Zone' by the U. S. Army in 1840. General Henry Atkinson suggested the idea of establishing a temporary Fort within the Neutral Zone. General Atkinson supposedly promised that the U. S. military would provide protection to the Winnebago Indians from the Sioux Indians located north of the Neutral Zone. However, the main purpose of the Fort was for the soldiers to monitor the location of the Indians.

Fort Atkinson was established on the Turkey River in the northeastern Iowa territory. The Fort was to be a temporary garrison to control the Winnebago Indians during their removal from Wisconsin. The Neutral Line had the Meskwaki (Fox) and the Sauk (Sac) to the south, and the Santee Dakota (Sioux) to the north with the Winnebago forced into the middle.

The Fort was started in 1840. The purpose of it was for the soldiers to contain the Winnebago, and to prevent the illegal infiltration of the white whiskey traders, smugglers, and squatters. All of these factions were prohibited from entering this territory because it was reserved for the Winnebago. In May of 1840, Company F of the 5th U. S. Infantry began the layout and construction of Fort Atkinson. The Fort was erected on top of a hill.

Limestone Blockhouse at Fort Atkinson 1840s



In the beginning, four main buildings and two-gun houses were in the process of being erected. A barracks with a temporary hospital and a building for the officers' quarters were being built. Both buildings were two stories high and made of logs. Unfortunately, neither building was totally finished by winter.

There were many desertions in the winter of 1840 and 1841 due to the extreme cold. Captain Isaac Lynde, commander of Company F, 5th Infantry, was in charge of the Fort. In the Spring of 1841, Captain Lynde suggested that future buildings be made from stone instead of logs. He indicated in his letter to Brigadier General Brook of Fort Crawford, that the timber in the immediate area was used up but there were stones available nearby.

The existing log buildings were very uncomfortable and twenty-two soldiers deserted. Much of the material used to build the Fort was prepared at Fort Crawford and brought to Fort Atkinson

by oxen and wagons. The total building cost of the Fort was ninety-three thousand dollars. Captain of artillery was E. V. Summer. He planned the Fort and held command of the Fort until the Mexican War.

Company B of 1st Dragoons (soldiers mounted on horseback) from Fort Leavenworth arrived at Fort Atkinson in June of 1841. The number of men increased from 60 to 127. Occasional marches throughout this quarter of the Iowa territory were made by the Dragoons. The soldier's service was to deter the different tribes of Indians from leaving their territory. This, in turn, deterred bloodshed among the Sioux, Sauk, and Fox tribes as well as the Winnebago's that were brought onto the Neutral Zone.

Construction of the Fort continued. In September of 1842, Lieutenant A. W. Reynolds sketched the layout of the Fort post for the War Department's records. By the Fall of 1842, most of the work on the Fort was completed with a total of 24 buildings. Ten buildings existed within the stockade walls. They included two enlisted men's barracks, an officers' quarters, a non-commission officers' quarters, a commissary store house, a settler's store, a powder house, two cannon houses (block houses) and a guard house. Fourteen buildings consisting of three stables, three laundresses' huts, a blacksmith shop, a granary, carpenter shop, bake house, root cellar, and icehouse were located outside the stockade.

The regular army troops stationed at Fort Atkinson were sent to Mexico to fight in the Mexican American War in 1846. At this time, Captain James Morgan of the Iowa Volunteers and his company of soldiers, maintained and resided at the Fort. Captain Morgan had been assisting the Dragoons in minor revolts and skirmishes with the Winnebago Indians. Captain John Parker from Dubuque took command of the Dragoons after Captain Summer left in 1846. In September of 1848, under the command of Captain John Parker, the volunteer soldiers disbanded. Captain Parker stayed until the last troops left Fort Atkinson in 1849.

Barracks at Fort Atkinson



Demise of the Fort

By the mid-1840s, the southeast Iowa Territory had been taken over by the settlers. The settlers were soon at the southern edge of the Neutral Zone. The U. S. government made the decision to move the Winnebago Indians out of the Neutral Zone into Minnesota. After Iowa became a state

in 1846, the Winnebago signed a treaty to relinquish their land within the Neutral Zone.

In June of 1848, the military completed the removal of the Winnebago Indians into Minnesota. After the soldiers left the Fort, the government sold all the remaining supplies to private residents of the new city of Fort Atkinson. Alexander Faulkner became the caretaker of the buildings and the grounds. He was replaced by George Cooney, a citizen of the county. After the removal of the Winnebago Indians, there was no need to keep the Fort as it was before. The stockade logs were taken down and used as firewood. All the different parts of the buildings were taken and used for the building in the city of Fort Atkinson. Hardware, glass, complete windows, lumber, and stone were the source of materials used in many of the buildings built in Fort Atkinson.

The new state of Iowa and its legislature wanted the federal government to give the Fort and the surrounding land to the state of Iowa. They wanted an agricultural college formed at the site. From 1849 to 1853 this effort persisted but to no avail. In 1857 John Flowers obtained ownership of the Fort. However, by this time the area settlers had pretty much caused the Fort to become ruins. Many of the buildings were destroyed and the block house and powder house were used for pigs and chickens. The state of Iowa finally acquired the Fort in 1921. In June 1940, workers remarked the foundations of the original buildings within the stockade. In 1957, funds were appropriated for partial reconstruction of the Fort. Reconstruction work was done in 1958 by the Conservation Commission. A museum was made in the north stone barracks to display artifacts and information about the Fort in 1962.

Preservation Efforts

In 1968, the Fort was dedicated as a State Preserve. In 1976, the Iowa Conservation Commission, along with the Travel Development Division of the Iowa Development Commission, developed a new program for promotion of interest areas on state-owned land in Iowa with Fort Atkinson being the starting point.

Two previous archaeological investigations have been conducted at the Ft. Atkinson military post site. In 1939-41, Sigurd S. Reque, a professor at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, conducted excavations at the Fort. The purpose of the investigation was to determine the exact locations of the building foundations located inside the stockade wall, and to collect artifacts for display at a State Museum within the Fort. A report on Reque's work was never published.

The second archaeological investigation was conducted by Dr. Marshall McKusick, then State Archaeologist of Iowa, in the summer of 1966. McKusick dug outside the stockade wall and located the foundation of the bake house as indicated by Lieutenant A. W. Reynolds sketch of the post. Reynolds made the sketch for the War Department in September 1842. McKusick then excavated the officer's latrines inside the stockade wall. Artifacts associated with the latter part of the Fort's occupation were discovered. McKusick never published the findings of his excavations. Many artifacts from this dig are now on display in the Fort Atkinson City Museum.

Starting in 1977, the Fort was celebrated by having a Rendezvous to remember the troops and the Winnebago Indians. This year, 2021, marks the 45th year of the annual Fort Atkinson Rendezvous that occurs each year during the last full weekend in September. The 'Friends of Fort Atkinson' group, led by Ron Franzen and Paul Herold who replaced Steve Sindelar, started the event called the Fort Atkinson Rendezvous. Over 100 tents and teepees are set up on the Fort grounds. All participants dress in 1840s time period costume and perform historic activities such as a cannon shoot, shooting of the anvil, 1840s kids' games, tomahawk throwing, and a shooting contest. There is also a camp of U.S. army dragoons. The entire event of activities is open free to

the public. The Friends of Fort Atkinson mark each year with a medallion with a historic theme for that year's rendezvous. The yearly medallions are designed by LuAnne Becker.

Rendezvous Days

To start the yearly event, a 'School Day' is held during the Friday before Rendezvous weekend. Alan Becker began Friday School Day activities in 1996 by inviting northeast Iowa schools to the events. He presented information to over 1300 students who participated in the event that day. The School Day grew into a free event for students to travel to Fort Atkinson where they could enjoy homemade pioneer root beer, observe pioneer demonstrations such as pottery and basket making, and learn about the history of the Fort and its buildings through a guided tour. About 1000 school students attend the free Friday School Day each year.

Restoration Efforts

During the summers of 2006 and 2007, the stockade walls that exist today around the Fort were replaced. The new posts for the stockade walls were from large pine trees that were cut down in Canada and trucked to Fort Atkinson. The stockade walls, 11 feet 9 inches tall, surrounded the main buildings. Gun openings were cut at regular intervals all the way around the walls. The back sections of the wall were constructed in a horizontal position rather than the upright position. This is because the outer walls of some of the buildings formed a part of the stockade.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recently developed a series of display signs placed throughout the Fort to serve as a self-guided walking tour within the Fort walls. Many of the Fort buildings are depicted on these signs that were researched and drawn by Fort Atkinson artist LuAnne Becker. The Fort Atkinson Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on February 27, 2013.

A Save America's Treasures (SAT) grant was awarded to the Iowa DNR by the National Park Service. The Fort, a state owned, nationally significant, property needs repairs. This grant is only given once. So, this is an opportunity for Fort Atkinson to be preserved to the original structures. Fort Atkinson is the only fort in Iowa with its original buildings, built before Iowa's statehood, still standing. The Friends of Fort Atkinson, a non-profit volunteer group from Fort Atkinson, is making an effort to raise matching funds. A SAT grant awarded \$497,500 for work on the preservation of the Fort Atkinson State Park. SAT grants provide up to \$500,000 for preservation of historic property. An equal amount of cash and an in-kind match are required.

Due to COVID-19 some fund-raising projects were put on hold. This fund-raising effort is also being worked with the Northeast Iowa Resource Conservation & Development Agency (RC&D) to manage private donations and to help find and secure additional funds. Donations small and large have been received to the amount of about \$14,000. If there are people interested in helping to preserve the Fort, we encourage them to help make this project a success through donations.

The Friends of Fort Atkinson and the Iowa Resource Conservation and Development Agency wish to thank you in advance for any donations given. Donations may be sent to:

Northeast Iowa RC&D
C/O Friends of Fort Atkinson
P.O. Box 9
Postville, Iowa 52162



Cottonwood tree in the Spring

Military Trail To Fort Atkinson On The Turkey River

William J. Burke

This summary is taken from the author's book, *The Upper Mississippi Valley, How The Landscape Shaped Our Heritage*.

The Regional Context—The Setting

The origin of the Military Road location was not with the European settlers and US Military, who simply followed the well-worn trails mostly on the ridge tops where buffalo and Native Americans traveled for centuries. Almost all trails were paths of least resistance, in other words, the easiest to travel. One can see that today in how deer trails are located in rough country. Seeking ease of travel was just common sense since prairie vegetation was often eight to ten feet high obstructing the vision of anyone trying to bushwhack a new trail. This provided ample reason for newcomers to take any existing trail that seemed to go in the intended direction.

Military Road's Unique Purpose

Unlike most forts, Fort Atkinson was developed to protect one Indian tribe from another tribe. These tribes were the Sioux to the north of the line and the Sac and Fox south of the line. In 1825 a Neutral Line was established generally down the Upper Iowa River and southward to the Des Moines River and later in 1830, a 20-mile wide Neutral Zone was established on either side of this line to keep two warring tribes apart. Besides keeping peace on the frontier, the ultimate end was to make these lands available for pioneer settlement.

