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The Society for German-American Studies was founded for the purpose of encouraging and advancing the scholarly study of the history, language, literature, and culture of the German element in North America. This includes coverage of the immigrants and their descendants from Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and other German-speaking areas of Europe. Members of the Society include representatives from various academic disciplines and others who share a common interest in German-American studies.

The *Yearbook* is published annually. The editor welcomes contributions in English, preferably, or German on all aspects of German-Americana from members of the Society. The manuscript should be prepared so that it can be read anonymously by the members of the Editorial Board, with the author's name appearing on a separate sheet only. For submission, four copies of the manuscript prepared in accordance with the University of Chicago Press *Manual of Style* are requested. All manuscripts and correspondence concerning the *Yearbook* should be addressed to William Keel, Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, 1445 Jayhawk Blvd., University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045-7950. Inquiries regarding book reviews for the *Yearbook* should be addressed to Timothy J. Holian, University of Wisconsin-Waukesha, 1500 N. University Dr., Waukesha, WI 53188-2799. The *Newsletter* appears four times a year. Items for the *Newsletter* should be submitted to La Vern J. Rippley, Saint Olaf College, Northfield, MN 55057.

The SGAS annual membership dues, which include subscription to the *Yearbook* and the *Newsletter*, are \$30.00 for regular members. Membership applications to the Society for German-American Studies should be made to the Treasurer of the Society, William Roba, Scott Community College, 500 Belmont Road, Bettendorf, IA 52722. The Society for German-American Studies is open to membership from individuals, societies, libraries, and organizations.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

From the Editor ix

Donalf F. Durnbaugh: In Memoriam 1

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

Frank Baron

*German Republicans and Radicals in the Struggle
for a Slave-Free Kansas: Charles F. Kob and August Bondi* 3

HISTORICAL TEXTS

Karl Friedrich Kob

*Wegweiser für Ansiedler im Territorium Kansas (1857),
with annotations by G. Scott Seeger* 29

*Excerpts from Wegweiser für Ansiedler im Territorium Kansas (1857)
(Guide for Settlers in Kansas Territory),
translated by Julia Trumpold and William Keel* 75

August Bondi

*Excerpts from the Autobiography of August Bondi, 1833-1907,
excerpted with annotations and index by Frank Baron* 87

BOOK REVIEWS

Edited by Timothy Holian

Paul C. Nagel

The German Migration to Missouri: My Family's Story
Reviewed by Robert W. Frizzell 161

- Christian Bauer
The Ritchie Boys: A Film by Christian Bauer
 Christian Bauer and Rebekka Göpfert
Die Ritchie Boys: Deutsche Emigranten beim US-Geheimdienst
Reviewed by Jerry Glenn 163
- Don Heinrich Tolzmann, ed.
Illinois' German Heritage
Reviewed by William D. Keel 165
- Ernst Grabovszki
Zwischen Kutte und Maske:
Das geheimnisvolle Leben des Charles Sealsfield
Reviewed by Jerry Schuchalter 166
- Christian Gellinek
Going Dutch—Gone American: German Settling North America
Reviewed by J. Gregory Redding 168
- Frank Mehring
Karl/Charles Follen: Deutsch-Amerikanischer Freiheitskämpfer
Reviewed by Gerhard Weiss 169
- Rudolf Leonhart
Memories of New Ulm:
My Experiences During the Indian Uprising in Minnesota
 Don Heinrich Tolzmann, trans. and ed.
Reviewed by Timothy J. Holian 171
- Philip Otterness
Becoming German: The 1709 Palatine Migration to New York
Reviewed by J. Gregory Redding 173
- Jürgen Macha and Andrea Wolf, eds.
Michael Zimmer's Diary:
Ein deutsches Tagebuch aus dem Amerikanischen Bürgerkrieg
Reviewed by William D. Keel 173
- C. George Fry and Joel R. Kurz
The Americanization Process in the Second Generation:
The German Lutheran Mathias Loy (1828-1915) Caught Between
Adaptation and Repristinization
Reviewed by Tom R. Schultz 179

