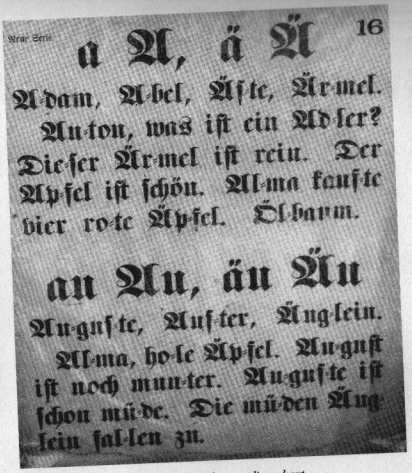

German alphabet reading chart

Cover illustration: City Hall of Bremen

CONCORDIA, MISSOURI: A HERITAGE PRESERVED

Essays on Cultural Survival

Edited by Adolf E. Schroeder

The essays in this booklet are based on research conducted from April 1993 to July 1995 by William D. Keel, A. E. Schroeder, and Laurel E. Wilson. The project was sponsored by the Concordia Area Heritage Society and partially supported by a Missouri Humanities Council "Scholar-in-Residence" grant. The University of Missouri Western Historical Manuscript Collection co-sponsored the research undertaken in the project.

Project Director: Nyla J. Shepard

Advisory committee: Nora Hartwig, Viola Mieser, Reverend Alfred W. Rodewald, and Buddy Samuels

The University of Missouri gratefully acknowledges a grant from the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Chicago which made the publication of research results possible.

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INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the preliminary planning for the Concordia Area Heritage Society "Scholar-in-Residence" project to assist local historians in documenting, interpreting, and preserving the German heritage of the community, it soon became apparent that experts in several fields were needed for a comprehensive study of the diverse aspects of Old World culture still surviving in the area. We therefore invited Professor William D. Keel of the University of Kansas and Professor Laurel E. Wilson of the University of Missouri to participate in the two-year project planned. Dr. Keel has devoted many years to the study of the dialects of German settlers in the Midwest, and Dr. Wilson has conducted extensive research on German and other textile arts in Missouri. The important discoveries they made in Concordia are documented in their reports in this booklet.

During the early phases of the project, we found that in addition to the letters, diaries, and documents that were brought in by residents, many of the most important documentary resources in the Concordia community lay locked in church records written in German Gothic script. There was interest in the community in having these early records of the cultural, religious, and social history of the area made accessible; therefore, through a joint effort by "Scholar-in-Residence" Schroeder and members of several churches, four major documents relating to three area churches were translated onto cassette tape and transcribed. These records comprise over 600 pages of church and community history that would not be available without the dedicated work of community volunteers, who not only made draft transcriptions but also prepared final edited copies of the translations. We owe a debt of

gratitude to Donald R. Dittmer, Hazel J. Payne, and Ruth Rodewald for their contributions to this important aspect of the project.

We also gratefully acknowledge the assistance and cooperation members of the project team enjoyed in Concordia. Many residents and former residents shared their letters and family documents, their own and their parents' reminiscences of life in early Concordia, and their knowledge of the history of the settlement of the area. Dr. Keel worked closely with members of the Low German Club and Dr. Wilson was generously received by needlework groups and individuals who are known for their skills in the several textile arts practiced in the Concordia area. We received excellent cooperation from Gary L. Beissenherz, publisher of *The Concordian*, who helped us reach both present and former members of the Concordia community through newspaper announcements. We appreciate the support of the project planners. Only someone who has administered a project that ran longer than its two-year term can appreciate the patience and stamina the project required of project director Nyla Shepard and her advisory committee.

The contributions of the late Don Radke, Jr., of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection, who worked with members of the community in identifying, organizing, and preserving documents and manuscripts, are greatly appreciated. Claudia Powell, document conservation assistant at the Western Historical Manuscript Collection, generously contributed time and talent to the project with her presentation in Concordia and advice throughout the project. The interest in the research results shown by Nancy Lankford, Associate Director of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection, and her support of the project contributed substantially to the achievements made.

We thank Reverend Alfred Rodewald for permitting us to print a page from one of his "Low German" sermons, demonstrating a language still in community use for special occasions. Through the contributions of Pastor Emeritus Rodewald and the Low German Club of Concordia, visitors to the community can still hear the language brought to the Missouri frontier by German immigrants over a century and a half ago.

Adolf E. Schroeder
Columbia, Missouri
April 1996

Survival of German Customs and Traditions in Concordia

Adolf E. Schroeder

To the West, to the West!
To the land of the Free...

Promotional literature, newspaper advertisements in seaport towns in Europe, letters written home by pioneer immigrants and circulated in towns and villages, and books published in Germany and Switzerland brought many German pioneers to the "Far West" in the 1830s and 1840s. They dreamed of a new land,

where a man is a man
if he is willing to toil
and the humblest
may gather the fruits of the soil,
where children are blessings
and he who hath most
has aid to his fortune and riches to boast.

From "To the West," American Broadside at Brown University

Enthusiastic letters from family and friends in America and such books as Gottfried Duden's *Report on a Journey to the Western States of North America* created a virtual "emigration fever" in Germany in the first half of the nineteenth century, bringing large numbers of emigrants from all regions of Germany to St. Louis. From there many boarded Missouri River boats to travel inland, where they founded farms and new settlements on the prairies bordering both sides of the river. The early towns of St. Charles, Augusta, Washington, Marthasville, New Haven, Hermann, Portland, Jefferson City, New Franklin, Boonville, Glasgow, Brunswick, and Lexington served as attractive stops

Bericht

über eine Reise

nach den

westlichen Staaten Nordamerika's

und einen mehrjährigen Aufenthalt am Missouri (in den Jahren 1824, 25, 26 und 1827), in Bezug auf Auswanderung und Uebervölkerung,

oder:

Das Leben

im

Innern der Vereinigten Staaten

und dessen Bedeutung für die häusliche und politische Lage der Europäer, dargestellt

a) in einer Sammlung von Briefen,
b) in einer besonderen Abhandlung über den politischen Zustand der nordamerikanischen Freistaaten, und
c) in einem rathgebenden Nachtrage für auswandernde deutsche Ackerwirthe und Diejenigen, welche auf Handelsunternehmungen denken,

von

Gottfried Duden.

Gedruckt zu Elberfeld im Jahre 1829 bei Sam. Lucas, auf Kosten des Verfassers.

Gottfried Duden's 1829 Report

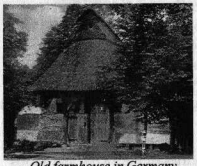
from which prospective farm families fanned out to locate promising land to buy or homestead and start to build their new lives on the western frontier.

Duden's book, first appearing in 1829, found an eager audience among Germans of all educational and social levels. Disappointed with the results of the social and political reforms promised them by their leaders for helping defeat and expel Napoleon and his French armies, students, particularly at the universities of Jena, Giessen, and Göttingen, had developed strong nationalistic movements. They called for freedom of expression, more liberal reforms, unification of German lands, and a democratic constitution. Their mass demonstrations alarmed the authorities, and the 1819 assassination by theology student Karl Sand of August von Kotzebue, an opponent of German unity who had ridiculed the democratic ideals of the students, resulted in the suppression of student fraternities and laws forbidding public assemblies. In some areas it became unlawful to use the word "freedom," and, as some said, it seemed that the only free Germans were in America or in their graves.

Students and other revolutionaries of the 1820s and 1830s were forced to carry on their political activities in secret, risking arrest and imprisonment for expressing their views. The youthful idealism and patriotism of students and former students, many of whom had fought in the "War of Liberation" against the French expecting to achieve a new and democratic Germany, brought some early emigrants to Missouri. Friedrich Muench, who signed his many articles for German and American newspapers and journals as "Far West" Muench, cut his first corn crop with a sword his brother had carried in the Napoleonic War. One of the leaders of the Giessen Emigration Society, Muench, who arrived in St. Louis in 1834, had hoped to help found a German state in the

West, but the group broke up, and he and a few others settled in Warren County. He later wrote that he was so tired after a day's work in the field that he had to support his right arm with his left hand to get the soup spoon to his mouth. He had been a minister in Germany and was one of the so-called "Latin Farmers" who came to the frontier for idealistic reasons; unused to the hard work of farming, most Latin Farmers soon gave up, but Muench was one of the few to succeed on the frontier.

Student revolutionaries in Germany had not gotten the broad-based support they expected from those they were trying to help--the recently liberated rural population, small farmers and farm workers; though no longer technically serfs, they continued to live in poverty, still dependent on the powerful landed gentry, baronial masters, provincial princes, and church leaders, most of whom still clung to their age-old privileges and properties and exacted high taxes to support themselves. Customary laws of inheritance left all but the oldest or, sometimes, the youngest son without property and a chance for economic independence. Even the small farm owners who supplemented their income with cottage crafts such as spinning and weaving lost that income as modern industrialization and changing textile manufacture displaced hand crafted linen with machine produced cotton products. Economic considerations, as well as a love of freedom, brought many of these emigrants to the American West, where, Duden promised, there was still room for thousands of farms along the Missouri River and there would be no burdensome taxes to support the lifestyles of the princes, bishops, and other rulers.



Old farmhouse in Germany

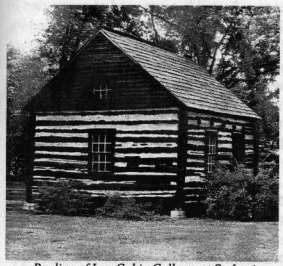
Duden recommended that emigrants travel in groups rather than individually, and several emigration societies were organized and settled near Duden's home in Warren County in the early 1830s. However, we have not yet found evidence that an organized emigration society headed for western Missouri. Rather, chain migration soon drew followers of early settlers, whose letters home encouraged others from the same village or neighboring towns to emigrate. Thus the bond of a common Low German dialect united the newcomers in their new and strange English-speaking world and gave them strength and confidence to endure the hardships of the frontier.

Even more important than their language were the churches they soon founded. No matter how humble their beginnings, German settlers in America brought with them in their immigrant chests treasures from their German homeland, a Bible, catechism, or hymnal, all printed in the old Gothic type, as well as a strong religious commitment which their hard-won freedom allowed them to practice. Transplanted to the Missouri prairie these pioneers soon banded together, built churches, and held Sunday worship services. Determined to preserve their religious heritage, they hired preachers who could also teach their children in German several months of the year. Eventually they were able to establish German schools.