Fort Atkinson

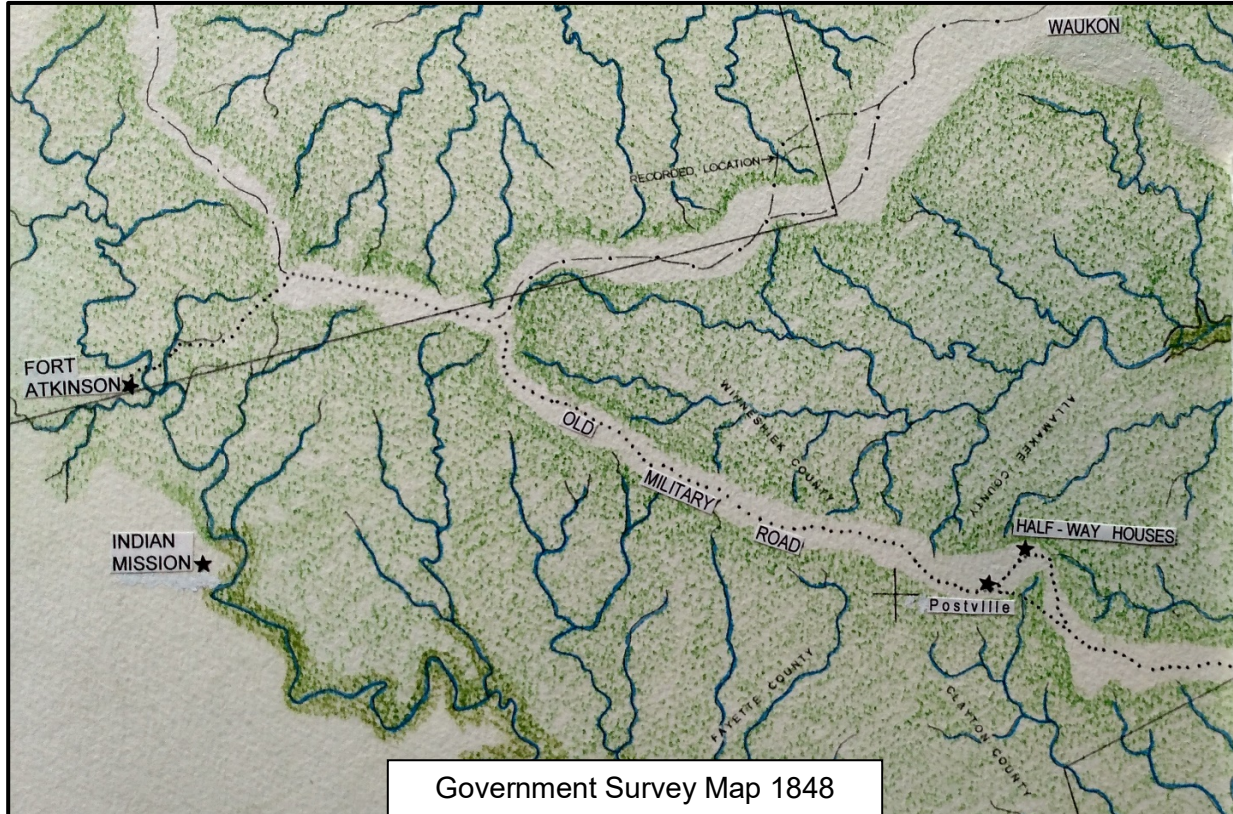
This was the third frontier fort named after General Henry Atkinson. The fort was occupied in 1840 and completed in 1842. The troop's function was to patrol the Neutral Zone territory and keep peace between the Indian tribes and the incoming settlers. The outbreak of the Mexican War in 1846 caused the removal of the troops from Fort Atkinson. The government moved the Winnebago Indians from east of the Mississippi River during the 1840s while there were still some troops at the fort. The Winnebago (Ho Chunk today) were then removed from the Neutral Zone to Minnesota in 1848 and the last troops left Fort Atkinson for good in 1849.

Why The Fort Was Located Where It Was

The reasoning in this section is my own, drawn from my own research involving settlement histories and military histories in frontier development. I have not come across documentation of specific government decisions regarding the determinations for the fort's location, but it is likely that such evidence would exist. First of all, The fort's location is exactly on the 1825 Neutral Line. A location here would not give preference to dealing with the tribes on one side of the line or the other. The most practical factor may have been the historic existence of a major trail from the east connected to an historic crossing of the Mississippi River to Prairie du Chien where Fort Crawford was located. An additional factor was the availability of water, the Turkey River being at the Fort's location. Another supporting factor may have been the availability of stone for building at or near the land surface. Stone may have been a preferred building material for much of the fort, and there may not have been ample timber nearby for producing lumber. If the above reasoning is faulty, then it is hoped that additional facts will be discovered.

Government Survey Map July 1848

This is a part of the federal government township survey map which was surveyed by Guy Carlton in July 1848. This is Township 96 North, Range 9 West, Washington Township. The various curving lines on the map are trails and roads required to be recorded by the surveyors.



Location of the Old Military Road

The military road's location both east and west of the Mississippi River is mostly on ridge tops where the land was flatter and dry. The military road east of the Mississippi River came first and originated at Fort Howard in Green Bay. Some of the military traffic to Fort Atkinson originated at Fort Howard. The lands that both roads were on were called "military ridges," mostly the road east of the Mississippi River. A bike/pedestrian trail has been established on much of this ridge, with some of the trail exactly on the old trail location. Much of the Military Road's location has the benefit of its documentation being mapped by the federal township surveys in the 1840's.

The Iowa half of the Military Road is easily experienced by way of the location of US Highways 18, 52, and Iowa Highway 24 mostly in Clayton and Winneshiek Counties. The Canadian Pacific rail line is even more precisely on this old road's location.

Site of the Old Mission Road Between Ossian and Calmar



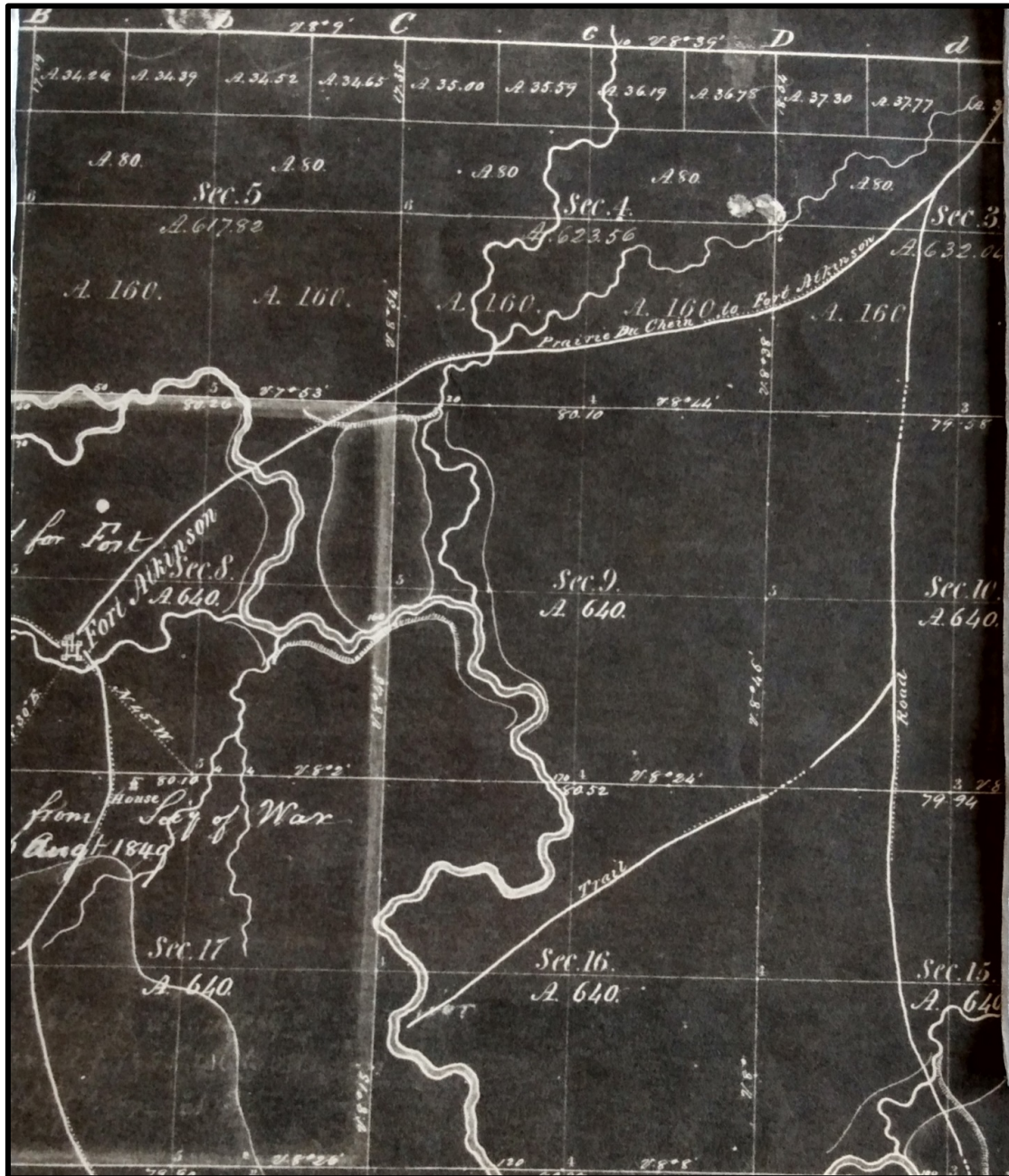
The route of travel from Fort Crawford in Prairie du Chien started with a ferry across the Mississippi River to Mc Gregor's landing and wound its way up to the hill-top prairie and proceeded westward through the future cities of Monona, Luana, Postville and Calmar. At the future site of Postville, a half-way station was located for the soldiers and horses to rest. This facility was provided by the U S Army by contract to a private party, Mrs. Post. This station was soon relocated a short way away to match a short-cut relocation of the military road. The military also relocated the start of the road out of the Mc Gregor area to military "Garden plot" lands just to the north to avoid excessive ferry fees across the Mississippi River. This new location was called the Upper Ferry Road. It went around the present-day lower unit tract of the Effigy Mounds National Monument. The original Military Road travel route can be walked in this mound area.

"Sodom and Gomorrah" Frontier Settlements

In 1842, two trading houses, selling mostly liquor, were established just outside the Neutral Zone along the Military Road to exploit the travelers on this new road. They were outside the Neutral Zone because it was against government regulations to make liquor available to the Indians. These trading houses took on an unsavory reputation, thus the names: Sodom and Gomorrah, right out of the Bible. These establishments are in proximity to the community of Luana that was established much later.

Author's Hand-Drawn Map of Four County Area

This is a part of the article author's map of the four-county area showing the Military Road to Fort Atkinson. The map shows this Fort was located directly on the Neutral Line established by the government in 1825. The small cross southwest of Postville is the intersection of the four area counties. The 1820's trading road leading to Waukon was called "Rolett's Road," named after the principal frontier trader in Prairie Du Chien. This road merged with the Military Road and proceeded to the Cedar River and other frontier areas. This map also illustrates the location of these paths of travel being on the hilltop drainage divides between area streams where well-worn paths of travel had been present for a long time.



Coming To America

The Many Lives Of Konrad And Anneliese Versteffen

Konrad Versteffen, Annegret Versteffen Schemmel, Rosemarie Versteffen Kuhn

Early Life

Our father, Konrad Versteffen was born on July 20, 1915, in Verl, Westfalen Germany. Dad's education consisted of eight years of elementary school and two years of business school. He then worked in a wholesale store as an apprentice for three years and as a regular clerk for two years. Our mother, Anneliese Augusta Baumeister was born on February 14, 1920, in Muenster, Westfalen Germany.

Our father grew up on the family farm in Verl, Germany. He was 13 years old when his father died due to a serious illness. His mother, Anna Versteffen, was left with the responsibility of raising my Dad, his four brothers and one sister by herself. They raised rye, oats, potatoes, and turnips on the family farm. They also milked eight cows and raised pigs.

Our mother's life was very different from our father's life during the 1930s. While Dad grew up on a farm and eventually went into business, Mom grew up in a very middle-class family. Her father was an electrical engineer and had his own business. Her mother helped in the family business so our Mom was raised by a nanny and a housekeeper. Mom attended Catholic school through 8th grade. After that, her Dad taught her how to hang lamps and light fixtures and connect them in her father's showroom.

Mom wrote that by 1933 Germany was becoming a restless nation. One day her teacher had a religious poem written on the board. A member of the Anti-Christ Party came into the classroom and told her to erase the poem, shocking both the teacher and the students. This was the beginning of Hitler's entrance unto the political scene in Germany. Mom shared a story where one night her family was woken by noises from the tavern across the street. It was the meeting place for the Communist Party. The National Socialists were arguing with the Communists. After that, going out at night was scary for all.