- Charles R. Mack and Henry H. Lesesne, eds.
Francis Lieber and the Culture of the Mind
Reviewed by Randall P. Donaldson 178
- Pearl Fichman
Before Memories Fade
Reviewed by Jerry Glenn 179
- Don Heinrich Tolzmann
German Heritage Guide to the State of Ohio
Reviewed by J. Gregory Redding 180
- Alexander Stephan, ed.
**Americanization and Anti-Americanism:
The German Encounter with American Culture After 1945**
Reviewed by Jörg Meindl 181
- Donald F. Durnbaugh, ed.
Edward E. Qunitier, ed. and trans.
**The Day Book/Account Book of Alexander Mack, Jr. (1712-1803):
Weaver, Brethren Elder, Apologist, and Chronicler in Early America**
Reviewed by Karen M. Johnson-Weiner 183
- C. Richard Beam, ed., with Joshua R Brown, ed. (vols. one and two)
and Jennifer L. Trout, ed. (vols. three, four and five)
The Comprehensive Pennsylvania German Dictionary
Reviewed by William D. Keel 185
- Stephen Bowers Harroff
The Amish Schools of Indiana: Faith in Education
Reviewed by Gabriele Lunte 186
- Corinne and Russell Earnest
**To the Latest Posterity:
Pennsylvania-German Family Registers in the Fraktur Tradition**
Reviewed by Bethany M. Usher 188
- Christoph Mauch and Joseph Salmons, eds.
German-Jewish Identities in America
Reviewed by G. Scott Seeger 190

Axel W.-O. Schmidt, ed. One of the 999 About to Be Forgotten: The Memoirs of Carl Barus 1865-1935 <i>Reviewed by Timothy J. Holian</i>	192
Colin G. Calloway, Gerd Gemünden, and Susanne Zantop, eds. Germans and Indians: Fantasies, Encounters, Projections <i>Reviewed by Heiko Mühr</i>	194
Wolfgang Helbich and Walter D. Kamphoefner, eds. German-American Immigration and Ethnicity in Comparative Perspective <i>Reviewed by William D. Keel</i>	196
Werner Mohr Albert Bloch: Caricaturist, Social Critic, and Translator of Karl Kraus <i>Reviewed by Randall P. Donaldson</i>	198
Antonius Holtmann A Lost American Dream: Civil War Letters (1862/63) of Immigrant Theodor Heinrich Brandes in Historical Contexts Eberhard Reichmann, trans. <i>Reviewed by Tom R. Schultz</i>	199

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dolores and Giles Hoyt Annual Bibliography of German-Americana	
<i>I. Supplements for 2003</i>	203
<i>II. Bibliography for 2004</i>	220
<i>III. Topical Index</i>	260
Five-Year Index of the <i>Yearbook of German-American Studies</i> (2001-2005)	267
SGAS Bylaws	281
SGAS Publication Fund Policy	287
SGAS Research Fund Policy	284

From the Editor

This issue of the *Yearbook* is devoted to the Germans who participated in the struggle for a slave-free Kansas in the era of “Bleeding Kansas” 150 years ago. The 1850s were tumultuous times in the United States and particularly in Kansas Territory. The Territory was opened for settlement in May 1854 with the signing into law of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Kansas became a rallying cry for the adherents of several factions, including those favoring the introduction of slavery, those favoring the total abolition of slavery and many who were simply proponents of free soil.

Coinciding with the effective abrogation of the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which prohibited the spread of slavery north of the southern border of the state of Missouri, was the founding of a new political movement that became known as the Republican Party. Abolitionists, Whigs, Free Soilers and others merged in the summer of 1854 into this new and radical political association. The Republicans also attracted many of the leaders of the failed German revolutionary efforts of 1848-49 who had come as exiles to the United States in the early 1850s. These exiled Germans and Austrians saw in the goals of the fledgling Republican Party a new struggle for freedom and democracy on this side of the Atlantic.

The convergence of radical Germans and the Republican Party led directly to the involvement of some of these Forty-eighters in the struggle to prevent slavery from gaining a foothold in Kansas. Indeed, the chief agency of abolitionism in Kansas Territory, the Massachusetts-based New England Emigrant Aid Company, made a concerted effort to attract Germans to settle in Kansas in the belief that Germans would vote against the adoption of a proslavery constitution for Kansas. Many Germans also came on their own to the newest American frontier as land speculators, entrepreneurs, adventurers, or simply homesteaders. These Germans in Kansas apparently had a song that addressed the issues of free speech and free men:

Hurrah – Frei Kansas!

Frei Kansas, freie Erde,
Die Freiheit unser Hort,
Dafür, sei's mit dem Schwerte,
Sei es mit Tat und Wort!

Frei Kansas, freier Boden,
Von Vorrecht frei und Bann!
Dem schwarzen und dem rothen,
Sowie dem weißen Mann!

Frei Kansas, freie Erde!
Sei unser Feldgeschrei;
Krieg, Krieg, mit Wort und Schwerte,
Sei stets die Sklaverei!