The pioneer settlers of the Concordia area came from the area southeast of Bremen, the Kingdom of Hannover. Roughly fifteen to twenty-five miles northwest of the city of Hannover, the area lies in the swampy region west of the Leine River, northeast of Neustadt am Rübenberg. Hamlets and villages of their origin were Borstel, Brunnenborstel, Büren, Esperke, Laderholz, Metel, the Rodewald settlements, and Niederstöcken. Thus, in the late 1830s men like Friedrich Dierking, Ferdinand Bruns, Christian

Oetting, Friedrich Niemeyer, Heinrich Franke, and others bought land, established farms, and built strong families in Freedom Township of Lafayette County, near the site where the city of Concordia is located today.

The North German area from which they came was predominantly Protestant. Hannover had joined the Reformation early and resisted the efforts of Friedrich Wilhelm III, the Prussian King, to form a Unionist Protestant Church to unite the conservative Lutheran with the Evangelical Reformed Church. Thus, arriving in Missouri, the emigrants from Hannover found themselves in sympathy with emigrants from Saxony who had arrived in St. Louis in 1839 under the leadership of Pastor Martin Stephan of Dresden. Some of the Old Order Lutheran Saxons remained in St. Louis, where they established old Trinity Church.

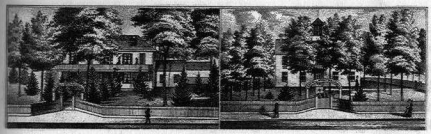


Replica of Log Cabin College, at St. Louis

Most, however, settled along the Mississippi River in Perry County. Pastor Stephan was soon exiled across the Mississippi River to Illinois, but in Perry County his former followers established seven villages: Altenburg, Dresden, Frohna, Johannisberg, Paitzdorf, Seelitz, and Wittenberg. Late in 1839 they founded a "log cabin college" in Altenburg, which offered schooling to both young men and young women.

The Saxon immigrants were instrumental in forming the Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church, and the log cabin college later developed into Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. The active educational, publication, and missionary work of the founders of the Missouri Synod linked them with outlying settlements in central and western counties of Missouri and supplied newly formed congregations with pastors and teachers trained in German school and church traditions. The first Lutheran congregation in the Concordia area (then called Cook's Store) was formed in 1840, with the first baptism administered by a teacher, Henry Christian Liever. In 1844 the first log church was dedicated by Liever. An ordained minister, Adolph G. G. Franke, was called by the congregation in 1847.

The diversity of religious beliefs and practices in 19th century Germany was soon reflected in towns and communities in the American west. A German Methodist Society was founded in Cincinnati in 1838 by Wilhelm Nast. Among Nast's early converts was Wilhelm Keil, founder of Bethel Colony in Shelby County, Missouri, who was living in Pittsburgh in the late 1830s and attended a revival conducted by Nast. Keil later left the German Methodist Church for the Methodist Episcopal, which he also soon left. He eventually developed his own communal religious group to settle Bethel Colony, but German Methodism was brought to Missouri by Ludwig S. Jacoby in 1841 and soon spread west. German Methodists founded a number of schools and colleges, including Central Wesleyan in Warren County. Originally a coeducational bilingual institution in Illinois, the school moved to Warrenton in 1864 as the Western Orphan Asylum and Educational Institute, where it soon became influential in educational efforts for children of German immigrants. Other Methodist groups also developed German churches, and a Methodist Episcopal congregation, first served by early



missionaries from Lexington, was established in Freedom Township, west of present-day Concordia, in the 1840s. First known as the Zoar Church, it became Zion Methodist Church at the dedication of a new building in August 1860.

Another religious group active in Missouri was the *Evangelische Kirchenverein des Westens* (Evangelical Church Union), organized in October 1840 at Gravois settlement. Supported by the Mission Society at Basel, Switzerland, which was trying to achieve a united Protestant Church, organizers hoped to unite German Protestants in America. But even German immigrants who had come to America for economic reasons appreciated the religious freedom their new country offered and did not want to give up their own beliefs. The establishment of a new and independent German church on the frontier did not occur without considerable controversy, but through the persistence of its leaders the new movement founded in Missouri grew. To provide

theological training for young men who wanted to enter the Evangelical ministry, the group founded Eden Seminary, first known as Marthasville Seminary and located in Deer Valley in Warren County. The influence of the St. Louis Evangelical Church movement reached western Missouri, and a congregation organized in 1850 established St. John's Evangelical Church in Emma, near Concordia.

The German Baptists, who had been persecuted for centuries in Switzerland and Germany, also found a welcome in Lafayette County and contributed to the early establishment of churches among the recently immigrated rural population in what later was to become the Concordia area. In July 1851, a German Baptist congregation was organized in Concordia by Carl Kresse, who had come from Lexington to preach in December of the previous year. Meeting at first in homes, the congregation built its first church in 1862.

Much of the early settlement and religious history of Concordia is recorded in the church records and minutes of the church councils of four major denominations which became established in the area. St. Paul's Lutheran Church, affiliated with the Missouri Synod, was staffed from the early 1840s by ministers educated and trained in Germany or at the Concordia Seminary in St. Louis with qualifications in German. It has been able to make information in its official records accessible to congregational members who no longer can read German script. However, three other churches established prior to the founding of the city of Concordia had handwritten record books of the church council minutes in German script that few people are able to decipher today. At the suggestion of Donald R. Dittmer, a member of the Concordia Area Heritage Society, the author undertook, with the cooperation of volunteers from the community, to translate and

make accessible these German records, some of which had suffered considerable damage over time. Some were water and fire damaged, but because of their historical significance deserved to be preserved in a form accessible to present and future generations of students and scholars. For this reason, translations of the records were made and copies deposited in the community.

Concordia, named in 1865, became an intellectually active community, and historians in the area have undertaken substantial work over the years to document the history of their settlement and record the growth and achievement of the community. In addition, such contemporary historians as Robert W. Frizzell have published excellent accounts of Concordia. In "Killed by Rebels: A Civil War Massacre And Its Aftermath," published in the *Missouri Historical Review* of July 1977, Frizzell focuses on the turmoil in the Concordia area during the Civil War, when settlers were harassed by guerrilla bands in western Missouri sympathetic to the South, and explores the effects on the area in the following decades.

Aspects of surviving German customs in the area were recorded in the early 20th century by William G. Bek, a historian and German instructor from the University of Missouri who had lived in Concordia for a few years. In 1908 he published a fascinating account of the folklife of the community and explored several wedding customs and traditions that originated in Hannover village life and were preserved on Missouri's western prairies for over a century. His study, "Survival of Old Marriage-Customs Among the Low Germans of West Missouri," in the *Journal of the American Folklore*, discusses the wedding inviter or *Hochzeitsbitter,* and other wedding traditions. At the time Bek wrote, he estimated that almost 10,000 German-speaking settlers lived in portions of western Saline, northwestern Pettis,

northeastern Johnson, and Lafayette counties, over 2000 of them foreign born. The nucleus of the German settlement was in Concordia, which at that time had a population of 900.

The wedding inviter Bek described traveled to individual homes "mounted on a thoroughbred." The bridle and saddle were gaily decorated with many ribbons. The hat of the *Hochzeitsbitter* was also adorned with a mass of bright-colored ribbons, varying in length from one half to two yards. In addition to these ribbons, the hat-band was studded with coins and paper money. While approaching the house, the *Hochzeitsbitter* uttered short piercing cries and discharged a heavy pistol. The wedding invitation was given orally, recited in verse form in High German. Those accepting the invitation affixed a ribbon to the inviter's hat.

1936 Wedding with "wedding inviters"

The custom of the wedding inviter was widely practiced in Missouri, as evidenced by several variants of invitations still found by the author seventy years later, although the last documented photograph of an inviter, taken at a wedding near Freistatt in Lawrence County, dates from 1936.

Bek described other customs associated with the wedding, including a race between the bridal couple in a spring wagon driven by the wedding inviter and the wedding guests in their wagons or buggies. They all raced across the prairie to the home of the groom's father, where the wedding reception was held. At several points the race came to a halt because of a chain placed across the road by neighborhood boys. The groom threw coins to the youngsters each time so the chain would be lowered and the party could proceed. After the "sumptuous" wedding feast, the table cloth from the bride's table was taken by the married women, who tried to capture one of the unmarried girls. The one caught was hailed as the next bride-to-be. In the afternoon, a foot race in a nearby meadow was held. "Here the bride and groom took their stand at one end of the spacious field, the groom holding a broom in his hand. The young men all retired to the opposite end of the meadow." The winner of the race got the broom and was designated as the next groom to be. The wedding celebration ended with a dance, which "lasted until daybreak." The wedding inviter, who wore his decorated hat all day, was kept busy accepting wedding presents, arranging them, and entertaining the guests.

Bek's detailed account of the wedding in Concordia is valuable for its documentation of German community life early in the century. Decades later, in the 1970s, the author conducted several interviews as part of a Missouri German oral history and folklore project and found that memories of the early customs and

traditions still survived. Most recently, the 1993 Missouri Humanities "Scholar-in-Residence" grant to the Concordia Area Heritage Society made it possible for three researchers to explore historical and current aspects of German arts, culture, and language, among the descendants of early settlers.

A major part of the author's project activity and research was to focus on collecting oral accounts from individuals relating to customs and traditions brought from Germany and handed down through succeeding generations in order to determine how many had survived or were remembered by area residents. The interviews collected in the area some fifteen years earlier from several retired pastors and their wives or female relatives had provided an initial resource of taped oral histories in which many of the extant traditions were discussed, particularly those practiced in connection with festivities centering on church holidays, with Christmas being the season most warmly remembered by contributors to the interviews.

The Christmas season began with the Advent period, the four Sundays preceding Christmas Day, which some churches and families celebrated with an Advent's wreath and four candles, lighted incrementally each Sunday. The custom of visitations by Saint Nicholas and his helper "Black Peter" on December 6 was widespread in Catholic areas of Missouri, but in Protestant families in the Concordia area the custom of a visit by St. Nicholas early in December evolved differently. Over the years the main event, that is the appearance of St. Nicholas, was forgotten, but in some families children set out their shoes in the evening and hoped to find some candy or fruit in them the next morning.