In 1938, at the age of 18, Mom's parents sent her to a nunnery in Bonn to learn how to cook and manage a household. Rather than learning culinary skills, the nuns used the girls to do all the cooking, cleaning, and gardening. Twelve girls from all parts of Germany attended. On September 1, 1939, Mom and the girls were working in the nunnery's garden which was next to the railroad tracks. She saw the railroad cars loaded with tanks and military machinery traveling south. Mother Superior told Mom and her classmates that Hitler had started a war with Poland. The whole country was put in a state of emergency. Across the country food stamps and gas masks were given out to all citizens. All stores were closed. Mother Superior told the girls to pack their suitcases because the school was being closed. She told them to find their own way home. The problem was that Mom was 500 km from home and very few trains were running. She ended up jumping onto a train and hanging on for dear life for her journey home. This train only took her so far, then she had to find another train. Everyone was clamoring to get onto the trains to get home. She finally made it to Muenster and her parents were there to greet her. This was the start of the war years.

Dad was drafted into the "Reichsarbeitsdienst" (National Workcorps) as a young teen. Its purpose was to build up the stamina of Germany's youth. He was paid 8 cents a day for six months. After time in the Workcorps, he was drafted into the Air Force in 1936. He had basic

training for six months and was given training in teletype operations. In 1939 he was to be released from the Air Force but because of the threat of war, servicemen were no longer being released from service. He was then stationed at the Muenster Airport as a teletype operator. He was given special training in sending and receiving secret codes. After two years of service and teletype instruction, he was promoted to Master Sergeant and thereby was made head of all teletype operations at the airport.

Our Parents Meet and Marry

Mom met Dad in 1942. A man named Walter came into her Dad's lighting store. Walter asked Mom to go to a movie the next Sunday. He called and asked if he could bring along his friend, Konrad. Mom went on a date with Walter and Konrad sat in front of them. Konrad (Dad) and Mom started talking and laughing. According to Mom it was "Love at first sight!" Mom's Dad did not like Konrad. Her father told her, "You let that guy go or you have to leave home and be disinherited!" He even gave Mom a deadline to break off the relationship. Months went by and Mom continued dating Dad. They dated for nine months. Dad then left to go back to his company. Their last night together they lived through an air raid. When they got out of the shelter all they saw was smoke and fire all around them. After that terrible air raid, they had to say good-bye the next morning. Mom received word that Dad was in Munich and on his way to Italy. Shortly after that, Dad sent Mom a letter asking her to marry him. She agreed and they were to be married during his upcoming three-week-long furlough.



Mom and Dad's Wedding Day, June 5, 1943

Mom and Dad were married during Dad's three-week furlough on June 5, 1943, at Mecklenbeck, Muenster West Germany. They drove by horse and buggy to the church. There was no gas for cars (rationed) so the wedding party had to walk a couple of miles to the church. Their friends and family joined them in the wedding ceremony. Their honeymoon was a trip to a nearby resort. They used food stamps to get food.

Since all stores were closed Mom had nowhere to go to buy a wedding dress. Luckily, she met an old school friend in her city and Mom told her she did not have a wedding dress. Her friend said she could use her dress and hairpiece from her wedding six months earlier. Dad's father brought the meat so all her parents had to do was take care of the rest of the wedding. There were no invitations except for a few relatives and friends were told of the wedding by phone.

Mom and Dad went to the courthouse to get married by the Justice of the Peace. The whole ceremony lasted fifteen minutes. After the ceremony they took their witnesses for a little treat in town and went home by train. In the afternoon they had an appointment with their pastor. He gave them a lecture on married life.

The War Years

The war years were extremely difficult for both Mom and Dad. First of all, food was limited and rationed, as well as gasoline. Because there was no gas, everyone was forced to either walk or bike to wherever they wanted to go. Dad was in the German Air Force and Mom was drafted into the Army in 1943.

Dad was sent back to Italy after their wedding and from there he was transferred to Belgrade, Yugoslavia in 1944 as a teletype operator. Mom's job was at the airport where she worked behind a map permanently on a glass wall.

They would watch for reports of planes and aircraft close by and set off the air raid alarm. Mom worked for the Ground Observer; it was her job to warn people to get into the shelters once fighter planes were detected and sirens were sounded.

Another casualty of the war happened in November 1943 when Mom's father's business was burned as a result from a terrible firestorm. Also, Mom's uncle died during an attack when his house was bombed. He did not escape and was killed, leaving behind his wife and seven children.

In March 1945, the war got worse and the German army had to move inland. Mom's captain told Mom to go home. The problem was that she was 80 km from home and her only transportation was her bike. Mom and six other girls had to get home but there was no way home except to use their bikes. Fortunately, she made it. Another challenge was the lack of food. The food stamps they received never provided them with enough food for the family. People would have to stand in line for just a few hundred grams of meat a week.

Post War Years

The biggest challenge for both Mom and Dad was that when the war was over in 1945, for two years Mom did not know if Dad was dead or alive. Dad had been captured and was forced to travel by foot to a prisoner of war camp after the war was over. He remained there for more than four years until he eventually escaped.

Post WWII was a rude awakening for the German people. Everything was gone! The money they had in the bank was no good anymore. Every citizen got \$10 to start with. Mom got a job with a government agency. She kept the books for registered horses. It gave her something to do since Dad was still imprisoned. Two girls from her office found an apartment for her.

Mom kept working until February 1947. It was then that she received her first postcard from Dad saying he was alive and was imprisoned in Yugoslavia. This was her first communication with him in almost two years. Dad was working in a coal mine for the Communist Party under Marshall Tito. He could now write a censored letter once a month and she in return could write back with all the news from home. In February 1948, Mom's father got a phone call from the city where Mom's sister-in-law, Hedwig was living. It was Dad's voice telling him that he had escaped from the Croatian prisoner of war camp and was on his way home. Dad wanted to talk to Mom but she was on the road and not available for the call. So, Dad stayed with his sister Hedwig that day and took the train home the next day.

Mom was sitting in a railroad car that was on the same train Dad was traveling in. When Mom stepped off the train, she saw her whole family standing at the gate and looking for someone. Mom could not figure it out. Why were they all standing there? Then she saw a familiar face in front of her... it was Dad! At first, she did not recognize him. He looked so pale and skinny,

weighing only 90 pounds. After five long years of waiting, he finally came home from his terrible experience as a prisoner in a war camp.

Life as a Prisoner of War

For Dad, the post war years were spent as a prisoner of war by the Yugoslavian Communists. Dad was on his way home when his unit encountered the British and Yugoslavian troops at the Austrian border. The British promised that if they would give up all their possessions, they would be free to go. However, after their possessions were taken, they were handed over to the Yugoslavians. Dad's unit was ordered to march to a prison camp in Croatia over high mountain peaks. The march lasted for sixteen days during which no one was given any food. During the march, anyone who was no longer able to walk was simply taken aside and shot in the back of the head and discarded in the ditches. After they arrived in the Yugoslavian camp, their remaining possessions (watches, wedding rings, etc.), all good clothes and shoes were taken away from them.

For the first half year, Dad was fed cornmeal with water. Their losses were heavy because of malnutrition and epidemics. About 50% of the men died. The remaining who were somewhat healthy were sent out to labor camps. Dad was sent with a group of fifty other men to a coal mine in Slovenia. They worked ten hours a day and received a diet of cornbread, which was actually cornmeal and water baked. Occasionally on Sundays they were given little horse meat. In 1946 Dad received his first letter from his wife in eighteen months.

Things slowly got better. The guards occasionally would let some of the prisoners go help some farmers after work. This was quite nice because the farmers would repay them with food, cigarettes and clothing. Through the farmers, Dad found out that the Allies intended to release all war prisoners at the end of 1948, which would mean two more years as a prisoner. Dad and two other prisoners made a plan to escape. While working on the railroad, they learned that a coal train left for Austria every day. So, they decided that somehow, they would escape on this train. They started saving food and acquired some warmer clothes because it was twenty degrees below zero at night. They also obtained some home brewed whiskey (Slivovica) which they gave to their guards. After the guards passed out, Dad and his two companions went to the railroad station. They wore all the clothes they had, and then quickly found a coal car headed for Austria. They placed some planks over themselves and then covered the boards with some coal so it looked as though the entire train car was full of coal.

The train left for Tripolje at three o'clock in the morning. After the first stop, the planks broke and the full weight of the coal fell on them. They could not move and were just barely able to breathe. It took fifteen hours for the train to reach the border. The border police, with their bloodhounds, always checked the trains before they crossed the border. After three hours of waiting, they finally crossed the border into freedom. There was a small hole in the side of the railroad car that they could see through. As they felt they were safe, reassured by the voices of the German speaking Austrians, they started yelling for help because they were unable to free themselves. Finally, the Austrian railroad men found them. After serving them a cup of hot coffee, they sent them on their way to the Red Cross Center which supplied them with their railroad tickets home. Dad was reunited with his wife and family whom he had not seen in over four years.

After the war, Dad had no job, no money, and no place to live. Mom's father offered Dad a job as a bookkeeper for the Electric Power Plant. They stayed with her parents until they could find a

place of their own. They found a house that had been damaged by the war. They hired a contractor to rebuild the house and after five months they were ready to move in. Konnie was born January 23, 1949. Coal was rationed after the war so their apartment was cold most of the time. In February Dad's brother Heribert was coming to visit them. Sadly, as he was trying to cross a four-lane railroad track he was hit and killed by the oncoming train.

Why Come To America?

Some may ask, "What motivated your parents to move to America?" First of all, Dad did not want to work in an office for the rest of his life (he had a lifetime job with the city power plant). They checked into immigrating to America in 1949 by writing to the Immigration Service in Bremen and asked how to get to America, but they were told that any serviceman who was in the German service longer than ten years could not enter America now so Mom and Dad put that idea on the back burner. Mom had read an article in a German newspaper about life in Iowa. The reporter called it "The land of milk and honey." Each farm was 200 acres in a square. The article described how rich the Iowa soil was. Then in 1951 Uncle Henry, Dad's brother, sent a letter to Hedwig, Dad's sister, addressed to Dad inviting Mom and Dad to come and live with him on the farm in Iowa. Uncle Henry said he would like some help. Mom and Dad asked her father what he suggested. He said, "If I were your age, I'd go tomorrow."

In 1951 Dad and Mom got notice from the American government to fill out the papers to come to America. Dad had to write a special report on his activity and ordeal in prison. They sent a letter to Uncle Henry letting him know they had the papers and in return Uncle Henry would mail the ship tickets for the trip. The whole family had to appear for an exam at the American Embassy in Bremen (e.g., TB test). Uncle Henry also had to send an affidavit and let the American government know that he would be responsible for us and that he had a job for Dad. Uncle Henry also had to provide a financial statement. Prior to leaving for America, Konnie contracted Head Polio. He had contracted the disease by sharing a lollipop with a neighbor boy. Both boys were hospitalized and put on an iron lung. Konnie was given a 1% chance of survival. Fortunately, he survived and we were able to immigrate to America.

Mom and Dad ensured some safeguards in case they did not like it in America. One preparation our parents made before leaving Germany included putting money in the bank and if they did not return in twelve months, everything would belong to the people who moved into their house/apartment. Dad made an agreement with his employer to take a year off as an unpaid furlough. If Dad did not like it in America, he would get his job back. He made a contract with the new people living in our house to buy their belongings.

We left for America on the ship Neptunia from Bremerhaven on October 29, 1952. Mom realized we were leaving for a new world but she had not really considered the total impact of leaving her family and friends. She wasn't worried. Mom felt she had a good, kind man who would guard and stand by her and take care of his young family. Mom's father encouraged them to go.



