

GERMAN SETTLERS IN THE MORETON BAY REGION 1838-1914

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This paper looks at general trends, and is not intended as a detailed study, but rather as an easily readable account of an important contribution to our early history.

THE EARLIEST CONTACTS

It has been generally little known that Germans played a significant role not only in the settlement of Australia but also in the voyages of discovery preceding it. This was not so much to be a direct participation of German ships, but rather of Germans serving on ships of the Dutch and English from the sixteenth century onwards. On Tasman's first voyage in 1642-3 during which he discovered the island bearing his name, was one Yde T'Jercxzoon Holleman, born in Jever in Oldenburg, and who was signed on in the Indies as second coxswain. He was later named captain of Tasman's second ship the *Heemskerk*, with authority to take overall command in the event of Tasman's death. There is little doubt that German sailors and soldiers were always fairly numerous in the service of the East India Company. In 1705 the northern coast of Australia was further explored by Andries Roseboom of Hamburg in *De Maijer*.¹

In 1721 a new expedition under Jabov Roggeveen left Amsterdam for the Indies. On board the *Arend* was Karl Friedrich Behrens of Mecklenburg, who was a corporal in the marines. On his return to Germany he published an account of his adventures in Dutch, German and French.² On James Cook's second voyage (1772-5) in the *Resolution* and *Adventure* were two German botanists, father and son — Johann Reinhold and Johann Georg Adam Forster of East

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Prussia. In 1765-6 the father, in the employ of the Russian Government, had studied the foreign settlements on the Volga River. Cook and the Forsters were friendly, but in his *Diary of a Journey of Discovery to the South Seas 1776-1780*, the father somewhat overvalued his influence on Cook. In England, he failed to get Admiralty assistance to finance the book, received a doctorate at Oxford, was imprisoned for debt because of his taste for expensive books and collection of flora and fauna, and on his return to Germany was appointed Professor of Natural History at Halle in 1780, where he died in 1798 — a colourful career. He had also ascertained the temperature of the depths of the ocean, and against Cook, had maintained the correct freezing point of sea water.

He sought rules for classification of sea organisms, commented on the speech, relationships, and customs of native peoples in relation to the humanistic thought of the Enlightenment of which he was a product. "Forsters knowledge was exceptional . . . But his lack of social polish, tactlessness, and not least of all his uncompromising love of truth often led him into great difficulties".³ Georg, who died four years before his father, was a friend of Goethe and influenced Alexander von Humboldt: a biographer stated that through him began "a new era of scientific voyaging, whose aim is comparative ethnology and geography".⁴ Of particular relevance were his detailed descriptions of the coral reefs off the Queensland coast.

The Forsters were not the only Germans on Cook's third voyage; there was also a copper engraver, Johann Weber, born in England of an English mother, who prepared many illustrations. In 1781 Heinrich Zimmermann from the Palatine published "A Journey around the World with Captain Cook", in which he told of encounters with the aboriginals of Van Diemen's Land, and Cook's meeting with King O-tou in Tahiti. He also witnessed Cook's death in the Sandwich Islands, and left a detailed description of Cook's appearance and character.⁵

During Matthew Flinders' last voyage of discovery in 1801-3 in the *Investigator*, which proved that Australia was an island, he was accompanied by the artist Ferdinand Bauer, an Austrian, who made no less than 1600 botanical sketches. The botanist on the voyage, Robert Brown, said of them that "their beauty, exactness, and completeness of detail has been attained neither in this nor in any other country of Europe."⁶ In 1814, he published his engravings which he coloured himself, under the title *Florae Novae Hollandiae*. In a letter to his wife, Flinders said that "Mr. Bauer . . . is always polite and gentle". Cape Bauer on the southern coast is named after him.⁷

In the first decade of the nineteenth century the Russian Government also equipped three expeditions to the Pacific, which had a high

proportion of German personnel. The first circumnavigated the world in 1803-6 under the command of Adam Johann von Drusensters, with the scientists von Langsdorff, Harner, Tilesius, and Brinkin.