The Christmas tree, first brought to America by German soldiers during the Revolutionary War, is decorated on Christmas

Eve in Germany, and many of the older members of the community who remembered this practice told of going out and cutting down a cedar tree on Christmas Eve and decorating it with popcorn garlands and wax candles, which were lit that evening after the family returned from church service. The minutes of the Baptist congregation, dated December 20, 1863, mention plans for a Christmas tree for December 25 at the Hader house, and an entry on December 6, 1874, again mentions plans for "a Christmas tree for the children." While they watched the sparkling tree, families or congregations sang Christmas songs, such as "Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht" and "O Tannenbaum." Some of these songs, for instance, "Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her," were composed by Martin Luther or were German translations of even earlier Latin hymns. On Christmas morning the children would find a plate at their usual place at the table with *Lebkuchen, Springerle*, or other cookies and perhaps an orange or a banana, and they were told that the *Weihnachtsmann* or *Christkindel* had brought these treats.

Christmas dinner, if the family could afford something special, consisted of a roasted goose with sauerkraut (in Germany red cabbage was usually served with the Christmas goose). The yellow goose fat was saved to be used later as a spread on bread or as a salve for the chest when children came down with chest colds. If a goose was not available, roasted duck or chicken was served for Christmas dinner.

Sometime before Christmas, *Stollen* in the shape of a loaf or a bundled baby, with lots of nuts and dried fruit, and *Lebkuchen* and other cookies had been baked to serve to family and friends at coffee time during the holiday period. Several informants fondly remembered the family singing appropriate German songs such as "Ihr Kinderlein kommet," "Nun singet und seid froh," and Martin Luther's "Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her."

According to some early writers, Americans in Missouri had not celebrated Christmas at all or had celebrated it with drinking, boisterous pranks, and shooting off their guns or setting off dynamite. However, their American neighbors soon adopted the German immigrants' customs of the family Christmas, with a decorated tree and gifts for the children, as they adopted some traditional German foods. Many German Christmas songs have been translated into English.

The traditional food for New Year's Eve dinner was poached fish, but at one home a family with roots in Baltimore always had oyster stew if at all possible. Shooting in the New Year, the centuries-old custom among Teutonic people to ward off evil spirits and protect the young New Year, was widely practiced. The custom of young men going from house to house and reciting their good wishes in German in return for gifts or treats does not seem to have survived beyond the early years. And the widespread tradition of children and teenagers remembering their elders and godparents with congratulatory New Year letters, for many years written in German, seems to have been abandoned in later years. However, some of the letters have been preserved, showing that the practice prevailed in Concordia. The quality of the letters indicates the high level of schooling the young people had received.

Viola Mieser with school children

While Epiphany may still be recalled in church services by most Protestant denominations, the age-old custom on January 6 of the three Wise Men calling on every house singing "Die heiligen drei Könige mit ihrem Stern," a composition by Johann Wolfgang Goethe, or giving recitations of their long journey to Bethlehem, does not seem to have survived in the predominantly Lutheran area. In Catholic sections of Missouri where the custom survived children or young adults dressed up like Biblical kings appear, the house is blessed, and the three initials C+M+B, standing for Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar, are written with chalk over the door of the house and remain there throughout the year.

William Bek wrote of the people of the Concordia settlement: "They are a pleasure-loving people. Their parties, shooting matches, picnics, and similar gatherings are very largely attended." What historian Carl Wittke called "the Continental Sabbath" sometimes brought Germans into conflict with their American neighbors. To many immigrants, Sunday was not only a day for church service and rest, but the afternoon and evening were times for social gatherings with musical entertainment, theater, shooting matches, bowling, going on picnics, or relaxing at the beer gardens that were established in most towns which had attracted German immigrants. Dating back to pre-Reformation times, when rural churchgoers often had to travel considerable distances to go to mass and thus had to fast for a long time, it became the custom that right after mass they would visit the nearby inn or tavern for their first meal of the day accompanied by beer or brandy. In German or Austrian towns and villages the tavern is often in the immediate vicinity of the church, and it became a traditional meeting place for entire families. As the village of Concordia grew, it soon had several taverns to accommodate not only the men, who would gather there after supper for beer and a game of cards; it also offered families the opportunity to meet

their friends for food, visiting, or singing and enabled them to maintain social contacts with neighbors they did not often see during the week.

There were, of course, some religious groups, in Germany and America, who did not condone the use of beer or wine with meals and certainly none condoned visiting the tavern too frequently. German Baptists generally frowned on the use of alcoholic beverages, but for many immigrants, beer was a part of the evening. One contributor to our oral history project had an amusing story to tell: Every evening after supper his father would send the young boy to the nearby tavern to fetch a small pail of beer for the evening. Some of the older boys in the neighborhood soon realized the opportunity this habit offered them. They would waylay the boy and extract a toll of several sips of beer before letting him go on his errand of delivering his father's refreshment.

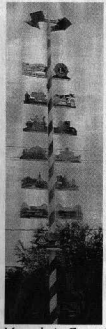
In over twenty five years of interviewing descendants of German immigrant pioneers in Missouri, we have found that customs and traditions varied widely from community to community. The one common aspect of social life was the part singing and playing musical instruments contributed, in the family, in the Protestant churches, and at social gatherings. Many immigrants brought musical instruments and song books from home, and many familiar songs lived in the oral tradition and brightened both the work hours and the times spent relaxing. Fun songs such as "Ach, du lieber Augustin," "Du, du liegst mir im Herzen," "Zu Lauterbach hab' ich mein' Strumpf verlorn," and others were sung at parties or gatherings just as many religious songs and hymns were commonly known and sung from memory. Group singing was popular among Germans. The church council of the Baptist congregation voted in April 1880 to purchase ten copies of hymnals and shortly thereafter scheduled a regular

singing hour for each Tuesday and Thursday evening to be conducted by Heinrich Borgstadt. After 1885 *Die Glaubensharfe*, a hymnal for German Baptist congregations, was published in Cleveland, Ohio, and became widely available.

Pastor Frederick A. Baepler fondly recalled the congregational picnics held by St. Paul's Lutheran Church on Easter Monday for the children. The town band played on these occasions and thereafter gave Saturday night concerts in the park every two weeks. As a special treat for the boy, he recalled, his parents usually gave him a nickel to spend on a box of popcorn at the concerts.

Rev. Andrew Baepler's residence and first St. Paul's Academy

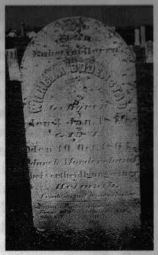
Band music in Concordia can be traced back to the early 1880s. Otto Walkenhorst is credited for having organized the first band. Soon thereafter, in 1881, Wilhelm Wilk, a teacher at St. Paul's Lutheran School, is said to have organized a second band, called the Concordia Cornet Band, which a few years later in the 1890s was directed by John J. Bredehoeft, son-in-law of Otto Walkenhorst. Bredehoeft was in turn succeeded by Emil Deke as conductor of the Concordia Band that proudly played in Concordia, at Missouri State Fairs, before a number of governors of the state, and in many towns and cities for well over seventy-five years, establishing a fine reputation as a concert and marching band in an era before high school bands were formed. Many older informants cherished memories of the music conducted by their beloved band leaders, and several proudly confessed to having been members of the band for many years, some well over fifty years.



Maypole in Central Park

Special occasions for the bands to play their music were spaced all through the year. The *Strassenfest*, begun in the 1890s was later called Fall Festival. This event celebrated the joys of a good harvest and developed into a true folk festival with song and dance and the revival of apple butter and cider making. In more recent times, to attract more visitors to Concordia, large signs along the highway announce "Wunderbar Days," scheduled on weekends throughout the year, when the community showcases and shares its traditions and heritage with tourists from far and near. Traditional crafts are displayed, quilts made by the ladies at group meetings in a church hall or at home are shown, and home-made breads, cakes, and other baked goods are made

available for sale. Beef and pork products are barbequed and *Bratwurst* or *Knackwurst* are grilled, recalling the days when old-fashioned butchering was a community social event. Few festival goers can resist the aromas drifting over the community park on these occasions, and the tables and benches near the park's towering Maypole invite the guests to enjoy the food while listening to the strains of familiar old band tunes. In one corner of the park reenactors sometimes pitch their tents near a camp fire and remind visitors of the trials and difficulties early pioneers experienced during the Civil War, when bushwhackers harassed and murdered several of the German settlers of the area sympathetic to the Union. Gravestones in nearby cemeteries attest to their names, origin, and age and the fact that they were "Killed by Rebels."



The gravestone of Wilhelm Bodenstab, "killed by the hand of a murderer while defending his home."

Visitors to the town will see many reminders of its German origins. Most of the stores along Main Street have signs in German telling shoppers that the furniture store is "Das Möbel Haus," the Public Library is "Die Bibliothek," and *The Concordian* office is "Die Zeitung." Most of the business owners who display signs in German have helped the sign painter use the correct German definite article *der*, *die*, or *das*--except in one case in which the wrong article is used and the sign announces *Der ... Haus*. This only serves to remind the visitor that, as Mark Twain said, German is indeed a confusing language. But in Concordia, it is a language that is still remembered.

The settlers of Concordia valued the freedom of religion they enjoyed, valued education, and valued their language. Many German books (including a copy of Duden's *Report*), school texts, sheet music, newspapers, and magazines are preserved in museums and private collections. Concordia's weekly paper, *The Concordian*, can look back on over a hundred years of operation in town. It started as a German weekly, *Missouri Thalbote*, or the "Messenger of the Missouri Valley," in Lexington in 1871, moved first to Higginsville and then to Concordia in 1893 with the current name of *The Concordian*. At that time it was under the direction of John J. Bredehoeft, the same person who for many years directed the Concordia band. Presently published and edited by Gary L. Beissenherz, its fall issue extends a hearty *Willkommen* to all who come to participate in and enjoy the German heritage festivities.