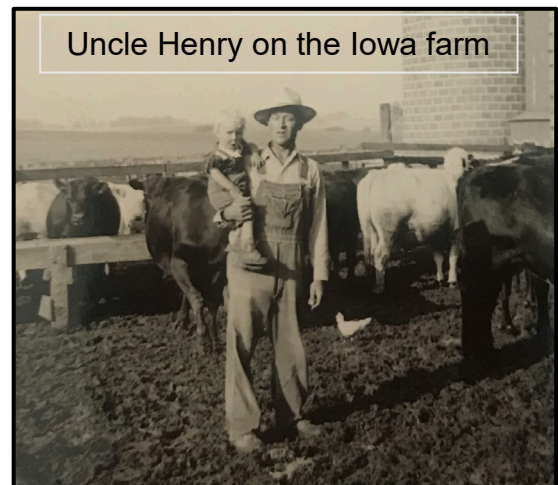
Aboard the ship to America



Adjusting to Rural Life

They came to the St. Lucas area where Uncle Henry had a farm. He had asked them to come. Dad's father had come in 1896 and bought the 200-acre farm near St. Lucas. There were many challenges facing them in establishing themselves in America. Our parents gave up everything to come to America: their belongings, Dad's job, their home, their friends. Their family was totally unaware of what they would face when they arrived.

When they arrived, the farm was nothing like they had pictured. Uncle Henry was a bachelor and lived a very simple life. When he picked us up at the Calmar train station, Mom and us kids had to sit on wooden boxes in the back of his Ford truck. Boxes with their belongings were not on their train when they arrived in Calmar. When they arrived at the farm, Mom asked to take a shower. Uncle Henry got a pail of water from the windmill outside because there was no running water in the house. Mom asked where the bathroom was. Uncle Henry pointed to the outhouse.



Uncle Henry on the Iowa farm

The upstairs bedrooms had no furniture. They were filled with bags of corn and oats. Water pipes inside would freeze and have to be thawed out because there was only a pot-belly stove to heat the house. Eventually a well was drilled so there would be running water and a septic tank was installed so the house would have a toilet.

As children when we spoke German on streets, we were told to "Spreche English." There was still an anti-Germanic attitude in America after WWII so we were encouraged to always speak English when in public. Our biggest challenge was that our parents did not speak any English. They had to learn to read, write, and speak English. With the help of Sister Reginalda, they learned to speak English.

We had to adjust to living in a small Catholic town in rural Iowa. It helped that the people of the St. Lucas community had many German ancestors. Those with German ancestry reached out to us and tried to support us and help us get settled. Our neighbors, Cletus and Viola Mihm had seven children. They became our best friends and everyday companions.

Mom had a real hard time adjusting to the farm life. She came from a university city of 200,000 people in Germany. Her family was affluent and she was accustomed to nice things. The first year was really hard on her being away from her family. Mom told me once that she had her ticket to go back to Germany that first year, but Dad begged her to not go, to stay with him and continue living in Iowa. Dad did not want to go back. He did not want relatives to know he could not make it. He did not want to crawl back. His honor was at stake. Because of Mom's love for Dad, she chose to stay. They were probably happiest after 1965; that was the year Uncle Henry sold the farm to Mom and Dad and he finally moved off the farm and went to live in Waucoma. They finally owned the family farm that his Dad and Uncle Joe had purchased many years ago.

Life in America Was Good

Dad was proud of being American. Our parents studied hard to pass the test for citizenship. They were very proud when they finally became citizens in 1959. Dad liked living in America where he could be his own boss. He wanted to own his own farm. He made it clear that he did not want to spend the rest of his life in an office job.

Our family life was good. We always knew we were loved. Our parents were strict with us and valued education. I



Konnie and Annie riding bikes with Dad, 1954

can remember Dad always saying to us, "Get your education. No one can ever take that away from you."

I would like others to know about our parent's background and their history. They were two incredible people who instilled values in us that motivated us to work hard to achieve the best in life.



Horse and buggy with Mom and kids

Christmas 1954
Annie, Mom, Konnie



Konnie and Annie on the car with Dad and Uncle Henry, 1954

Letter From Mr. Wolfgang Kania, Nersingen, Germany

Carl Most

This letter is from Mr. Wolfgang Kania, an 85-year-old gentleman currently residing in the city of Nersingen in Bavaria, southern Germany. Until his retirement, Mr. Kania was the associate editor of a major German newspaper in the state of Nordrhein-Westphalen. He lives with his wife Ilse, who has also written for our Newsletter about her experiences of the devastating food shortages as a young girl in the aftermath of World War II.

We must never forget that President Harry Truman (Democrat) called upon President Herbert Hoover (Republican) to lead humanitarian efforts to alleviate the immense hardship after the War. Herbert Hoover is remembered in Europe, but especially in Germany, for his sentence, "We will feed the children of our enemies!" These two men rose above political differences to prevent further catastrophes in war-torn Europe.

Letter (handwritten) from Wolfgang Kania, February 2021. Translated by Carl Most

The artillery bombardment had been going on for a week. I was ten years old and crouched most of the time in the air raid bunker with my mother and other residents. Suddenly everything went quiet. Then-it was in April 1945-US soldiers occupied Arnsberg, our city of 20,000 Inhabitants, located near the Ruhr Region, the industrial area of Germany. All that occurred quite calmly, rather routinely. Nevertheless, we were all afraid. We asked ourselves, "How will this whole thing end?" Would this April 1945 bring us freedom from Nazi rule or be an endless time of occupation?

In any case I was glad to finally get safely out of the air raid bunker and breathe real Spring air. And besides there were no shells and bombs flying through the air. But what about these G.I.s? At first, we stared at them from afar. Then we soon had our first contact with them. "Have you got any chocolate, any biscuits?" We quickly learned our first sentences in English. And the American soldiers distributed these, and sometimes even had chewing gum and real cigarettes. Then four months after the end of the War, I had my first day of school, and for me and my classmates our first school meal. During recess, our teachers and upper classmates distributed a hot, steaming, bowl of soup. It was also a big deal when we could get a few spoons full of cocoa into our hungry stomachs. In school classes our teachers informed us whom we should thank for all these foods. Yes, it was the people of United States, the Christian Congregations, the Quakers, and former President Herbert Hoover. It was they who made possible these nutritious school meals through generous donations to us, formerly enemies.

"What kind of good people are these?" went through my mind at that time. Some months earlier an American soldier taught me to say "Thank you very much" when he gave me a small pack of cookies. I shall never forget these events.

Wolfgang Kania
Nersingen, Germany
February 2021



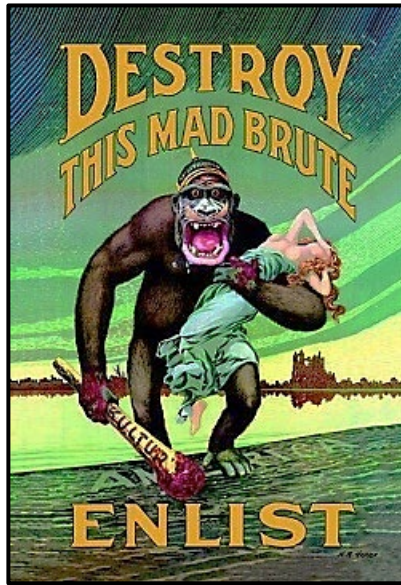
Markus Most, son of Carl and Rosemary Most,
with Ilse and Wolfgang Kania in Germany

^{Schulpeisung}
Nicht Tage dauerte schon der Partisanenbesuch. Ich
war 14, zehn Jahre alt, mit meiner Mutter und anderen
Hausbewohnern die meiste Zeit im Luftschuttbunker. Wir
nachten vor dem einschlagenden Granaten. - Auf einmal
herrschte Ruhe. Dann, es war im April 1945, waren die
US-Soldaten da, besetzten unsere Stadt Hornsberg,
20.000 Einwohner, am Rande des Ruhrgebietes gele-
gen. Das alles lief recht normal ab. Und den noch
waren wir in Gefahr; wie wird das noch enden? - Und
dann die Befreiung von dem Nazis, oder wird das eine
endlose Besatzung?
Ich war auf jeden Fall froh, endlich aus dem Luftschuttbunker
heiß herausgekommen zu sein. Endlich frei in der frühlings
Luft atmen zu können. Und es flogen auch keine Granaten
und Bomben durch die Luft.
Erst langsam wir die Gr. 1.2. von fern. Doch schnell kamen
sie die ersten Kontakte mit ihnen an. - „Have you a cigarette?“
„Hast du eine Zigarette?“ Schnell hatten wir die ersten englischen
Sätze gelernt. Und die Soldaten gaben reichlich. Als Beza-
ge, „Cheering“ genau oder sogar „cigarettes“.
Vier Monate später kam für mich der erste Schultag wieder.
Für mich und meine Freunde auch erstmalig die Schulpei-
sung: Während der „großen Pause“ verteilten Lehrer und
ältere Schüler aus großen Kesseln dampfende Suppe. Das schön-
sten war es, wenn wir Kaffee in die humpelnden Mägen kaffee
tranken. - Der Rührer Lösung, wenn diese Fülle an Lebensmit-
teln zu verdauen war lieferten die Lehrer im Unterricht. Ja
es waren die amerikanischen Bürger, die christlichen Diäzi-
onsgemeinschaften, die Quäker und Präsident Hoover, die
uns, den Feinden von einst durch reichliche Geldspenden diese
Schulpeisungen ermöglichen.
„War sind das eigentlich für Menschen im fernan Amerika?“
ging es mir damals durch den Kopf. Aber auch ein herrlicher
„Thank you very much“, das mir Monate vorher ein US-Soldat
vor seinem Jeep mit einem Kettel in der Hand beigebracht
hat. Ich werde das Bild nicht vergessen.
Wolfgang Kania, Nersingen Februar 2021

Misinformation And Propaganda During World War I

Clyde Cremer

“The first casualty in war is the truth.”



The Germans Started The War

On June 28, 1914, a Serbian Nationalist assassinated Austro-Hungarian Archduke Ferdinand and his pregnant wife. Within six weeks, Europe and numerous other counties were embroiled in war. Since that time, over 7,000 books have been written about the causes of the “Great War.” All of us have heard about the chose sides based on numerous come up with a simple reason dialogue! However, this is the other countries in the world have Go to war, have hundreds of end up with one winner and one any winners in war? There is a breach of German howitzers: Kings.” This is certainly a true after hostilities commenced, the Transatlantic cables used by the that was disseminated across the beyond was one sided with the giving their spin on the war.

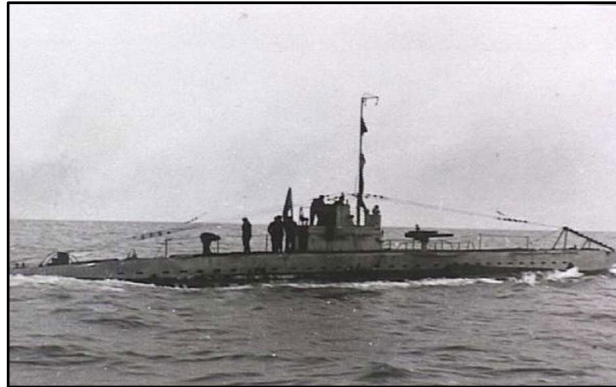


various countries that treaties. This writer has for the war: a lack of way that Europe and always settled disputes: thousands killed, and loser. Are there ever Latin inscription on the “The Last Argument of statement! Merely days British cut the Germans, thus the news United States and British and its allies

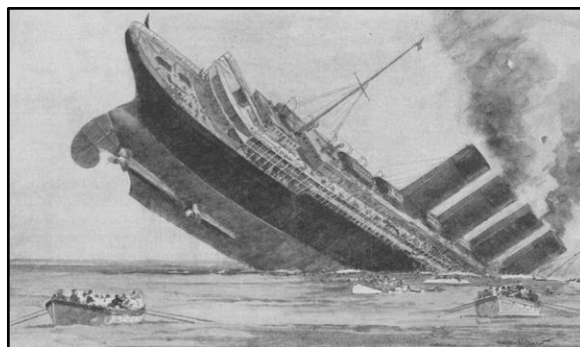
The Germans Sank Our Ships Without Cause

With the commencement of hostilities, trade between the United States and Europe greatly decreased. This became an immediate problem for the Wilson administration as a recession was underway in the United States and this was soon felt by farmers and manufacturers alike. President Wilson was from Virginia and, as the warehouses in that state filled with cotton, the political pressure mounted. Shipping companies began shipping to countries throughout Europe with ships that were available in ports in the United States. The British had, by this time, established a blockade and seized all merchant shipping that it intercepted. These ships were taken into ports in England and their cargo seized. They paid the shipping companies for the goods seized and sent the ships back to their home ports. They not only seized ships going to Germany and the Central Powers, but also ships involved in trade with Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and other neutral countries. The British felt that these trade goods could end up in Germany and aid its war effort. This was contrary to International Law as outlined in the Declaration of London, which was never signed by the British. This blockade of the North Atlantic grew even tighter after the Battle of Jutland in mid-1916.