The commander of the other two expeditions was Otto von Kotzebue, in 1815-8 and 1823-6. They discovered a number of island groups and much detail was gathered concerning earlier discovered areas. From this period on, German expeditions proper began to explore the Pacific area: Admiral Bellinghausen in 1819-21, Ferdinand von Hochstetter in 1857-60 in New Zealand waters, Karl Semper in the Philippines in 1859-64, Georg von Schleinitz in Melanesia and New Guinea in 1897-9.⁸

Germans also played a direct part in the settlement of Australia from the earliest days: Arthur Phillip's father, Jakob, was born in Frankfurt, emigrated to England, and worked as a language teacher. The first Surveyor-General of New South Wales was Theodor Alt, a baron from Hessen-Kassel. Born in 1730, he entered English service in 1755 and was named to the New South Wales post in 1787. There was one other German in the First Fleet, Supt. Philipp Schaeffer, who had served as a lieutenant in a Hessian regiment which had fought for the British in the American War of Independence. In 1788 he settled as the first free colonist in Parramatta, and was also the first known settler to cultivate the vine.⁹

But not all emigrants destined for Australia reached these shores. J.D. Lang in his book *An Account of New South Wales* tells of a group of vine-dressers and their families sponsored to settle at the Dunmore estate in the Hunter Valley. When they reached Rio de Janeiro the Brazilian authorities spread a rumour that they would be sold into slavery in New South Wales, so they demanded to be put ashore, and eventually founded a settlement in Brazil.¹⁰

MORETON BAY SETTLEMENT

In 1837 Lang raised the matter of sailors wrecked on the coast near Moreton Bay who had fallen into the hands of hostile aborigines, and proposed that a mission be established in the area. He approached the authorities in England with the request that his (Presbyterian) Church should receive a subsidy when it undertook to send missionaries to the aborigines in Moreton Bay, claiming that the Established Church of Scotland was as much entitled to such a subsidy as the Anglican Church. This request was granted to the extent of £150 for equipment and transport for each of three fully-trained missionaries who were to proceed to Australia. Gifts the mission received through the Scottish Church would also be subsidized pound for pound. Lang realized he would be unable to find suitable people in England, so he appealed to Continental protestants to provide them. He personally travelled to

Berlin to enlist the help of the Lutheran Church. The offer was accepted by the pastor of the Bethlehem Church in Berlin, Johannes Gossner, who believed that if a party of Christian farmers and artisans were to settle among the natives, they could be better led to follow the example. The party Gossner assembled included: Peter Niquet, mason; August Rode, cabinetmaker; Leopold Zillmann, blacksmith; Gottfried Haussmann, farmer; Wilhelm Hartenstein, weaver; Carl Theodor Franz, tailor; Gottfried Wagner, shoemaker; August Olbrecht, shoemaker; and Ludwig Doege, gardener, of whom the last three were unmarried. In addition there was Moritz Schneider, who had studied medicine, and one of the three trained missionaries. Leader of the party was Pastor Carl Wilhelm Schmidt of the State Church of Prussia, assisted by Pastor Christoph Eipper from Wurttemberg.

The party left the Scottish harbour of Greenock in August 1837. During the voyage Schreiner died, and the others landed in Sydney on 25 January 1838. Because of a typhoid epidemic they had to remain on board for some time, and it was not until 20 March that they arrived at Moreton Bay.¹¹

Their 650 acres set aside by the colonial Government on both sides of Kedron Brook in the present-day Brisbane suburb of Nundah was named Zions Huegel (Zion's Hill). This was the first free and direct German settlement in what was to become Queensland. Even at this early time there was a German missionary in Brisbane, one Johann Simon Handt from Saxony, who was employed by the Church Missionary Society. He had arrived in 1837 as chaplain to convicts and a missionary to aboriginals. For this work he received £100 from the Government. In 1843 he returned to Sydney.¹² The "Gossner Missionaries" as they came to be called, established their settlement more than six months before the foundation of Klemzig in South Australia, and thus can be considered the real pioneers of German emigration to Australia.