Perhaps the most unique celebrations of the Concordia German heritage are theater productions with skits in the Low German dialect, written and performed by Concordians who enjoy using the dialect they spoke at home during their childhood. These events, sponsored by the Low German Club of Concordia, draw large audiences of old and young, most of whom seem to understand the humor of the skits. A mixed choir which presents popular German songs on these occasions soon gets the audience humming along. A visitor to Concordia can almost imagine the Germany from which the ancestors of the actors and singers came.

Bibliographic Note:

To get a schedule of the festivals Low German Theater, and other events in Concordia, write to the Concordia Chamber of Commerce, P. O. Box 143, Concordia, Mo. 64020.

Microfilm copies of the original records of St. John's Evangelical Church, Concordia Baptist Church, and Zion Methodist Church and typescript copies of the translations are available in the respective churches in Concordia through the efforts of community volunteers and staff of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection.

The method used in preserving the old church records was to translate the original German aloud onto a tape recorder; then the tapes were transcribed by a volunteer, the transcriptions were checked for accuracy, revisions were made, and finally we arrived at an accurate English version of the original German document. Documents thus treated were:

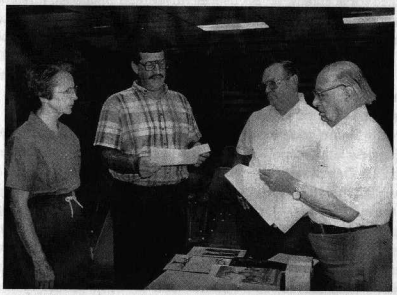
1) The minutes of St. John Evangelical Church of Lafayette County, covering the period 1850 to 1933, were translated and transcribed with the assistance of Don Dittmer, a member of the church in Emma now known as the United Church of Christ.

2) The minutes of the Concordia Baptist Church for the period 1851 to 1922, the Constitution of the Baptist congregation, and the minutes of the Baptist Women's Mission Society, covering the period 1898 to 1922, were translated and transcribed with the assistance of Mrs. Hazel J. Payne. Her meticulous work on this demanding project produced a document which could serve as a model for churches in other communities. A 350-page history covering seventy-five years was made accessible to church members and researchers by Mrs. Payne's transcription of the translation.

3) The minutes of the Quarter-Annual Conferences as well as the church records, designated as the *Kirchenbuch*, begun in 1861, covering the period 1860 to 1893 and 1898 to 1920

respectively, of the Zion Methodist Church, formerly Freedom Zion Methodist Church, were translated, edited, and transcribed with the assistance of Mrs. Ruth Rodewald.

With the authorization of the three church councils the Western Historical Manuscript Collection at the University of Missouri in Columbia had the original documents as well as the English transcriptions microfilmed and deposited in the "German Heritage Archive" at WHMC, 23 Ellis Library. On July 29, 1995, at a small ceremony in the Concordia City Hall, representatives of



Ruth Rodewald, Jerry Basye, Kenneth Mieser accept microfilms from A.E. Schroeder

the three congregations were presented with a copy of the microfilm of their respective church records and a copy of the translation. Thus St. John and/or Bethel United Church of Christ,

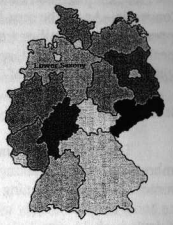
Concordia Baptist Church, and Zion Methodist Church now have in their possession their original German documents as well as the accompanying English translations, which constitute a valuable contribution of the Missouri Humanities Council sponsored project "Preserving the Concordia Area German Heritage."

A note on spelling: Readers will notice that Keel and Schroeder spell the province in Germany from which the settlers of Concordia came "Hannover." This is the German spelling. Dr. Wilson uses the English spelling, "Hanover," in her essay.

Textile Production in Concordia, Missouri

Laurel E. Wilson, Ph.D.
University of Missouri at Columbia

Textile production, including many forms of fiber and needle art, was traditionally passed from parent to child, especially in rural communities that had limited access to ready-made goods. That has changed because today even people living in rural communities have access to all kinds of manufactured goods including all the forms of textile production. However, even though it is no longer necessary for women to produce the textiles for household use, women continue to make lace, embroider, quilt, and weave. This project was to document surviving folk traditions including textile production in Concordia, Missouri—originally settled by Germans from Lower Saxony, located in northwest Germany.



Map showing the Lower Saxony Province in Germany.
Maps on File.

Textile production done in other Missouri communities where Germans were the dominant cultural group has been studied but, until now, the textiles of Concordia have not been investigated. In his study of German folkways in Missouri, Charles van Ravenswaay[1] found very little evidence of textiles that included clear German characteristics. Instead, he found that the kinds of textiles being produced in the predominantly German communities located along the Missouri River were very much like

the textiles made by other Missourians. On the other hand, Horn and Wilson[2] found that the textiles made in Bethel, Missouri, a communalistic settlement in northeast Missouri, displayed typical German characteristics including an expanded point twill weave structure and a bound edge finishing technique used on woven blankets. It was somewhat expected that the textiles of Concordia would display German influences because so many other German cultural and traditional customs had been retained during the 150 years that Germans had been the dominant group in and near Concordia. As can be seen by the list of tradition bearers (see appendix), most families are of German extraction and many still speak or understand the German dialect their ancestors used in the Lower Saxony Province of Germany.

Background

Textile production including spinning, weaving, embroidery, and lacemaking was usually the responsibility of women. Although spinning and weaving were commonly done in the home to clothe family members and to serve the textile needs of the household, very little had been written about textile production until it became an uncommon part of women's activities. Special textile arts have been documented because these arts were considered to require special skill or special materials, or were used for special purposes. These special textile arts included embroidery and lace production and were often used to embellish churches or the dress of wealthy and powerful people.

The women of Concordia, Missouri, are noted for excellence in the needle arts that embellish their homes and for weaving sturdy rugs that are both beautiful and practical. Most of these women learned the needle arts from their mothers when producing textiles and clothing for the family was part of a

woman's responsibility to her family. Every young woman was not only expected to know how to sew, she was required to know because her family depended on her skill with a needle. Typically, as her skill increased so did her enjoyment of the process of creating beautiful things of thread and fabric. The women of Concordia, Missouri, come from a proud heritage of textile production and have carried on this tradition in the form of woven blankets and rugs, laces such as pulled work, tatting, crochet, and cut work lace, embroidered, appliqued, and pieced quilts, and embroidered work of all kinds. The most striking aspect of the textile arts produced in Concordia is the quality and quantity of work accomplished by women of all ages and the number of community activities that revolve around textile production. This activity points to community values with regard to how women spend their time and the kinds of work respected by the community.

Method of Study

This study was accomplished by interviewing those who were actively involved in textile production. I interviewed 27 people about their work and the work of their ancestors, which I photographed, and when possible I photographed the place where they did their work. Each of those involved in these activities was asked when she learned the needle art and from whom she learned it. Each of the needleworkers showed me examples of her work and some showed me where the work was done. The type of needlework done and how it compares to needlework done in Germany and other German communities in Missouri provides one framework for discussing textile production of Concordia, Missouri. Themes that were common to a number of the needleworkers form another framework for discussing the work done by the women and the one man I interviewed.

Types of Textile Art and their Relationship to Concordia Textiles

Embroidery

The embroidery created in Lower Saxony was particularly admired and has been collected in museums in Germany and in France. M.E. Jones[3] noted that numerous examples of 14th- and 15th-century work, most having religious themes, can be seen in collections of the textile arts of Lower Saxony in Hanover. Most of the embroidery was done on coarsely woven linen because it could be more easily worked with the woolen yarns that were used to decorate the fabric.[4] By the 16th century, German embroiderers preferred colored linen yarns over the woolen ones because finer work could be done in linen. Even this changed during the 17th century, for after the Edict of Nantes was revoked Protestant silk weavers and lacemakers fled from France to northeastern Germany, bringing the silk production industry with them. German embroiderers quickly adopted the use of silk fabric as a ground for embroidery worked in silken yarns. Even after textile production was mechanized in the 19th century, German hand embroiderers continued working stitched patterns into fabric. The most famous 19th-century German embroidery was Berlin work, a craze that soon became popular in the United States. Fine embroidery that included Berlin work in addition to other finer embroidery was fostered in Germany at a school for needlework in Crefeld.[5]

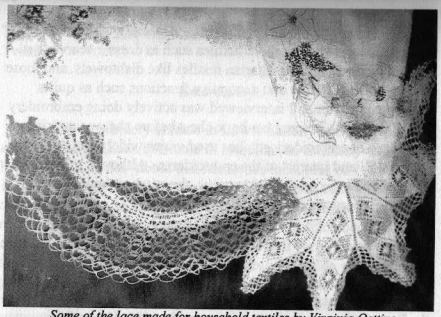
It is probable that the tradition of doing fine embroidery was carried from Germany to Concordia because the skill was passed from mothers and grandmothers and is still honored by the women whose families settled the area. Embroidery is one of the most common of the needle arts practiced by Concordia women. It

embellishes special occasion clothing—especially christening gowns, decorative household textiles such as dresser scarves and framed pictures, more utilitarian textiles like dishtowels, and those having both utilitarian and decorative functions such as quilts. Nearly every woman I interviewed was actively doing embroidery or had done it to prepare her hope chest before she was married. The types of embroidery stitches used varies widely and depends on the skill and interest of the embroiderer. Although most of these women use preprinted patterns, the stitches they use were learned from mothers and grandmothers.

Lacemaking

Another tradition that began in Lower Saxony and is still practiced by Concordia women is that of lacemaking. Even before the French Huguenots fled to Germany in 1685, Upper Saxony was known for the quality of the lace produced there. The most renowned of the 16th- and 17th-century laces were the cut work embroidered laces and embroidery on net. Drawn work, in which whole cloth is partially unwoven and sets of threads are bound together, and bobbin lace, an interlacing technique, were included in the folk costume of Lower Saxony.[6] After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the city of Hamburg, which is located on the border of Lower Saxony, became a refuge for the French lacemakers who made fabulous gold and silver lace that was known as Hamburg point.[7] As late as the early 20th century there were still men who made lace living in Saxony, probably descendants of the French who fled to Germany in the 17th century.[8] The German lacemakers were women who used this technique to decorate their own clothing and household textiles.