Even as Americans tried to work this out with the British, American manufacturers began selling arms, munitions, cotton, wheat, meat, and medicine to the Allies. The Germans countered this by initiating submarine warfare with a new kind of blockade. They would surface near a merchant ship, tell the crew that they had 15 minutes to launch the lifeboats, and then sink the ship with a torpedo. The British then countered this by hiding howitzers on the ships. When a German submarine surfaced, the German submarine was destroyed with several well-placed shots from the British ship. When word got back to Berlin on this British tactic, the German submarines began sinking ships without warning. This included all ships headed to England and France, including American merchant shipping.

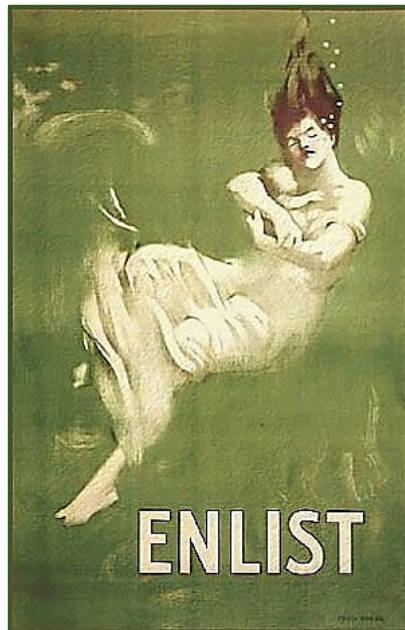


Submarine on Patrol in WWI



We Declared War Against The Axis When They Sank The Lusitania In 1915

Enter the *Lusitania*, which became a propaganda battle cry for the Allies. The German government put an advertisement in the New York Times that all ships heading for ports in England and France were subject to sinking as they could be carrying cargo beneficial to the Allies. When the *Lusitania* left New York, it was noted by pro-German dock workers that it was being loaded with war materials besides the 1500-plus passengers. This included some 650,000 rounds of small arms ammo as well as shells and fuses for artillery. As the ship came near the coast of Ireland, it was sunk with a great loss of life, including over 120 Americans. The British had broken the German naval codes and intercepted the messages going to Berlin regarding the location of all German submarines. The British knew that a submarine was lurking in the area of the *Lusitania*'s route, but they failed to inform the Captain of the ship! Was this a cruel ruse to bring the Americans into the war? However, not all was lost as the sinking of the *Lusitania* became a cause célèbre for the propagandist who cranked out a proliferation of posters showing a mother drowning in the North Atlantic, clutching her dead baby in her arms! This was a public relations disaster for the Germans, but it did not bring us into the war!



We Were Neutral Until We Were Pushed Into The War By German Depredations Against the US

The sinking of ships going into the war zone continued and this turned American public opinion against the “Beast of Berlin” – Kaiser Wilhelm. The Wilson administration felt that this was against International Law as America was a neutral nation. This was backed up by Wilson’s Secretary of State. However, the *New World Dictionary* gives the definition of neutral as not “taking part in either side of a dispute or quarrel.” If we had not conducted trade with the Allies, we could have been truly neutral and stayed out of the war completely. To highlight this increased trade with the Allies, wheat sold for 86-cents per bushel in 1914 and increased to \$2.20 per bushel in 1918. Was one-sided trade with the Allies worth the short-term monetary effects when all the pain and suffering of the war was tabulated and the dust settled in late 1918?

The Zimmerman Telegraph

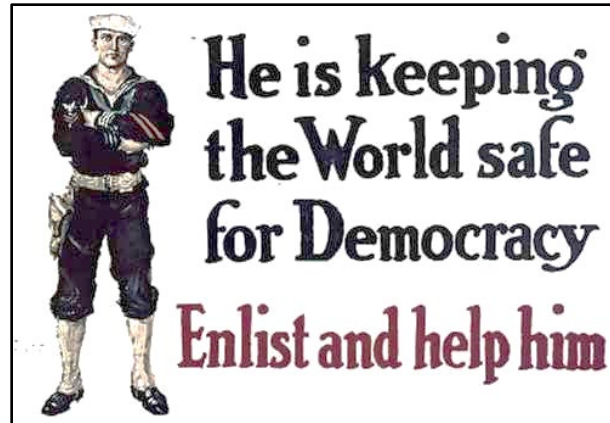


In the April 1917, the British intercepted a telegram from the German Foreign Minister to the German Ambassador to Mexico. It stated that the Mexican government should declare war on the United States and thus Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas would once again become part of Mexico. The intercepted telegram was sent to President Wilson, who was less than amused. This pushed the United States over the edge and war was declared against the Central Powers shortly thereafter. Mexico could not even catch Poncho Villa or suppress the various revolts that took place in Mexico, much less invade the United States!

America Was Going To Save The World For Democracy

This call to arms is hollow in its substance. In the United States, the Native Americans lived in poverty on some of the poorest land where they were “resettled” in the 19th century. Women in the United States did not have the right to vote when this proclamation was made nor could the African Americans. In the Old South, African Americans were lynched as a way of “keeping them in their place.” Jews were attacked for many reasons, including for being communists, after the war ended. In 1882, the United States Congress passes the Chinese Exclusion Act, which told the Chinese to stay in China! It was September 1, 1885, when the Knights of Labor held a meeting in Rock Springs, Wyoming, and decided that the Chinese residents of their town must go. At the end of the day, not one Chinese person was alive in Rock Springs and not one person was charged with this massacre!

The Allies were no better than the Central Powers in their various colonies, such as in the Congo, East Africa, Morocco, Algeria, and French Indochina. This is not to give the Germans and their allies a pass on their various depredations, but solely stating a historical fact. The Germans did not treat the subjects in their colonies in a benevolent manner and they committed many assaults during their march across neutral Belgium. Were the Allies really saving the world for Democracy from the barbarous Germans?



Taking Away The First Amendment And Free Speech Would Shore Up The War Effort

In 1917, President Wilson passed the Espionage Act, which forbade speech and writing against the war, his policies, or anything that would give aid and comfort to the enemy. Any loose lips in a bar or gathering could lead to heavy fines and time in prison. A Committee of Defense was formed in various parts of the country to make sure that loose talk was met with the strong arm of the law. To add to this Orwellian mind set, the German language was forbidden in schools, churches, and public places. Americans had had to tear up parts of the Constitution to make the world safe for Democracy! Near Calmar, Iowa, a local farmer was heavily fined because he failed to hand out Red Cross donation card to his workers. This writer's grandfather, Mike Hauer (a naturalized German immigrant), was hanged in effigy in front of the Festina church due to being German. Luckily, he heard of the plot and before church services were over and he removed his name from the effigy and replaced it with the name of the perpetrator!

The United States Shortened The War

The answer to this is both a yes and a no. When we entered the war and sent over two million fresh soldiers to the Western Front, we bailed out the Allies who were "on the ropes." We might also add that we helped spread the Spanish Flu to Europe, though the "Spanish" Flu originated at Camp Funston in Kansas! By sending untold shiploads of weapons, ammunition, and food to the Allies, as well as giving them large loans, Americans lengthened the war. Without aid, it is doubtful if the Allies would have made it through 1916! Lord Rhonda, the British food controller, stated in January 1917: "Unless America can increase in January the quantity of supplies sent in December, I am unwilling to guarantee that the Allied Nations can hold out."

America Sent A Well-Trained Fighting Force To France

The first units to go to Europe were regular Army soldiers who had been in the military for several years. They could "shoot and salute," but knew nothing about modern warfare, which was raising its ugly head in Europe. We did not have machine guns, tanks, flame throwers, modern artillery, modern aircraft, or a fleet of ships to take the men to England and France! When the draftees came to war torn Europe, they trained for some weeks with the French and British in France, but later in the war many of them never even fired a rifle before going into combat.

General Pershing was in command of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF – or After England Failed, as the doughboys referred to it), but his experience was on the Western Plains and fighting the Moro tribesmen in the Philippines. The false story was fielded that the American soldier needed little training because they were from the American tradition of outdoor woodsmen such as Davy Crockett and Daniel Boone. This was far from fact as one only needs to look at a ship's manifest of soldiers going to the Western Front to determine that many soldiers of the AEF were immigrants from foreign lands. In fact, before boarding a ship to go to Europe, soldiers who had not been naturalized were given the chance to become citizens. If they declined, they went on the ship anyway. General Pershing bemoaned the fact of the poor training they had received prior to going to France. The epicenter of this writer's book on World War I, Julius Holthaus, contains a letter he sent home on his trip to the port on the east coast: "Here I go

off to war and have never fired a shot." Prior to the Battle of the Meuse-Argonne, one sergeant was charging some of the replacements five Francs to show them how to load their standard issue rifle.



We Produced A Proliferation Of Modern Weapons

We did produce many weapons, including a British-designed rifle (1917 Enfield), the Browning automatic rifle, the Browning belt-fed machine gun, the Liberty biplane, a million MK-1 hand grenades, gas masks, trucks, locomotives, and more. The automatic weapons did not reach the Front in any quantity during the war. The gas masks were inferior in quality and discarded and the grenades were recalled due to their sophistication and the lack of proper training in their use by our soldiers. We fought most of the war with British-designed gas masks, helmets, rifles, grenades, machine guns, and tanks. When in a French section, we also borrowed weapons, including their howitzers and ammunition. Our preparedness was so dismal that Will Rogers quipped in 1918: "If the war lasts much longer, we will have to buy another machine gun!"



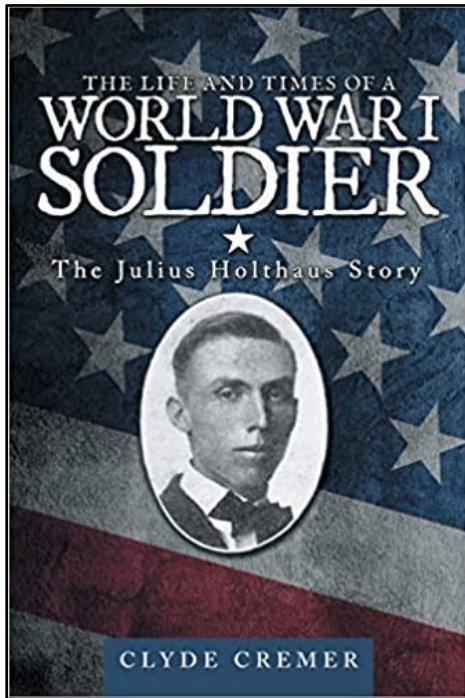
American training with French Chauchat Automatic Rifle



Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery

The Landings In Normandy, And The Battle Of The Bulge, Happened In World War One

When I talk to people about my published book on World War I, *The Life and Times of a World War I Soldier: The Julius Holthaus Story*, they inevitably ask me if he, Julius, had fought in one of the above-named battles. Then I sigh and say (often ad nauseum) that *no*, he fought and died in World War I. At least we know that World War II is at least being taught to a minimal degree in our schools. When I see documentaries and scholars discussing World War I, they inevitably repeat falsehoods about the war. Yes, World War I is another one of America's forgotten wars. The men went through hell fighting a war based on false pretenses and then, within a few decades, their exploits were relegated to the dustbin of history.



**“Only the dead have seen the end of war.” –
Anonymous**

Recommended Readings On The First World War

Bradley, James. *The Imperial Cruise*. Little, Brown and Company. New York. 2009

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Preston, Diana. *Lusitania. An Epic Tragedy*. The Berkley Publishing Co. New York. 2002.