In 1842 the region around Brisbane was opened for settlement. Because of their strong religious opinions, the German missionaries came into conflict with other whites. Nevertheless, Ludwig Leichhardt wrote to his mother in a letter dated 27 January 1843:

Here in Moreton Bay I am living at the German Mission which is comprised of loving brave people who have borne much in order to convert the blacks, though unfortunately making little progress. They are all married, altogether seven families with twenty-two well-educated children. I feel quite happy amongst them, as it is seldom that one finds decent people in this colony.

On 27 August he wrote that "I almost believed myself to be in my homeland again, when I attend their Sunday German services".¹³

SECOND PARTY ARRIVES

The British Government agreed in 1844 to the New South Wales Government's request that all subsidies to missionary undertakings in the colony be annulled. These subsidies, though guaranteed by London, had to be paid by the Department of Lands in Sydney; officials repeatedly objected, because in this manner income from the sale of Crown lands was depleted. Christoph Eipper left Zion's Hill and accepted a position in the Scottish Church in New South Wales. In June of 1844 another party of missionaries arrived, which Gossner had sent from Berlin — August Richter, Wilhelm Gehricke, Carl Gerler, and Johann Hermann. The Sydney committee responsible for the Mission, and the Church of Berlin promised to give more liberal support, but it was becoming increasingly evident that the missionaries were failing to contact the aboriginals and their influence was waning. In 1845 the other leader, Schmidt, left to join the London Missionary Society and went to Samoa. The laymen who remained at the original settlement established their own farms. The Government surveyed the Mission Reserve and sold blocks to them, some being as small as three acres. Several persevered with missionary work, especially Hausmann and Niquet, but by 1848 all attempts to work with the aboriginals had been abandoned.¹⁴

The Germans erected a small church at Zion's Hill, which seems to have been open to all regardless of denomination, being made available for other services. However, there was no organized Lutheran congregation before 1856 when Pastor Matthias Goethe from Melbourne arrived to persuade them to help him in Victoria. Hausmann had already gone, now Niquet and Gehricke consented. At the same time Goethe organized the settlers as a congregation and induced them to join the recently constituted Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Victoria, on 28 October 1856. On this occasion, lay missionary Carl Gerler was ordained by Pastor Goethe, and took over charge of the congregation.¹⁵

Pastor Carl Franz Alexander Schirmeister, aged 43, joined the settlement in 1857. He was Gehricke's brother-in-law. At this time a split had developed in the congregation, which had never been Lutheran in the strict sense of the name, some being more inclined towards Presbyterianism and the Baptists, or following an independent line. Schirmeister failed in his attempt to patch up the split, and turned his attention to the settlers in Brisbane itself, and in 1858 organized the first Lutheran congregation, the parish of St.

Andreas, known as St. Andrew's, on Wickham Terrace. Through Schirmeister's efforts they were granted 1½ acres by the Government, on which was erected a small wooden church which was dedicated in 1861. From the early stages, Schirmeister extended his work to South Brisbane, Ipswich and Toowoomba and had secured from the Government blocks of land at each of these places. The Ipswich congregation was organized in 1861, and in that year Haussmann returned from Victoria, where he had been for the past six years, taking over responsibility at South Brisbane. By this time, many of the German settlers were coming to Moreton Bay under contract to owners of sheep and cattle stations, and when their contracts expired, moved to more closely settled areas around the region.¹⁶

When the Government support for missionaries ceased, they had to fend for themselves. Several were artisans; five (Zillmann, Wagner, Gerler, Franz, Rode) took up farming. In the following two decades German colonists came only sparingly to Queensland. In 1852, 64 came to Brisbane; in 1854, a Mr. Lord of Toowoomba was sent to Germany to promote emigration to Moreton Bay and as a result of his efforts, in 1855 almost 1000 took a ship from Hamburg for Brisbane. This was more than one quarter of the total immigration into the settlement for that year. By 1861, of a total population of 30,000, Germans numbered 2124.¹⁷