The lacemakers of Concordia use the lace they make primarily in household textiles rather than for clothing. Crochet is



Some of the lace made for household textiles by Virginia Oetting

the most common form of lace made by Concordia women. Crochet is one of the easiest of the lacemaking techniques and was developed long after bobbin lace, which is a form of weaving. Although crochet hooks were used in the 18th century in conjunction with some other lace making techniques, it wasn't until the 1840s that crochet laces came into their own in Ireland. It then spread very rapidly because it can be made quickly by a novice or can be used to form very complex patterns by a skilled person. It often resembles some of the very time-consuming laces that require much practice to make a good quality product.

Tatted laces are also fairly common in Concordia. The shuttle used for tatting is like that used in making fishnets. It is therefore possible that the technique is very old although I was unable to find a reference that cited when tatting was first used for embellishing textiles. These laces are often very delicate and

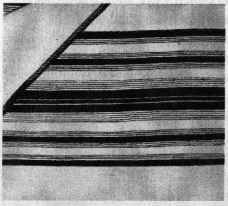
because of this they often trim the neck, sleeves, and hems of baby dresses.

Cut work embroidery and pulled work were traditionally done in the Lower Saxony region of Germany and are still sometimes done by Concordia women. The ancestral textiles found in Concordia include more of this work than the work that is currently done. I suspect it is because both of these techniques are very time-consuming, and this kind of work no longer fits into the rhythm of life in late 20th century America.

Weaving

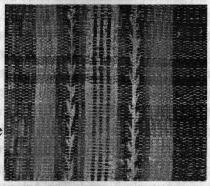
Nearly all Missourians who lived away from the Mississippi or Missouri Rivers did some spinning and weaving for the use of their own families. Most of the fabrics handwoven in the northern part of Missouri were made of wool because most families kept sheep for wool and meat. Because the same fibers and same dyestuffs were available to these rural Missourians, most of the fabrics made tended to be similar no matter what cultural heritage was represented by the weaver. A noted exception was the textile production of the professional weavers of Bethel Colony, Missouri. These characteristically German blankets were produced by six men, one having a master weaver's diploma from Leipzig, and one woman who were members of the communalistic community established by Wilhelm Keil.[9] The blankets were woven on eight and 16 harness looms that were not usually found in Missouri homes. The weave structure used is known as an expanded bird's eye pattern that results in a design featuring diamonds and crosses. The colors used tended to be very intense reds and blues that were arranged in bright plaids. All the blankets made by the professional weavers and other plain blankets made in Bethel Colony were finished by binding the warp ends in a plain

weave fabric to protect the edge that was very susceptible to fraying. This edge protector is another characteristic of German-made blankets.[10]



A blanket made by Emeline Petering, the mother of Louise Oetting.

The few blankets seen in Concordia are all finished with a bound edge protector, and several of the blankets are woven of bright blue and an orange-red like the Bethel coverlets. All the blankets were made by one individual who made them on a simple two or four harness loom for her family. A couple of the blankets seem to have been used but most were carefully folded and placed in a cedar chest where they safely remain in perfect condition. The most common of the woven goods now made in Concordia are beautifully made rag rugs that are done by a number of Concordia women. Each weaver has a particular style of designing warp (lengthwise yarns) stripes and weft (crosswise yarns) stripes. Some weavers twist two colors of the rug filling together to make a pattern sometimes called turkey tracks that is used in the borders at the ends of the rugs.



A rug with a turkey track pattern worked into the borders. Lohoefener House

Quilting

The quilts that are often found in German communities today did not have their origins in Germany but were an American art form. Nancy Roan[11] found that the Germans of Pennsylvania did not use quilts on their beds until the 1820s, 100 years after they had emigrated to North America. By the 1890s Pennsylvania Germans were enthusiastically making quilt after quilt in patterns that were passed from woman to woman. In an Ohio study of quilts R. Clark[12] found that characteristic Germanic aesthetics were found in German communities. Typically the appliqued quilts displayed large motifs of flowers or whirling swastikas arranged so that the design occupied one quarter of a square quilt. The colors of these skillfully stitched quilts were usually red and green appliqued over a white ground. The sectarian quilts made by Amish, Mennonite, Brethren, and Moravian women tended to be pieced with one pieced block alternating with a solid block that combined bright blocks with dark blocks.

Minerva Tebbencamp with the embroidered quilt she was making for her granddaughter.

Concordia women make quilts that are more fashion driven. Quilt patterns that were printed in the *Kansas City Star* and other newspapers and magazines in the 1930s and 1940s[13] are representative of those made by Concordia women in the past. The patterns currently used are sometimes based on those patterns while others can be found in the numerous quilt publications found at newsstands today. There is one notable exception. Many more quilts are made of embroidered

squares than are seen in quilting publications. The embroidery patterns used by Concordia women are not original patterns for the most part; pre-printed squares are purchased and embroidered in the colors preferred by the makers. One maker in particular customizes her quilts by using an embroidery stitch she learned from her grandmother. Nearly all these quilts are pieced with colored sashing or alternating solid blocks separating the embroidered squares.

Comments Concerning Textile Production

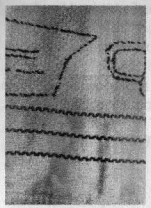
None of the textiles was overtly German in character but the process of creating household and clothing textiles was learned by observing the needlework done by or being taught by female family members. The stitches used in embroidery tend to be the common stitches done by busy women who were responsible for making clothing, preparing food when food preparation was very time-consuming, and caring for children. All of these responsibilities resulted in frequent interruptions that did not interfere with the quality of needlework done in simple stitches. The lacemaking techniques used are also more easily learned and easily done by busy women. Even the weaving done in the past and the present could be done on simple looms. The patterns used for both the blankets and rugs are warp and weft strips that are pretty without being complex, since complexity requires constant attention. The quilts are the most complex of the textiles made by Concordia women and, because they are pieced in small sections then assembled into a larger whole, they too fit into the demands made on the lives of these women.

Common Themes Related to Textile Production

There were four themes that emerged as the most important concerning the meaning of these textiles in the lives of the people who produced them.

"I don't remember being actually taught how. I just remember always being able to do it."
Liese Fischer

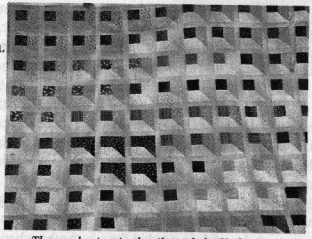
Most of these women had been sewing since they were allowed to hold a needle, imitating the actions of their mothers and grandmothers. Nora Hartwig calls this embroidered dishtowel her first project. It may well have been the first project she and her mother considered good enough to save but a closer examination of the stitches shows that, although somewhat uneven, Nora understood the principles of embroidery and had sufficient needle control to stitch the outlines of the creamer and sugar bowl on her dishtowel. To her chagrin, she found that she had embroidered her picture on the underside of the towel when she had nearly finished the project. In spite of this error she finished her work and went on to embroider many other beautiful pieces that first filled her hope chest then were used to decorate her home. Viola Mieser also learned to sew when very young. She was an accomplished seamstress and embroiderer when she made a housecoat in crazy quilt style to wear at boarding school where she went to earn a teacher's certificate. Viola did not want to spend money to buy fabric needed for a bathrobe when she could make



Nora Hartwig's first embroidery project.

do with materials she found on hand. The result of her handy-work is a beautifully stitched garment of colorful silks and a few velvets. It is cut in a Japanese kimono style that was appearing in fashion magazines during the 1920s. The pieces, interesting in arrangement of color and texture, were arranged randomly except for fans that embellish the back and sleeves. While it may have been a cost-cutting measure, Viola's work must have been admired by others because she has saved it since the 1920s.

Violet Kirchhoff is an excellent example of a person who has learned the womanly art of sewing and now does it for gain as well as pleasure. Violet is a busy farm wife who does most of her sewing for her family. Among the many things she makes are well-dressed baby dolls. The first was made for a granddaughter and was so admired that she agreed to do another in exchange for money. This kind of project is too time-consuming to be fully reimbursed for the materials and time spent making it, so most of Violet's reimbursed products are sturdy rag rugs. Violet's rugs are made with a striped warp that produces a simple pattern that distracts the eye from the dirt these rugs were designed to catch. Most of her rugs have wide borders that provide bold contrast to the body of the rugs.

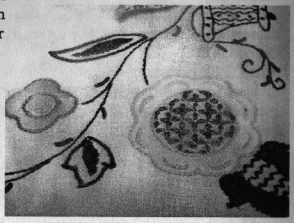


The garden inspired quilt made by Violet Kirchoff.

Although she does not sell her quilts, she

loves making them. She said that this one was inspired by the flower garden in front of her farm house, another activity she enjoys doing. It can be seen from this example that Violet must be a true artist in the garden as well as with the needle.

Grandmothers play particularly important roles in passing along traditional arts to family members. While mothers are busy caring for their offspring, it is often left to grandmothers to teach children the time-consuming task of needlework. It was Mary Jane Borgstadt's grandmother who taught her the boullion stitch, a name Mary Jane learned only recently; she had known it as "grandma's stitch." Her first embroidery was on pillowcases and dresser scarves but now her wonderful boullion stitched embroidery embellishes quilts for which she has received blue ribbons and viewer's choice awards at quilt shows. This stitch is made by anchoring at one end into the textile to be decorated. Then thread is wrapped around the needle, the needle is reinserted into the cloth behind the anchoring stitch and emerges in front of the anchoring stitch to leave a row of thread coils forming a petal of a flower. Her embroidery box, consisting of a Whitman's sampler box, probably resembles those of others in the community.



An example of the boullion stitch made by Mary Jane Borgstadt.

"I quilted till I married."

This theme was one I heard so often I forgot to write down the name of the person who first said it during the course of discussion. Many women said that one of the activities they did before their marriage was to make quilts for their hope chests. Quite a few of the young, single women of Concordia worked away from home in the 1920s and '30s. Some worked at a shoe factory in Sweet Springs while others worked as maids for middle-class families in Kansas City until they returned to Concordia to marry. Both of these groups of young women spent their evening hours doing needlework including piecing, then quilting, fabrics into bedcoverings. Several of the women mentioned saving enough money to buy the materials for quilts which they then made for their hope chests. It took Anna Bushman just under a year to make a double Irish chain quilt in two shades of lavender and white for her hope chest. Although the quilt is a little faded, it is in excellent condition indicating that she did not use it every day but saved it for special occasions.