**Stone Structures Of Winneshiek County-
The Gerleman House
Shay Gooder**



In the fall of 2019, Bear Creek Archeology, Inc. (BCA) of Cresco, Iowa, was contracted by the Winneshiek County Historic Preservation Commission (WCHPC) of Decorah, Iowa, to conduct a reconnaissance survey of known stone structures within Winneshiek County. The WCHPC is a county organization established in 1985 to promote the “educational, cultural, economic, and general welfare of the public through the recognition, enhancement, and perpetuation of sites and districts of historical and cultural significance.”

Recently, the WCHPC had become concerned with the lack of information on stone structures throughout the county. These iconic structures dotting the rural landscape played a significant role in the intellectual, social, and spiritual development of community. Unfortunately, many of these structures have fallen into disrepair, with several sites either having been razed or allowed to significantly deteriorate in the last decade. While not all can be saved from destruction, the aspiration of this project is to alert the public as to the existence of these historic structures and the role they played in the growth of Winneshiek County.

To accomplish this goal, it was determined that the survey would incorporate three primary objectives:

1. Conduct a reconnaissance survey of known sites containing stone structures throughout the county, identifying those which are still extant and evaluating their current condition.
2. Publication of a self-guiding tour booklet containing those stone structures considered to be the most “exceptional” in terms of condition and design.
3. Completion of 10 Iowa Site Inventory Forms for those properties possessing the highest levels of integrity to meet eligibility standards for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), as determined through the course of reconnaissance survey and coordination with the WCHPC.

With the assistance of the Winneshiek County Historical Society, a list was developed of potential stone structure sites located throughout the county. Field investigations commenced in June of 2020, with each site visited and recorded at the reconnaissance level. Fieldwork comprised primarily of recording each location using a handheld Global Positioning System (GPS), digital photography of each structure, conducting landowner interviews, and completing site descriptions which highlighted structural conditions, architectural elements, and features of interest. Investigations were completed in December of the same year a total of 112 extant stone structures identified and documented.

Comprehensive presentation layouts were generated for each structure detailing background data and archival research, as well as including plat map depictions, historical aerial images, and modern photographs. A report containing these presentation layouts and the reconnaissance survey results was prepared for the WCHPC entitled, “Winneshiek County Stone Structures” (Gooder 2021a). Additionally, in an effort to stimulate local interest and appreciation, 44 of the 112 total recorded stone structures were selected for inclusion in a booklet entitled, “A Self-Guiding Tour of Stone Structures of Winneshiek County” (Gooder 2021b).

The remaining objective of this survey was the completion of Iowa Site Inventory Forms for 10 properties considered to possess the highest historic significance and integrity that had not previously been documented at this level. These forms serve as an important tool for gathering data regarding historic features and aspects of a property and are used by the State Historic Preservation Office of Iowa to evaluate a property’s eligibility potential for listing in the NRHP. As such, the Gerleman House in Military Township was deemed to meet these qualifications and was recorded as Iowa Site Inventory Form number 96-00796 (Becker and Gooder 2021).

Located along 155th Street just southeast of Calmar, Iowa, the Gerleman House is a two-story, single-family residence in the Italianate style featuring a hipped roof with wide eaves and wood-panel cornices beneath that display evenly spaced scroll patterned brackets. The nearly square house (36 x 44 ft [11 x 13.4 m]) is constructed of rough-cut limestone laid in regular course and overlaid with a thick application of pebble dash stucco.

The north and south facades each contain a five-over-five pattern with centered first floor entrances containing segmental arch doorways. The west and east facades display windows in a two-over-two pattern, with a single offset entryway to the first floor near the northwest corner of the building, and an external basement entrance at the center of the east façade.



In total, the impressive residence contains a total of 26 four-pane, segmental arch windows, all featuring stone sills and brick lintels. These lintels have three courses with the pattern following an alternating stretcher and header course below two stretcher courses that project from the face of the structure. Brick-arched lintels can also be found at the north and west entrances, with the south entrance covered by a one-story open porch comprised of a hipped roof and four-square wooden posts set at the corners of a concrete pad.

The interior first floor of the Gerleman House contains a total of eight rooms that include two entryways, two bedrooms (one of which is the

master bedroom), a kitchen, a parlor, and a large living room measuring 17 x 20.8 ft (5.2 x 6.3 m). The centered doorway along the north façade opens up to the living room, which contains a floor covered in blue geometric and leaf-patterned vinyl tiles, and walls featuring blue patterned wallpaper and white-paneled wainscoting.

The remaining rooms consist of wood-plank floors (aside from the bathroom) and various wallpaper coverings that include yellows, blues, pinks, and floral patterns. The white panel wainscoting stays largely consistent except in the master bedroom where it covers approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the walls. Much of the first floor has remained largely intact except for the parlor, which was traditionally a single room that now contains a closet and the bathroom, in addition to the main parlor. The original main entryway of the home is found along the south wall and is where the main staircase to the second floor is found with wooden stairs and a wood turned-spindle handrail. The doorway to the basement is also located beneath the main staircase.

The second floor consists entirely of wood-plank floors and plaster walls, featuring a total of seven rooms that include three bedrooms, a recreational (“dancing”) room, a corn-drying room, and a smoke room. The walls of the bedrooms and second floor hallway are covered in wallpaper that is a combination of striped and pink patterned designs.

The irregularly shaped recreational room holds the attic access, which consists of a secondary staircase at the northwest corner that actually leads from the first floor and is concealed by wood-slat walls. The recreational room also provides the only access to both the corn-drying and smoke rooms. Evenly spaced wooden boards with nails inserted can be found along the ceiling in the corn-drying room, likely used for drying produce, and the bare wooden walls of the smoke room are lined with black soot, reflective of the rooms intended purpose.



Cut stone cistern in basement

Accessed internally below the main staircase and externally from an entryway at the center of east façade, the basement of the Gerleman House features a dirt floor and stone walls covered in deteriorating lime plaster. The basement is divided into two rooms by a single stone wall running west-to-east that contains two doorway openings with wood frames and wood beam lintels. Along the west wall of the northern basement room, a large cistern measuring 7.8 x 9.5 ft (2.4 x 2.9 m) can be found. Constructed of rough-cut limestone laid in regular courses and covered in plaster, this cistern was historically used to collect rainwater from the roof (Roger Gerleman, personal

communication 2020).

The first cartographic depiction of the Gerleman farmstead is with the 1886 (Warner and Foote) plat map of Military Township that depicts the property under ownership of a Frederick Gerleman. Historical documentation further indicates that the house has remained within the Gerleman family since 1872.

According to an autobiography of Sister Edmunda, Frederick emigrated to New Vienna, Iowa, at the age of 11, later marrying Catherine Schrandt in 1860 and moving to a rented farm near

Festina. While the deed indicates that Frederick purchased the Gerleman property from William and Elisabeth Cremer in 1868 (Winneshiek County Recorder's Office n.d. a), Sister Edmunda recalls her father acquiring the property in 1867, with the family later planning to build a new house in 1872 to replace the "cozy little home" the property originally contained Calmar, Festina, Ossian, Spillville (CFOS) Parishes 2021. Indications are that stone used to build the house was procured from a nearby family quarry contained within a grove of trees toward 155th Street (Roger Gerleman, personal communication 2020).

Historic mention of this quarry includes several newspaper articles referring to the "Gerleman quarry near Calmar" (Decorah Republican 1898) and a Winneshiek County bridge report containing a line item for "Gerleman, stone and labor" for \$35.50 in Military Township (Calmar Courier 1903). The property was later sold to Frederick's son Anton F. Gerleman in 1890 (Winneshiek County Recorder's Office n.d. b), with Frederick Gerleman later passing in late February of 1903 (Decorah Public Opinion 1903). This transition of ownership to Anton is further reflected in plat maps from 1905 (Anderson and Goodwin Company) and 1915 (Anderson Publishing Company).

Over the ensuing decades, the property would exchange hands through several generations of Gerleman family farmers. Historic aerial images dating to 1940 show the Gerleman House located on a robust farmstead surrounded by numerous outbuildings, agricultural fields, and several small groves of trees. This setting would remain fairly consistent up through the turn of the 21st century, after which the groves were removed and many of the outbuildings razed. Aside from the residence, all that remain on the 44-acre parcel are a detached garage and a machine shed, both of which are frame buildings established in the last half of the 20th century.



1964 aerial photo of Gerleman farmstead

The large stone house serves as an enduring relic of the original Gerleman farmstead, and an inspiring pioneer monument against the backdrop of the rural agricultural setting.

So how does this all fit together in evaluating NRHP eligibility potential for the Gerleman

House? This first warrants consideration of a property's context in regard to the seven aspects of integrity, location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Secondly, an understanding of the criteria used to evaluate the eligibility of historic properties for their significance on national, state, and/or local levels is also crucial (NPS 1997).

Separated into four distinct criteria (A, B, C, and D) to be considered eligible, a property must be representative of at least one of the following:

- **Criterion A:** Connection to a significant event or events within a defined context
- **Criterion B:** Connection to a notable person or persons in documented history, with importance placed on a period of significance during the life of the individual(s)
- **Criterion C:** Representative of a distinctive architectural design or construction method
- **Criterion D:** Exhibits the ability to provide information that contributes to our understanding of history or prehistory

The Gerleman House represents one of the few surviving examples of early settler stone construction in Winneshiek County. The house is built of limestone blocks procured from local outcrops, likely a nearby family quarry, and has not been moved since its construction ca. 1872 when it replaced the original home on the property. As such, a high degree of integrity is assigned regarding the structure's location, materials, and association. Many of the original structural features remain intact and are indicative of early construction techniques with local materials, with only a few alterations applied to the interior and exterior of the residence.

While some of the design elements have deteriorated or been removed over time, the house remains in relatively good conditions and appears much as it would have when first built. Despite still being surrounded by agricultural fields, the physical environment around the home has been modified with the removal of the tree groves and many of the outbuildings associated with the once expansive farmstead. Therefore, the Gerleman House is interpreted as possessing moderate levels of integrity in design, setting, workmanship, and feeling. Finally, Frederick and Catherine Gerleman represent two of the early Euro-American pioneer settlers of Military Township and Winneshiek County, with the stone residence they commissioned remaining in the family since its construction for over 150 years.

With these considerations in mind, the determination of this investigation is that the Gerleman House be recommended eligible for the National Register under Criterion A. Historic stone structures are being lost physically and in the collective memory of the community through the



course of time, neglect, and sometimes intentional destruction. Once these structures are lost, they can no longer be replaced, which is why now is the critical time to record those that still remain and preserve their stories. The purpose of this survey was to conduct preliminary documentation of extant stone structures within Winneshiek County, with the greater ambition of creating awareness to their significance and generate public enthusiasm for their protection. The importance of informing individuals to their local heritage cannot be overstated, and historic preservation can serve as an essential ingredient in community development. The Gerleman House serves not only as an exceptional example of stone architecture, but an enduring reminder of a time that once; one that future generations can learn from and appreciate for years to come.

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The Lobkowicz Palace And Collections

By Eileen Tlusty

In 2019 I was honored to be invited by Prince William Lobkowicz to the Lobkowicz Palace for a luncheon, a tour of the historic Palace in Prague, the Czech Republic. This special day concluded with a concert in the beautifully decorated Concert Hall, with impressive 17th century ceilings. I thoroughly enjoyed taking part in this immersion into Czech culture and history. The Lobkowicz Palace is one of the most significant cultural sites in the Czech Republic and the only privately owned building in the Prague Castle Complex, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Lobkowicz Family



Prince William Lobkowicz (born 7 September 1961) is a nobleman from the House of Lobkowicz of American origin with Bohemian (Czech) roots. Prince William grew up in Boston, Massachusetts, but moved to then Czechoslovakia in 1990 to claim his family's vast ancestral belongings. Prince William's professional passion is the restoration, preservation and display of this vast historical and cultural treasury.

Gillian Somerville, the wife of Maximilian Lobkowicz, later moved with their three sons, Martin, Dominik, and Oliver from London to Boston. William is the fourth child and third son of Martin Lobkowicz by his Kentucky-born wife, Margaret Juett. William prefers to use the title Prince only when professionally useful.