(“German-American abolitionist song” c. 1860,
<http://www.musicanet.org/robokopp/Lieder/freikans.html>
and <http://www.gtg1848.de/>)

In an introductory essay for this volume, Frank Baron examines the complexities of these issues and provides background information on the two individuals whose historical texts are reprinted in this special issue: Karl Friedrich Kob, whose *Wegweiser für Ansiedler im Territorium Kansas* was published in 1857 with the support of the New England Aid Company and modeled on the company’s English *Information for Kansas Immigrants* written by Thomas Webb, published in numerous editions in the mid-1850s; and August Bondi whose autobiography was published in 1910.

Kob was born in East Prussia in 1820 and trained as a physician at the University of Königsberg. He became involved in the ill-fated uprising in the Duchy of Holstein against Denmark in 1849-50. In the aftermath of the revolutionary period in Germany he emigrated, settling first in Hartford, Connecticut, and later living in Boston, Massachusetts. During the election of 1856 he became involved in Republican politics during Frémont’s unsuccessful presidential campaign that championed “Free Soil, Free Men and Free Kansas.” With the support of the New England Emigrant Aid Company, Kob published his settlers’ guide for Germans, moved to Atchison, Kansas Territory, and began publishing the weekly *Kansas Zeitung* in the summer of 1857. Kob collaborated with other Germans in the territory and dreamed of a belt of anti-slavery German settlements extending from Kansas to Texas. He died in Leavenworth of “inflammation of the brain” in 1861. In addition to the original German text, excerpts in English translation that provide descriptions of the German settlements in Kansas Territory are included in this volume.

Bondi, born in 1833, was an Austrian Jew whose family immigrated to the United States in late-1848 following the upheavals in Austria during the revolutionary period and settled initially in St. Louis. Bondi moved into Kansas Territory in April 1855, settling near a number of John Brown’s sons in southeastern Franklin County. He and several other German/Austrian abolitionists rode with John Brown during the 1856 territorial skirmishes against the pro-slavery Missourians—the period known as “Bleeding Kansas.” Bondi later served three years in Company K of the 5th Kansas Calvary during the Civil War as a Union soldier and was wounded while on a patrol

near Pine Bluff, Arkansas, on 11 September 1864. After his discharge in November 1864 he operated a store in Leavenworth, Kansas. Bondi moved to Salina, Kansas, in 1866 and spent the remainder of his life there as a successful businessman and judge. Bondi died in Salina in 1907. The autobiography was published for his family in Galesburg, Illinois, by the Wagoner Printing Company in 1910 and is now a rare book. The first five chapters of his autobiography reprinted here offer a firsthand perspective on the German-Austrian contributions in the struggle for a free Kansas in the years prior to the American Civil War.

For Kob's German text we have attempted to remain true to his German orthography where possible. For instance, nineteenth-century spelling of verbs ending in *-iren* rather than Modern German *-ieren* is retained (e.g., *rapportirte*, *cultivirt*) and irregular grammatical forms are also kept where nineteenth-century usage was not consistent (e.g., the plural of *Boot* could be *Boote* or *Böte*). Words or names that were emphasized in the German printed version by the technique known as *Sperrung* appear in boldface in our reprint. Where Kob used roman type instead of fraktur we have used italics. His use of English terms is not consistent. He may use roman type for an English word such as *claim* and a few lines later use the same word capitalized and in fraktur. We have attempted to mark actual omissions of letters and typographical errors by [*sic*] in square brackets. Kob also used a system of footnotes. We have included his footnotes at the point in the text at which they occurred. We have also included images of the original cover and the final page (48) of his guide (by permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University, call number US 287738.57*).

We should also note that volume 40 represents the twenty-fifth anniversary issue of the *Yearbook*. When the Society began publication of the *Yearbook* in 1981, we decided to continue the volume numbers of the *Journal of German-American Studies*, whose last issue in 1980 was volume 15. This issue of the *Yearbook* also contains a five-year index covering volumes 36-40 (2001-2005), including the two supplemental issues published in 2003 and 2006, respectively.

The editor wishes to especially thank his colleagues in Kansas, Frank Baron, Scott Seeger and Julia Trumpold, for their contributions to this volume. As always, our appreciation is extended to Timothy Holian for editing the book reviews and also Dolores and Giles Hoyt for the compilation of the annual bibliography. The next volume of the *Yearbook* is scheduled to appear in the spring of 2007 and will again be devoted to individual essays addressing the scholarly interests of the membership.

William Keel, Editor
Max Kade Center for German-American Studies
The University of Kansas
September 2006