Anna Bushman and the quilt she made for her hope chest.

After their marriage, these young Concordia women were well-prepared with enough quilts to furnish their households. It was a good thing they were prepared because the work of being a housewife in the 1930s and '40s was a full-time job. Cooking and caring for children required time that they had once spent making quilts. Now that these women have raised their families and have retired from jobs they held outside the home, they are once again making quilts, this time for their grandchildren.

"It is a good pastime."

Irene Lohman

Many of the women I interviewed said they never watch television, although everyone has one, but instead spend their time doing embroidery, quilting, weaving, and sewing. Others liked television but always had a project in process. Nearly all of them said, "It is a good pastime." Women's work of caring for the family, including cooking, cleaning, and community involvement, could require every minute of every day. Because of these heavy demands on a woman's time, it makes sense that she might engage herself in an activity she could use to say, "I'm busy, don't bother me," or an activity in which she could listen to a husband or child and still feel as though she was accomplishing something she could see.

Virginia Oetting passes her time

Virginia Oetting and her embroidered dishtowels.

considers the textile arts a good pastime. Interestingly his textile work began with woodworking. He built a lath house in his yard but couldn't find anyone to take a picture of it. His wife does quilting and had some fabric left over from other projects so Clarence decided he could use that fabric and make a picture of his woodworking project. That led to another picture of the lath house then to quilt after quilt after quilt. By fall 1992, Clarence had made over 100 quilts, all pieced and quilted on his sewing machine. Although no one will say, I think that the women of Concordia think it is all right for Clarence to machine quilt because he is a man. I doubt that machine quilting would be as accepted if it were done by a woman. All the quilting done by the women of Concordia, without exception, was hand done.

"It is good to be among people."

Viola Mieser

Many of the women in Concordia are widows whose children lead very busy lives. Quilting and other group activities provide a reason for people to get together while at the same time contributing to their community. The quilting circles that meet once a week at St. Paul's

The quilters at the Senior Citizen Center.

Lutheran Church and at Bethel Church use proceeds from quilting for mission purposes, a way of linking their community to other communities. Individuals bring quilt tops, some pieced by mothers and grandmothers who did not have time or inclination to finish the quilts, to these quilters. There are always at least two quilting circles at St. Paul's Lutheran Church and usually one quilt that is in the process of being removed from a quilt frame or being prepared for quilting. Women who enjoy making decisions about the patterns used will decide which of the large collection of templates to use and will mark the quilt; if several quilts are already in process, one person will volunteer to mark the quilt so it can be put into the quilt frame the next time. The other women stay busy quilting the two tops usually in progress and talk about community events and concerns. One person proposed that the quilting circles at St. Paul's Church be suspended between Thanksgiving and Christmas but most of the women protested because it provides an important way for them to make a worthwhile contribution to their community as well as have social contact they don't get in their homes apart from family members and friends.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church quilters.

At the Senior Citizen Center there is room for just one quilt frame but because they meet every day, nearly as many quilts are completed there as at the two churches. Typically, a quilt is finished every two weeks. Anyone can have this group work on a quilt. They charge a fee for each yard of thread worked into a quilt and, because they know how many yards of thread in each spool used, figure the charges by the spool. Thanks to the efforts of the Senior Citizen Center quilters, the mortgage for their building was paid long before it was due. The seniors had a mortgage burning ceremony to celebrate.

Summary

Textile production provides a way of leaving a legacy to family members who may have no other contact with ancestors but through the stories of the blankets woven or christening dresses made. The legacy also takes the form of lessons passed from mother and grandmother to daughters and granddaughters. Needlework can provide a means of seeing accomplishment in busy lives that might have few signs of tangible products and provides a means of controlling at least a little time for relaxation and contemplation. Perhaps best of all, textile production in Concordia, Missouri, provides a way to "be among people."

The work done by women is often seen as trivial; it is work that is so commonly done that investigating its meaning to the makers is considered unimportant. This and other projects concerning textile production have been funded, indicating these attitudes are changing. However many of the textiles that were made for comfort and beauty were made by people who **"never left their names behind."** (Marie Schluter)

Appendix

List of people in Concordia who shared their textiles.

Melba Boeschen
Elma Bokelman
Mary Jane Borgstadt
Edna Brackman
Dorothy Bushman
Nora Dittmer
Liese Fischer
Mildred Flandermeyer
Irma Friedling
Nora Hartwig
Lydia Heinz
Selma Hinck
Violet Kirchhoff
Irene Limbach
Irene Lohman
Viola Mieser
Esther Nierman
Louise Oetting
Helen Ohrenberg
Buddy Samuels
Marie Schluter
Nyla Shepard
Virginia Thieman

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The Low German Dialect of Concordia, Missouri

William D. Keel
University of Kansas

Well, wi wohn över der Strate vun den College--vun St. Paul's College--un wi wohn op 'n Farm un dat Heunerhuus was recht dicht bi de Strate twüschen den College un usem Farm--un wi hadn witte Heuner un de witten Heuner, de lööpn jümmer över de Strate (op) na den College hin--un einmaal do güng mien Mama na--wull de Heuner fuddern un do keem se in Huus un do seggt se to mien Papa: De Heuner, de slaapt alle. Ach, seggt Papa, wat is dat denn. Do geiht he hin. Ja, de Heuner, de slaapt. Do nimmt he een vun de Heuner un nimmt se na en Dokterken in de Stadt un do seggt de Dokter: De Heuner, de sünd besoppen. Un seggt Papa: Dat kann nich angahn dat de besoppen sünd. De hett schon nix had, wat de besoppen makt. Ja, de sünd aber besoppen. Do geiht he na Huus hin un seggt he to Mama: De Heuner, de sünd besoppen--geiht he in Heunerhuus hin--do kickt he in dat Ding, wo de Heuner utdrinken doot, un schluckt dat en beten--un dat röök na Beer. Do sünd de College-Jungs bigahn un hett do Beer in dat Water doon un hett all use Heuner besoppen makt![1]

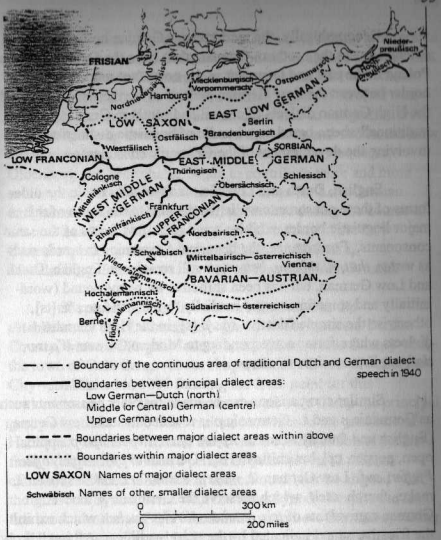
Erna Stuenkel Frerking (recorded Concordia, MO, February 1993)

Within two hundred miles of the University of Kansas in Lawrence the interested traveler can locate numerous communities which were settled largely by Germans. To this day, some one hundred fifty years after the original settlements, the German dialects brought by those immigrants have persisted. One can still find hundreds of speakers of these dialects who now fondly recall

them as the language of family and community in their youth. Anecdotes, children's rhymes, and reminiscences of those earlier years often can be recalled in the local dialect easier than in the now dominant English.

For several years now various events might lead one to believe that there is a renaissance of Low German dialects and culture in western Missouri. Low German theater groups have staged performances of skits in the local dialects in the communities of Concordia and Cole Camp in Missouri.[2] In preparation for these events, community members have offered language instruction in the Low German dialects to participants in the skits and others interested in refreshing their knowledge of their mother tongue or learning the immigrant dialect of their forebears.[3] In May 1994 the Missouri Synod Lutheran St. Paul's Church in Concordia held a Low German church service featuring a choir singing favorite hymns in the Low German dialect.[4] It often seems that everywhere one looks a community or a church group in western Missouri is celebrating its Low German heritage. Are these events signs of resilience and even of a renaissance of immigrant dialects after almost a century and a half of acculturation and assimilation to the dominant American English culture?

The history of Low German takes us back to the Germanic migrations from southern Scandinavia at the beginning of the Christian era. Those Germanic clans or tribes that settled along the North Sea Coast from roughly the Danish peninsula in the north to the mouth of the Rhine River in the south are the direct ancestors of several related languages: Modern Dutch in the Netherlands, Frisian in a few isolated areas along the North Sea Coast in the Netherlands and in Germany, Modern English and its dialects, and the dialects known collectively as Low German.



Map 1. Low German dialects (northern area of map). Source: Steven Barbour and Patrick Stevenson, *Variation in German: A Critical Approach to German Sociolingusitics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 76.

Geographically, the modern Low German homeland extends across the northern German plain from the Dutch border to Poland in the east and Denmark in the north (see map 1). The border between the Low German dialects of northern Germany and the High German dialects of central and southern Germany has traditionally been based on a bundle of linguistic distinctions involving the development of the Germanic consonants.

English, Dutch and Low German typically retain the older forms of these consonants while the dialects to the south of this major linguistic border exhibit altered or shifted forms of the same consonants. For instance, the historical Germanic *t* in words such as *water, that, it, tide, to, better, sit* still remains in English, Dutch and Low German, but has been shifted to an *s*-type sound (word-initially and sometimes word-medially to the affricate *z/tz* [ts], otherwise the simple fricative *s/ss/ß* [s]) in the High German dialects where forms corresponding to Modern German *Wasser, daß, es, Zeit, zu, besser, sitzen.*

Similar comparisons can be made for other consonants such as Germanic *p* and *k*. Germanic *p* is retained in such Low German (English and Dutch) words as *Appel, open, Peper, up/op* 'apple, open, pepper, up', but shifts in High German to *pfff: Apfel, offen, Pfeffer, auf.* Low German *ik, maken, Kark/Kerk, söken/säuken* 'I, make, church, seek', which preserve the Germanic *k*, have High German equivalents of *ich, machen, Kirche, suchen* which exhibit the fricative sound indicated by the <ch> spelling. All in all, Low German is characteristically more similar to English than to modern High German as can be seen by such structures as *dat Water is to deep* 'the water is too deep' vs. a High German *das Wasser ist zu tief.*[5]

Settlement by groups of Low German-speaking immigrants was quite limited in the Colonial period--if we ignore the very first group settlement in Germantown, Pennsylvania, of 1683 whose members came from the Low Franconian region of Krefeld near the Dutch border.[6] With the dramatic increase in emigration from German-speaking areas of Europe in the 1820s and 1830s, the Low German regions of northern Germany, especially Hannover, Oldenburg and Westphalia, began to contribute more and more settlers to the New World. The source areas for Low German emigrants expanded eastward and northward during the course of the nineteenth century to encompass the entirety of the Low German-speaking area, including Schleswig-Holstein, Mecklenburg, Pommerania as well as East and West Prussia.