William Lobkowicz first visited Czechoslovakia in 1976 when he was 14 years old. William attended Milton Academy for high school and then went to Harvard University as an undergraduate where he majored in European history. William married Alexandra Florescu. They have three children. Prince William Rudolf (b.1994), Princess Ileana (b.1997), and Princess Sophia (b. 2001).

Historical Origins



Lobkowicz Palace was built in the second half of the 16th century by the Czech nobleman Jaroslav Pernstejn (1528-1569). The Palace is complimented by another family holding, the Nelahozeves Castle on the Vltava River some 15 kilometers north of Prague.

Jaroslav's sister-in-law, Maria Maximiliana Manrique de Lara y Mendoza, wife of his brother Vratislav, Chancellor of the Czech Kingdom (1530-1582), brought the celebrated Infant Jesus of Prague statue from her homeland of Spain to the Palace, where it became well-known for its miraculous healing powers.

The statue was later given by Vratislav and Maria Maximiliana's daughter, Polyxena (1566-1642), to the Church of Our Lady Victorious in Prague, where it remains on display and attracts thousands of visitors each year. A copy of the Infant Jesus of Prague is on permanent display in the Lobkowicz Palace Museum.

The Palace came into the Lobkowitz family through the marriage of Polyxena to Zdenek Vojtech, 1st Prince Lobkowitz (1568-1628). In the turbulent times following their marriage, the Palace witnessed some of Bohemia's most significant historical events. In 1618, the famous Defenestration of Prague took place when Protestant rebels threw the Catholic Imperial Ministers from the windows of the Royal Palace at Prague Castle. Surviving the fall, they took refuge in Lobkowitz Palace, where they were protected from further assault by Polyxena, the first Princess Lobkowitz.

Following the defeat of the Protestant faction at the Battle of White Mountain in 1620, the Catholic Lobkowitz family consolidated its influence and power base for the next three centuries. Lobkowitz Palace took on a more formal, imperial role and functioned as the Prague residence when the family needed to be present at the seat of Bohemian power for political and ceremonial purposes.

In 1939, the invading Nazi forces confiscated the Palace along with all other Lobkowitz family properties. The Palace was returned in 1945, only to be seized again after the Communist takeover in 1948. For the next forty years, the Palace was used for a variety of purposes, including State offices and as a museum of Czech history.

The Lobkowitz Collections

After the Velvet Revolution of 1989 and the subsequent fall of the Communist government, President Vaclav Havel enacted a series of laws that allowed for the restitution of confiscated properties. Following a twelve-year restitution process, the Lobkowitz family once again became the rightful owner of its Palace in 2002.



The Lobkowicz Collections draw significance from their comprehensive nature, which reflects the cultural, social, political, and economic life of Central Europe for centuries. Highlights include world-famous paintings by Bruegel, Canaletto, Cranach, Rubens, and Velázquez, Medieval and Renaissance works of art, exceptional arms and armor, and ceramics, such as the largest surviving 17th-century Delft dinner service in the world.

The Collections also include the oldest, largest, and finest private library in Central Europe, housing such rare relics as a 9th-century Gospel Book and a 15th-century edition of The Apocalypse illustrated with exquisite Albrecht Dürer woodcuts.

An unparalleled collection of musical instruments, manuscripts, and printed editions of scores, parts, and libretti dating from the 17th–19th centuries, is crowned by hand annotated works by many of the world’s greatest composers and musicians, including Mozart and Beethoven.

The history of the Library dates to the 14th century. Its approximately 65,000 volumes represent the oldest, largest, and finest private library in the Czech Republic. Since the 17th century, the Library was stored at Roudnice Castle in northern Bohemia, where it remained until 1942.

Today, it is housed at Nelahozeves Castle. Among its many treasures is a rare 9th-century gospel book and 15th-century Albrecht Dürer woodcuts.

Dinner setting in the dining room of the palace



Culture for the People

On April 2, 2007, after more than four years of planning, restoration and refurbishment, the Palace was opened to the public for the first time as the Lobkowicz Palace Museum, home to one part of The Lobkowicz Collections.

This new reincarnation of the Palace not only revitalizes an important cultural site in the heart of Europe, but also dramatically expands the Lobkowicz family’s efforts to make the Collections accessible to Czech and international audiences alike.

Festina Church Members 1857

Joe Tillman

(Alphabetical Order)

Andres, Joseph Sr.	Martinek, Thomas
Bauhaus, Bernard Sr.	McManus, Hugh
Bechel, Sebastian	McManus, John
Boyle, Bernard Sr.	McManus, Phillip
Brockamp, Herman	Meirick, Bernard
Broemmeling, George	Meyer, Andrew
Bruckner, Mathias	Moellers, Heinrich
Centlivre, Charles	Pieper, Henry
Collins, John Sr.	Puttmann Bernard
Cremer, William Sr.	Rademaker, Bernard
Collins, John Sr.	Schissel, Peter Sr.
Doerr, William Sr.	Scheidemantel, Heinrich
Drees, Friederich	Schneberger, George
Drees, Michael	Schneberger, Michael
Dreyel, George	Scholbrock, Henry Sr.
Eimers, Frederick	Schones, Frederick
Eimers, William	Schones, Henry
Eppel, Andrew	Schreier, Herman
Etteldorf, Phillip Sr.	Schulze, Theodore Sr.
Ferkinghoff, Theodore	Schupanitz, John
Freiech, Herman Sr.	Spillman, Phillip
Funke, Clemens	Stribley, Adolph
Gaertner, Johann	Sudtelgte, Bernard
Gerlemann, William Sr.	Timp, Theodore Sr.
Gehling, Heinrich Sr.	Unger, Friederich
Giesing, Joseph	Uhlenhake, Ferdinand
Hess, Charles	Werner, Christopher
Holthaus, Herman	Wimber, Franz
Holthaus, Theodor	Zweibahmer, Herman Sr.
Holthaus, William	

Huinker, Heinrich

Kabeisemann, William Sr.

Kopet, Wenzil

Krauss, George

Krysan, Frank

Leard, John

Lensing, Johann

Lensing, Lewis

Lensing, Wenzil

Lone, John

Marr, Henry

(Names not located)

Balzer, Jonn

Daldrup, E.

Gallagher, Bernard

McGuery

Moore

Murphy

Schmid, John

Slone

Festina Settlers Via Wisconsin

1857 Festina Church Members With Racine Or Kenosha County Ties.

(Ties = place of marriage, residence, and/or birth)

NOTE: The presentation I did for the St. Lucas Historical Society listed 11 people from Wisconsin.

Broemmeling, George

Cremer, William Sr.

Eimers, Frederick

Etteldorf, Phillip

Freiech, Herman Sr.

Gehling, Henry Sr.

Giesing, Joseph Hess

Charles Holthaus

Herman Holthaus

Theodor Holthaus

William Lensing

Johann Lensing

Lewis Lensing Wenzil

Meirick, Bernard

Pieper, Henry

Puttmann, Bernard
Scheidemantel, Heinrich
Scholbrock, Heinrich
Schones, Frederick
Schones, Henry Timp
Theodore Sr.
Uhlenhake, Ferdinand

This list doesn't include other Festina settlers who arrived from Wisconsin after 1857. I know that Henry Kipp and Friederich Tillman also lived in Wisconsin before arriving at Festina.



Our Lady of Seven Sorrows Church and Cemetery, June 2021



Headstone for Phillip Etteldorf

Headstone for Wilhelm Cremer



Many additional tombstones of these early settlers are in the older section of the Festina Cemetery.

What Happened During The Pandemic?

Clair Blong

Events

- Museum Open House that drew over 160 persons in two days and raised \$3,400 for much needed funds for operating expenses, December 2020.
- Christmas Reflections curbside carry-out dinner that sold nearly 300 meals that raised \$5,400 with matching funds from NCSF of \$1, 500, and all expenses for food stuffs, cookies, candies, and supplies (over \$1,600) were donated by supporters, December 2020.
- Andrew Pavlovec funeral dinner for 125 family members in the Museum in April 2021.
- Trinity School 5th & 6th graders toured the Museum, April 2021.

Outreach

- Publication of the new Historical Perspectives in December 2020.
- Installation of the Internet in Museum in April 2021.
- Preparing the Spring issue of Historical Perspectives for May 2021.
- Updating the Society/Museum website.

Museum Building

- Installation of 48 exterior storm windows on the all the newly restored large double hung windows.
- Clean out, clean up, scrub up and total revamp of the huge attic space into several attractive museum theme areas. 2,100 volunteer hours of labor.
- Rebuild 10 windows frames on Annex portion of building.
- Installation of 15 completely restored attic double hung windows, December 2020.
- Installed 10 storm windows on the large Annex windows in April 2021.
- Applied for National Park Service grant funds for removal of all roof materials and replace with red cedar shingles, the original roofing material.

Museum

- Donation of 8 high quality display cases by museum supporters.
- Donation of several significant historic museum pieces from family estates.
- Supporters donated and 12 glass display cases ordered for delivery in July 2021.

Hauer Blacksmith Shop

- Amish master carpenter built 17 window sections for the weld shop, summer 2020.
- Installed these new windows in the weld shop in March 2021.
- Establishing Internship to get the blacksmith shop functional, May 2021.

Volunteers/Support

- Donation of 3,300 volunteer hours to move the mission of the Society and Museum forward.
- Donations from 3 family estates to the growth and development of the museum.
- Sizeable donations from key supporters to advance the museum's growth and development.
- Growing and strengthening of the volunteer team's spirit de corps.



- * Joyce Moss and Father Radloff viewing the meditation area
- * Open House - Children's Delight
- * Super Women in the Attic
- * Scrubbing the Attic



Diversity In Faith: An Introduction To The Reformation And Protestantism

Part I

(All photographs taken on-site in Germany by author.)

Russell P. Baldner
Spillville, IA
March 2021

Preface: Worms, Germany

In the city center of Worms, Germany, where in 1521 Martin Luther once confessed his faith before Emperor and Reichstag, stands an impressive monument honoring major historical figures associated with the Protestant Reformation. The bronze statue of Luther, standing tallest at center with Bible in hand, dominates the memorial, but the likeness of the sixteenth-century Saxon monk, Professor, Dr. of Theology and Reformer hardly stands alone. Surrounding Luther on all sides are statues and relief sculptures of other early reformers of the church, princes, scholars and contributors to the Reformation. Among these are Prince Elector Frederick III of Saxony and theologians and churchmen Girolamo Savanarola of Italy, the Englishman John Wycliffe, Jan Hus of Bohemia, Huldrych Zwingli, a Swiss contemporary of Luther, and John Calvin originally of France and later Switzerland. Several of the individuals preceded Luther, some by many years, even centuries.



Reformation Monument—*Lutherdenkmal*
Worms, Germany
1969

Dedicated in 1868 and although popularly called the *Lutherdenkmal*—the Luther Monument—the Worms memorial recognizes not only Martin Luther and his teachings but also those who held similar as well as contrasting theological views. The historical figures and diversity represented in the Luther Monument thus serve as a convenient visual metaphor and introduction not only to the following historical account appearing here as Part I and as Parts II and III in the next issue of *Historical Perspectives*, but also to a series of articles which is to appear in future issues of the journal, each focusing on separate denominational limbs of the Reformation and Protestantism.

While Martin Luther and the church bearing his name are perhaps first and most closely identified with the sixteenth-century Reformation and the permanent cleft within Western Christendom, a combination of religious, political and social circumstances resulted in

a Protestantism that was and remains far more complex and diverse. Major theological differences contributed to distinct and completely independent denominational branches of faith. While the eventual

major theological differences contributed to distinct and completely independent denominational branches of faith. While the eventual proliferation of separate Protestant religious traditions and the names by which they are known can be a source of confusion, the following introduction to the Reformation and primary branches of Protestantism, their historical context, respective theological character and relationships to each other may serve as a guide and aid to greater understanding.