Of special interest in western Missouri was the establishment of a Lutheran stronghold in northeastern Benton County, western Morgan County and southern Pettis County with the town of Cole Camp--about sixty miles southwest of Jefferson City--established in 1839 forming the focal point for this settlement area.[7] In the rural areas around Cole Camp the principal group of settlers came from various locations in the province of Hannover. In the town itself there was a concentration of settlers from Westphalia. Within a period of years several Lutheran churches had been established, some would later be aligned with the Missouri Synod, some with the Iowa Synod. Despite the fact that most members of this community were Low German-speaking Lutherans it was deemed quite sinful for a young man of the Missouri Synod to date a young woman from the Iowa Synod and vice versa--these communities had a somewhat different concept of a mixed marriage.[8]

At approximately the same time Hannoverians were also settling in southern Lafayette County and western Saline County

about fifty miles north of Cole Camp.[9] In 1840 the St. Paul's Lutheran Church was organized in Concordia in Freedom Township. German Baptist and German Evangelical churches were also soon organized in and near Concordia. St. Paul's first pastor, the Rev. Adolf Franke who had studied at the University of Jena in Germany, participated in the organization of the Missouri Synod (The German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States) on 26 April 1847 in Chicago. The St. Paul's congregation formally joined the Missouri Synod in 1854. The ties of the Concordia Hannoverians to the Missouri Synod were solidified with the establishment of St. Paul's College in 1883 which served to prepare young men to enter the pastorate.

The Low German settlements of Concordia and Cole Camp have persevered in the retention of the dialect to the present day. Most speakers are over fifty years of age since the generation born after World War II has not acquired the ancestral mother tongue from their parents and grandparents. The forces of assimilation and the difficult years, especially during and after World War I, have led to the near total loss of both literary German and the Low German dialects in these communities. Only the oldest members of these communities learned standard German or *Hochdeutsch*. By 1948 only three of the six Missouri Synod churches in the Cole Camp vicinity were still holding services in High German. In Concordia 333 attended the German worship service at St. Paul's Church on 5 August 1951, while 551 attended the English service that same day. By the early 1960s the use of High German in church had ceased.[10]

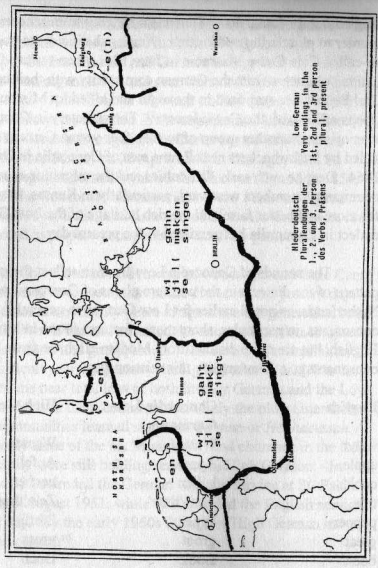
Both Concordia and Cole Camp experienced early discrimination for their pro-Union and anti-slavery sympathies as Missouri and the rest of the country approached the Civil War. Both communities suffered losses during the Civil War, being

singled out for brutal acts of terrorism ranging from random acts of murder to plundering and looting. Among the incidents was the so-called Cole Camp Massacre in June 1861 when twenty-five Union volunteers from the German community with their captain Carl Brühl were surprised in the night and killed by Missouri state troops allied with the Confederacy.[11] The cemetery in Concordia memorializes another group of twenty-four young German men killed by bushwhackers near Emma east of Concordia in October 1864. Despite such early difficulties and the migration of many community members westward, particularly to Kansas, in search for more and better farmland the rich heritage of the Low German dialect in Concordia has persisted to the present day.

The sounds of Concordia Low German reflect the sound pattern of the dialects in the northern plains of Germany and the Netherlands, as noted earlier for Low German in general.[12] The consonants, in particular, share many features found in Modern English, but are quite distinct from Modern High German. The consonants *p, t, k,* exemplify this relationship:.

English	**Concordia Low German**	**High German**
water	Water	Wasser
apple	Appel	Apfel
cook	koken	kochen
tide	Tiet 'time'	Zeit 'time'
pepper	Peper	Pfeffer
great	groot	gross
book	Book	Buch

The High German consonants reflect a shift from the historical West Germanic system whereas the consonants of English and



Map 2. East Low German and West Low German present tense plural verb conjugation. Source: Reuben Epp, *The Story of Low German and* Plautdietsch (Hillsboro, KS: The Reader's Press, 1993), p. 39.

Concordia Low German preserve to a large extent the older pattern.

Within the larger group of Low German dialects, Concordia Low German can be localized as a Low German dialect primarily on the basis of its grammatical structures and its vocabulary. The broad spectrum of Low German and Dutch dialects is divided into three larger groups based on the conjugation of the present tense plural forms of verbs (see map 2). An eastern group (referred to as East Low German), which is now limited to those dialects in the northern part of the former East Germany, exhibits a consistent *-en* ending for all three persons in the present plural. This same pattern is also found in some of the coastal dialects along the North Sea and in the northern Netherlands (it is also the standard pattern for Modern Dutch). A second type (*-en, -et, -en*) occurs in the southwest of the Low German/Dutch area along the Lower Rhine (these dialects are often called Lower Rhenish) and in Germany and the Netherlands and in northern Belgium (and is reflected in Modern Standard German as well). The third type exhibits *-et* for all three persons in the present tense plural and is found consistently in northwestern Germany from Westphalia to Schleswig-Holstein. It is this third type (also known as West Low German) which we find in Concordia Low German as the following plural conjugations illustrate (the *e* of the ending often drops out):

English	**E. Low German**	**Low Rhenish**	**Concordia**
we make	wi maken	wi maken	wi maakt
you make	ji maken	ji maakt	ji maakt
they make	se maken	se maken	se maakt

While the present tense plural forms of the verb provide us with a general geographic location for the origins of Concordia Low German, a series of other grammatical distinctions permits a very precise localization. One such item is the use of *mi* 'me' for the dative case as opposed to *mik* as in the phrases *mi geiht dat jo gans schlecht* 'I feel pretty bad' or *segge mi maal, wat machst du äten* 'tell me once, what you like to eat'. This distinction excludes the southeast of the West Low German region near the city of Hannover.

Another characteristic of Concordia Low German is the vowel *-o-* the past participle *broken* 'broken' as opposed to *-ua-* found in Westphalian dialects in the southwestern area of West Low German. Concordia Low German also uses a form of *jück* 'you' for the plural objective pronoun, preserves the final *-e* in the plural form *Göse* 'geese', and exhibits the verb forms *he hett* 'he has' and *ik bin* 'I am'.[13] Taken together these characteristics place the dialect in the state of Lower Saxony in northern Germany southeast of the confluence of the Weser and Aller rivers, perhaps along the Leine River and in the vicinity of the Steinhuder Meer (see map 3). Within this area is found the farming village of Rodewald from which several of the early founders of Concordia emigrated.[14]

Confirming the strong maintenance of a very localized form of Low German in Concordia is the evidence of a unique vocabulary preserved over several generations. While Concordia shares many vocabulary items with its sister Low German dialects, it exhibits several words that tie it most closely with the Rodewald region.[15] For instance, the word for 'cream' found in Concordia is *Flött*. Similarly the word for 'strawberry' is *Artjebeere* and the word for 'gooseberry' is *Stickebeer*. The coincidence of these three forms is precisely the area along the Leine River described above.

Map 3. West Low German dialect groups. Concordia Low German corresponds to the area along the *jul/jück*-border directly northwest of the city of Hannover (near the "O" in the word "Ost-") and south and east of the two rivers indicated (south of the Aller and east of the Weser). Source: *Lexikon der germanistischen Linguistik*, 2d ed., p. 460.

These forms are indeed quite rare in the modern Low German dialects where one typically finds forms such as *Sahne, Schmand,* or *Rohm* for 'cream', *Erdbeere* or *Arbeere* for 'strawberry', and *Stickelbeer, Stickbeer,* or *Krissbeer* for 'gooseberry'.

Other vocabulary items are less precise but also limit the area of origin for the dialect. The verb 'to pull' in Concordia is *teihn* which only occurs in a narrow corridor from north to south from the North Sea between Bremen and Hamburg to the Low German/High German border. To the east and west the Low German dialects generally use the verb *trecken* in this sense. Also, the use of the forms *vandaage* and *vanmorgen* for 'today' and 'this morning' in Concordia Low German limits the eastward extent of the dialect since the eastern Low German area consistently evidences forms such as *hütt, hütte, hidde* for 'today' and *hütt morgen,* etc. for 'this morning'. The only exception to this are the West Prussian dialects of the Mennonites who emigrated to Polish Prussia from the Netherlands and northwestern Germany in the sixteenth century and today preserve forms such as *vandoog* 'today' in their version of Low German in speech islands on the Great Plains in Canada and the United States.[16]

Characteristically Low German are the following vocabulary items in the Concordia dialect: *Poggen* 'frog'; *Söge* 'sow, female swine'; *Farken* 'young pig'; *Suernkohl* 'sauerkraut'; *Wuddel* 'carrot'; *Deern* 'girl'; *lütjet* 'little'; *Brauer* 'brother'; *Huus* 'house'; *Buukweih* 'stomachache'; *Kauh, Keih* 'cow, cows'; *Anten* 'duck'; *Peerd* 'horse'; *Swien* 'hog'; *Schaape* 'sheep'; *Goos* 'goose'; *Ketuufel* 'potato'; *Sünnabend* 'Saturday'; *Middeweken* 'Wednesday'; *Harfst* 'autumn'; *Wiehnachten* 'Christmas'.

The following sentences provide some samples of Concordia Low German:

Wen hett he dat seggt? 'Who did he tell that to?'

Ji mött beide noch en beten wassen. 'Both of you have to grow a little.'

Doot diene Feuten weih? 'Do your feet hurt?

Ik bin gans meue! 'I'm worn out!'

Ik bruuk dat nich te doon. 'I don't have to do that.'

Wi mött Unkruut utteihn. 'We have to pull out (the) weeds.'

Tütt di warm an. 'Dress warmly.'

Wi kört Plattdüütsch. 'We speak Low German.'

The following verb conjugations are also typical of Concordia Low German:

Infinitive:	*slaapen* 'to sleep'	*ween* 'to be'	*hebben* 'to have'
Present Tense:			
ik	*slaap*	*bin*	*heff*
du	*slöppst*	*bist*	*hest*
he, se	*slöppt*	*is*	*hett*
wi, ji, se	*slaapt*	*sünd*	*hett*

Past Tense:			
he	*hett slaapen*	*was*	*hett hatt*

While it was noted at the beginning of this essay that scores of individuals are able to speak some Low German, it is also clear that the communicative needs which were earlier served by Low German are now served by English. Low German has become a marker of a community's heritage and a signal of group identity, but it no longer is used for everyday conversation or interaction in the community. The efforts to preserve the various Low German dialects in the American Midwest will have modest success in that the dialects will be documented, described, tape recorded and even video recorded prior to the extinction of these dialects.

The recent Low German service at Concordia, Missouri, in May 1994 provides some significant insights into the current situation. The attendance at the service was 378 which exceeded the expectations of the organizers. Some in attendance observed that they were glad to see the people of Concordia keeping Low German in use and making attempts to keep people interested in the language. Others found it refreshing to learn that people cared so much about their heritage. Local children, however, understood practically nothing of the Low German in the service. Many of the guests stated they enjoyed the service but understood nothing. Even those who grew up speaking Low German were often puzzled by the texts used in the service. Of course, the language was never a written language to these people, but rather only a spoken idiom.[17]

Thus we must conclude, despite the flurry of present-day activity in Low German dialects in Kansas and Missouri, that the now living generation of speakers will be the last to have any fluency in the dialects. Indeed, there really does not exist a following generation of even partially fluent speakers. Those born after the period between the two world wars simply did not grow up in an environment where it was

necessary to communicate in Low German and thus did not learn the dialect completely, if at all.

Notes

1. In English: "Well, we lived across the street from the college--from St. Paul's College--and we lived on a farm and the chicken house was right next to the street between the college and our farm--and we had white chickens and the white chickens, they always ran across the street to the college--and one time my mother wanted to feed the chickens and she came into the house and said to my father: 'The chickens are all sleeping!' 'Oh,' said father, 'now what's the matter?' He went out [to the chicken house]. Sure enough, the chickens were all sleeping. He took one of the chickens to a doctor in the town and the doctor said: 'The chickens are drunk.' Father said: 'They can't be drunk. They haven't had anything that would make them drunk.' 'Well, they are still drunk.' So father came home and said to mother: 'The chickens are all drunk!' He went out to the chicken house and looked into the thing that the chickens drink out of and tasted that a little--it tasted like beer! The boys from the college had gone and poured beer into water and made all of our chickens drunk!"

2. The Concordia Low German Club "Hadn Tohopa" has performed its skits each October since the fall of 1990. The Cole Camp group evolved out of a 150th anniversary celebration of the founding of Cole Camp in 1989. Cole Camp has also produced a volume on the Low German heritage of the community *Hier Snackt Wi Plattduetsch* (Cole Camp, 1990) and offers video recordings of its skits for sale.

3. Viola Mieser, a retired second grade teacher in Concordia, has produced a series of lessons for learning pronunciation and basic

conversation in the Concordia Low German dialect (Ms, n.d.). Mrs. Mieser has graciously provided Xerox copies of these handwritten materials to the Max Kade Center for German-American Studies at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

4. Rev. Alfred Rodewald conducted the Low German worship service in Concordia on 22 May 1994. He had previously conducted a Low German service in Cole Camp in 1992.

5. Orthography for all Low German forms, including those recorded during interviews in Concordia, Missouri, is based on the usage in the *Plattdeutsches Wörterbuch*, ed. Wolfgang Lindow (Bremen: Institut für Niederdeutsche Sprache, 1984). Dialect orthography is a much disputed issue, especially in a German-American context. I have attempted to present the forms in the most accessible manner rather than in a narrow phonetic transcription.

6. For a thorough discussion of the issues surrounding this first group settlement of Germans in the American Colonies see Helmut E. Huelsbergen, "The First Thirteen Families: Another Look at the Religious and Ethnic Background of the Emigrants from Crefeld (1683)," *Yearbook of German-American Studies* 18 (1983): 29-40.

7. See J. Neale Carman, "Foreign Language Units of Kansas," TMs (1974), University of Kansas Archives, Spencer Research Library, Lawrence, KS, 3:406ff

8. Informal interview with Fred Viebrock of Cole Camp background, Lawrence, KS, 14 September 1994.

9. Carman, 3:409ff., and [Rev. Alfred W. Rodewald and others], *Descending Love--Ascending Praise: St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Concordia, Mo., 1840-1990* (n.p., n.d.), especially pp. 13-92.

10. Carman, pp. 407, 411.

11. Steven Rowan, "Civil War/*Bürgerkrieg*: The Cole Camp Massacre, June 1861," *Der Maibaum* 2.1 (Spring 1994): 7-8, and Bob Owens, "Civil War/*Bürgerkrieg*: The Battle of Cole Camp," *Der Maibaum* 2.1 (Spring 1994): 11-13.

12. Dialect forms and sentences in Concordia Low German were recorded during interviews with subjects in February 1993. This research was supported by a heritage preservation grant from the Missouri Humanities Council. Professor Adolf Schroeder of the University of Missouri-Columbia facilitated the initial contacts with Low German speakers in Concordia. The orthographic transcription will often not indicate some of the actual pronunciations such as the vocalization of /r/ which is quite frequent: *wi kört* 'we speak' is actually pronounced something like *kö-et*, for example. I have also used *aa* where a backed, slightly rounded /a/ occurs, as in the verb *slaapen* 'to sleep'.

13. Some subjects used Standard German *hast* and *hat* in place of the common Low German forms *hest* and *hett* in the present tnese singular conjugation of the verb 'to be'.

14. *Descending Love--Ascending Praise*, p. 146.

15. Analysis of vocabulary in Concordia Low German is based on the documentation of specific vocabulary items in the twenty-two volume *Deutscher Wortatlas,* ed. Walther Mitzka and Ludwig Erich Schmitt (Gießen: Wilhelm Schmitz, 1951-73).

16. See William D. Keel, "From the Netherlands to Kansas: Mennonite Low German, *Heritage of the Great Plains* 27.2 (Summer 1994): 39-50; and William D. Keel, "A Russian-German Settlement Dialect in Kansas: *Plautdietsch* in South Central

Kansas, in *The German Language in America, 1683-1991*, ed. Joseph C. Salmons (Madison, WI: Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies, 1993), pp. 138-57.

17. Ruth Rodewald, "Widespread Interest in First-Known Low German Service in Concordia, Mo.," News Release, Concordia, MO, 25 May 1994.

Plattdeutsch Gottesdeenst *
(Low German Divine Service)

Dat anfangt Musik		Prelude
Grusen un wat bekannt to maken is.		Greetings and Announcements

Gemeen seegt dat *Gloria Patri*
Ehr wees den Vatter un den Söhn un den Hilligen Geest, as dat wörr in'n Anfang,
nu un all de Daag un von evig Tiet to evig Tiet. Amen.

Pastor:	Kyrie eleison.	Kyrie eleison.
Gemeen:	Herr, erbarm di doch!	Lord, have mercy on us!
Pastor:	Christe eleison,	Christe eleison,
Gemeen:	Christus, erbarm di doch!	Christ have mercy on us!
Pastor:	Kyrie eleison.	Kyrie eleison.
Gemeen:	Herr, erbarm di över us!	Your mercy be upon us!
Pastor:	In di, lebe Gott, is us Hoffnung!	In you, dear God, is our hope!

Chor: Singt een Leed: *Alleen Gott in de Hööchd de Ehr* *All Glory Be to God on High*

1. Alleen Gott in de Hööchd de Ehr
un Dank för all sien Gnaaden,
dorüm dat nu un nümmermehr
us röhren kann keen Schaaden.
Een goot Gefalln Gott an us hett,
de us to Segen kaamen lett;
all Stried hett nu een Ennen.

2. Wi laavt di, dries di, bedt di an,
dien Ehr singt wi mit Danken,
üm dat du, Gott, von Anfang an
regeerst alleen ahn Wanken.
Nich uttomeren is dien Macht,
dat kummt, as du't hest wullt un dacht,
woll us, wi sund dien Kinner.

3. O Jesus Christus, Gott sien Söhn,
ut Gnaaden Minsch us worden,
de du för all wullt Heiland ween,
de hier in Sünn verlooren.
Hest geven di in düüster Noot,
büst för us storven bittern Dood:
Schenk du us dien Erbarmen!

4. O Hilligen Geest, du höchste Goot,
von Gott dörch Jesus geven,
schenk du us Glooven schenk us Moot
stüür du us' Christenleven:
Bring du tosaamen dien Gemeen,
laat us in Freden een bi een
nu Gott sien Riek hier booen!

Pastor:	De Herr Gott wees mit jo.	The Lord God be with you.
Gemeen:	Sien Wohrheit mit di.	His truth be with you.
Pastor:	Laat us behen ...	Let us pray.
Gemeen:	Amen.	
Pastor:	De Lesung	The readings
Gott maakt Himmel un Eer 1 Mose 1, 1–5		*God created heaven and earth* Genesis 1:1–5

Ganz in den Anfang hett Gott Himmel un Eer maakt. Un up de Eer see dat düster un wöost ut, un över dat Water wörr dat stickendüüster. Aver Gott sien Geest swev över de Floot.

Courtesy of Rev. Alfred W. Rodewald