Part I: Martin Luther and Lutheranism

In 1517, Martin Luther, Professor and Dr. of Theology at the University in Wittenberg in Electoral Saxony, Germany, set forth in writing 95 theses, propositions or statements intended for academic debate. According to popular tradition but meager historical evidence, Luther



Martin Luther
1528

nailed or posted the theses on the door of the *Schlosskirche*—the Castle Church—which also served as a university hall, its door as a bulletin board.ⁱ The 95 Theses arose out of Luther's concern over the sale of indulgences by the Church and the consequent potential to jeopardize the spiritual well-being of fellow Christians. Luther's intent was to bring attention to, examine, and correct what he considered to be a questionable and dangerous practice, not to divide the Church.ⁱⁱ Reflecting years later, in 1545, on the Reformation and its dramatic turn of events, Luther observed, "I got into these turmoils by accident and not by will or intention. I call upon God himself as witness."ⁱⁱⁱ

Rather than an invitation prompting a proper scholarly debate among theologians, the rapid dissemination of Luther's 95 Theses throughout Germany soon ignited a religious, political and social firestorm.^{iv} A primary instrument facilitating their widespread distribution was the moveable type printing press, a revolutionary medium first developed in fifteenth-century Europe by Johannes Gutenberg of Mainz, Germany.^v By Luther's time, the innovation in communication technology had become the sixteenth-century equivalent of the internet. Western Christianity was to be permanently altered.



Schlosskirche—Castle Church
(All Saints' Church)
Wittenberg

Prompted by the 95 Theses and following several years of confrontation between Luther and the Church, intensifying theological differences which reached far beyond the sale of indulgences, negotiations and political maneuvering, Luther was ultimately summoned in 1521 to appear before Emperor Charles V and the Imperial Estates of the Holy



Des inners innde myt wot. veeceven
 San en lre innet met wot. veeceven

Appearing again on the following day before Emperor and Reichstag and standing in the flickering light of the candle and torch-lit chamber, Luther delivered his historic response:^{vi}

Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the scriptures or clear reason . . . I am bound to the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. [Therefore] I cannot and will not retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. I cannot do otherwise. Here I stand. God Help me. Amen.^{viii}

A photograph of a large, historic stone castle with a prominent tower and a white-walled section, situated on a hillside. The date 05/30/2018 is visible in the bottom right corner.

Excommunicated by the Church and about to be officially condemned as a heretic and outlaw in the imperial Edict of Worms, Martin Luther departed for Wittenberg, his life now to be in mortal

danger. On the way, Luther was “kidnapped,” whisked away by friendly forces and secretly delivered and hidden away in protective seclusion at Wartburg Castle, an imposing medieval fortress standing at the summit of a craggy mountain overlooking the city of Eisenach in Electoral Saxony.



Frederick III—The Wise
Prince Elector of Saxony

Some now feared him perhaps dead. To his good fortune, however, Luther had allies in high places, among them his ruling prince, Elector Frederick III—The Wise—of Saxony, one of the seven prominent dignitaries who had recently elected the youthful Charles V as German Emperor, and whose imposing robust figure, with sword raised, flanks the statue of Luther on the monument at Worms. Wartburg castle was Prince Frederick’s fortress and provided a secret redoubt, a safe haven. The Saxon Elector, himself a devout Roman Catholic, was not about to forfeit his now famous professor of theology at his recently founded university. Nor did Frederick wish his harboring of Luther in defiance of imperial authority to become public.^{xi}

Luther remained in hiding at fortress Wartburg for nearly a year. A century earlier in 1415 Jan Hus, a Czech reformer deemed heretic, whose bronze figure is seated below Luther at Worms, had been burned at the stake. Now, one-hundred years later, Luther himself was both hailed and denounced as a “Saxon Hus”; there was good reason to fear for his safety.^{xii}

Central to Luther’s theology and teachings was the primacy of Holy Scripture, *sola scriptura* (Latin: scripture alone), the written word of God, expressed in Hebrew in the Old Testament and in Greek in the New.^{xiii} While in hiding, bearded and disguised as *Junker Jörg* (Knight George) at fortress Wartburg, Luther produced his seminal translation of the New Testament, thus rendering the sacred writ from original Greek into a brilliant and pleasing form of German that was to greatly influence the modern standard language. Luther completed the initial translation of the New Testament in an astonishingly brief three months! Unlike previous German translations based on the Latin Vulgate, Luther’s New Testament employed a more natural, authentic German and masterful literary style, which was easily understood, enjoyed great appeal, and was eagerly received by the general population.^{xiv} Commenting on translation, Luther observed:



Martin Luther as Junker Jörg
1521

Denn man muß nicht die Buchstaben in der lateinischen Sprache fragen, wie man sol deusch reden . . . sondern man muß die Mutter im Hause, die Kinder auf der Gassen, den gemeinen Mann auf dem Markt drümb fragen, und denselbigen auf das Maul sehen, wie sie reden, und darnach dolmetschen. So verstehen sie es denn, und merken, daß man deusch mit ihn redet.^{xv}

For one does not have to ask the letters in the Latin language, how one should speak German . . . rather one must consult the mother in the home, the children on the street, the common man in the marketplace, and pay attention to their language, how they speak, and translate accordingly. Then they will understand and recognize that one is speaking German with them.

Published in 1522, Luther's translation, the *September Testament*, quickly became a best seller. The first printing of 3000 copies immediately sold out as did in short order the 2000 copies of the second.^{xvi} In collaboration with other scholars, translation of the Old Testament followed and resulted in the publication of the entire Bible in German in 1534.^{xvii}

Especially from its epicenter at Wittenberg and the University established there by Frederick the Wise in 1502, where Luther and his colleagues taught and preached, the Reformation of the church reached out in all directions and was widely embraced. Organizational efforts and adoption of reforms led to the establishment of a new independent Lutheran church, a now separate branch,



Wittenberg from top of Schlosskirche bell tower
to town square and Stadtkirche (St. Mary's Church)

denomination, of Western Christianity. Supported by ruling German princes and *Reichstädte*, self-governing imperial cities, much of Germany, especially the northern portion, adopted Lutheranism in the form of *Landeskirchen*—territorial churches—although Lutheranism was also widely established elsewhere.^{xviii} Beyond Germany, to the north, all of Scandinavia became Lutheran, as did much of the Baltic region lying to the east.^{xix}

Early followers of Luther were called “Evangelical” due to their emphasis on the gospel. The term Evangelical is derived from Greek “euangelion,”

based in turn on two root words, and means “good news”—the gospel.^{xx} When adopted into Latin, the word became “evangelium.” Likewise, “gospel,” a word of Germanic origin and similarly derived from two words, means “good story.” As use of the term Evangelical broadened, it applied not only to followers of Luther but also more generally the larger reform movement.

Luther himself preferred that people not call themselves “Lutheran,” but simply Christian, since what he taught, he said, was not of his making, nor had he been crucified.^{xxi} History, however, would have it otherwise, as the church which arose out of his teachings generally came to be known as Lutheran or, more specifically, as “Evangelical-Lutheran.” In 1529, at the Reichstag in Speyer, an imperial city on the Rhine River not far south of Worms, allies of Luther and the Reformation “protested” against the decision of the majority to enforce the Edict of Worms, hence, the origin of the term “Protestant,” signifying those who separated from the Catholic church.^{xxii} Depending on context, the term “*evangelisch*” as used in Germany may be synonymous with “Protestant.”

Ever since its composition and presentation in 1530 to the Reichstag in Augsburg, Germany, the *Confessio Augustana*, the Augsburg Confession, has been a fundamental declaration of faith of the Lutheran Church, subscribed to by all who share its name and teachings. Serving as its primary



Philip Melancthon Monument
Wittenberg Town Square

author was Philip Melancthon, prodigious intellectual and scholar, Professor of Greek, systematic theologian and prominent Luther colleague at the University of Wittenberg.^{xxiii} Separate monuments honoring both Luther and Melancthon correspondingly stand across from each other on the historic Wittenberg town square. In his contributions to Lutheranism, Melancthon ranks perhaps only second to Luther, hence also, his prominent lean bronze figure next to Luther at Worms.



Martin Luther Monument
Wittenberg Town Square

The essential theological character of the Lutheran church is expressed in the “*solae*” (or *solas*), from Latin meaning “alone.” Joining *sola scriptura*—scripture alone, as previously noted, are *sola fide*—faith alone, and *sola gratia*—grace alone.^{xxiv} Occupying the theological center of Lutheranism is a key passage from Paul’s Epistle, his letter, to the believers at Ephesus, now located in southern Turkey: “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any man should boast.”^{xxv} Paul speaks similarly elsewhere (Rom. 1:17, 3:28; Gal. 2:16). Salvation, being justified with God through faith, is a free gift that has nothing to do with having earned it—by works—whether indulgences or otherwise. This was not about keeping score! From faith, however, proceed good works.^{xxvi} In his treatise *The Freedom of a Christian*, Luther declares, “A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.” The Christian was to be of honest service to his fellows.



Wittenberg Town Square
Rathaus left, Stadtkirche right

Although sharp differences clearly divided Lutheranism and the Roman Church, Martin Luther and the church bearing his name retained many traditional teachings and practices of the Catholic tradition. In several respects, though often unrecognized, the Lutheran Church represented a relatively conservative departure from the Roman Catholic fold. Shared was the continued practice of infant baptism and an uncompromising belief in the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament of Holy Communion—the Eucharist—although now distributed to parishioners in both kinds, bread and wine. Luther taught that

in Holy Communion Christ's words to his disciples, "This is my body" and "This is my blood," were to be understood as they had been spoken.^{xxviii} Luther rejected, however, the concept of the Eucharist as a sacrifice, a work, in which the priest by transubstantiation causes the bread and wine to become body and blood.^{xxix} Eliminated, accordingly, was the canon, the corresponding portion of the mass in which the reference to sacrifice occurs.^{xxx} By contrast, the general format of traditional worship, including liturgical forms, was retained largely intact in the Lutheran Church, though soon conducted with few exceptions in German rather than Latin. Indicative of the continuity in Christian worship, Luther in 1526 published the *Deutsche Messe*, the "German Mass," a title which by itself is unmistakably revealing.

Luther had a great love of music, and a rich heritage of congregational singing and instrumental music became hallmarks of the Lutheran Church. Consistent with active participation by the congregation and worship in the vernacular, the language actually spoken by parishioners, were new German hymns, many of which written by Luther himself. Of these, surely the most well-known and beloved is "*Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott*"—A Mighty Fortress is Our God—whose steadfast profession of faith is displayed in bold letters across the very top of the Schlosskirche bell tower in Wittenberg.^{xxxi} Luther observed that "Music is a fair and lovely gift of God . . . Next after theology I give to music the highest place and the greatest honor."^{xxxii} The Lutheran Church was to become a singing church, even in voluntary unrehearsed four-part harmony.^{xxxiii}

Luther and his colleagues likewise placed great emphasis on schools and education. Witnessing a great need for instruction in the Christian faith, Luther wrote the *Small Catechism*, published in 1529 and intended especially for children. The *Large Catechism* was designed for pastors.^{xxxiv}

Although many of the principles in Luther's teachings and those incorporated in the Lutheran Church were widely shared by other reformers, distinct theological differences were hardly lacking. Nor were those favoring evangelical reforms always as conservative as Luther. In Parts II and III, this introduction to the Reformation will examine other branches of Protestantism and expressions of faith, including the Reformed Church and Anabaptism.



Ein' Feste Burg Ist Unser Gott
Schlosskirche belltower
Wittenberg

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Notes

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- ^{iv} Orthbandt, 456; Steinwede, 16; Roper, 83.
- ^v Perry Brown, “Preaching from the Print Shop,” *Christian History* 11, no. 2(1992): 33–34.
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- ^{ix} Orthbandt, 468.
- ^x Bainton, *Here I Stand*, 185; Metaxas, 216; Roper, 172.
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- ^{xxiii} Treu, 89, 94.
- ^{xxiv} George, 18–22.
- ^{xxv} Eph. 2:8–9 (Revised Standard Version).
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- ^{xxix} Bainton, *Here I Stand*, 138–139; Kittelson, 153–154, 195.
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