STIMULUS TO MIGRATION

When Queensland became a separate colony in 1859, the Herbert Ministry named a Select Committee to research the question of immigration, and J.D. Lang who was very much in favour of German Protestants, recommended the bringing out of a set number of them each year. To promote this, the Government appointed a Brisbane wine merchant, J.C. Heussler, as Immigrant Agent in Germany, and promised free passage and other advantages, with the result that by 1864 the number of Germans in Queensland had doubled. The immigrants found employment without difficulty, and during the three month sheep shearing period a man could earn £70 so that if he led a simple life, he could soon buy land and ensure an independent existence for himself. Of special advantage were the "Land Orders": each immigrant, including women and children, received from the Government a voucher for land. On production of this, the holder could choose so many acres in certain areas as he had vouchers. The properties farmed in this manner were around 100 acres. The vouchers could also be sold, and though many were sold for less than half their value in ignorance, nonetheless it was a sum of money which could be put to good use upon arrival in the colony.¹⁸

At the beginning of 1864 the *Susanna Godeffroy* brought 30 families to Brisbane after an 18 week voyage. Though they originated from different parts of Germany, during the long voyage they had drawn closer together, and desired to remain together in their new country. A few weeks were passed in the Immigration Depot, then Pastor Haussmann made a proposal that a German settlement be founded in the not too distant Logan district. Through the mediation of Haussmann and Consul Heussler, land was opened up by the Government. A coastal steamer brought them up the Logan River as far as present day Waterford, and set them and their possessions down in pouring rain. Wood and grass huts were built, and scrub cut to serve as bedding. After overcoming initial depression, they set about clearing land and building homes, until they reached the stage where the settlement was named "Little Germany" by their English-speaking neighbours. The first church was given the name Behanien (Bethany). From this settlement, in 1868 Albert and Pimpama Islands were settled.¹⁹

By 1871 there were around 6,000 Germans in Queensland, constituting about 6% of the population. The following year another 1800 arrived, but also in this year the Prussian Government forbade the recruiting of emigrants. Though the ban was later lifted, emigration was hindered in other ways, for example by raising the taxes which emigration agents had to pay. As a result of the connection between J.C. Heussler and the Hamburg shipping concern of Godeffroy, 11,000 Germans emigrated to Queensland. The largest number originated from the Uckermarck region and provinces of Prussia, Pommerania and Silesia, and to a lesser extent from Wuerttemberg in south-west Germany.

The period of "mass immigration" — if that term can be used for the Germans — was the years 1862-73. With the construction of the railway to Toowoomba (on which many Germans laboured), settlement was extended to Rosewood, west of Ipswich, where the bush was almost impenetrable and the first German pioneers were considered fools by the English-speaking settlers. The first arrived here in 1864, and when in 1867 a statute was enacted which made available forest land at 60 acre leases per year for five years, many more followed. Ten years later the Fassifern area was opened up, to which many from the Logan area came. The rich black soil made it one of the best farming areas, and by the end of the century the number of farmers who were German or of German descent numbered around four-and-a-half thousand. Settlement then extended out to the Lockyer district, though settlers did not live in such close communities as those in other areas, with the exception of Plainland and Hessenburg (Ingoldsby). On the Darling Downs, there were 1500 German families by 1900.²⁰



Brass band of the Apostolic Church, Hatton Vale, 1896.

After 1901 there were more Scandinavians than Germans coming to Queensland, though new German settlements were founded in and around Maryborough, Bundaberg and Mackay. In these areas, many went in for cane growing, and in 1898 it was estimated that of 110,000 acres, one tenth was held by Germans. The total land held by Germans at that time was 330,000 acres. At the 1891 census there were 15,000 German-born settlers and thousands more of German descent who learned the language in homes, churches and primary schools. A conservative figure was estimated to be 25,000.²¹

The English-speaking community always had a high degree of respect for the Germans' industriousness. Even the Premier, Sir Thomas McIlwraith — no friend of German colonial ambitions in New Guinea — noted in the Legislative Assembly that:

“Having disembarked from the ships and spent one or two days in the Immigrant Depot, the German immigrants disappear. One hears or sees nothing of them for eighteen months or a couple of years, when some fine day they return from the bush in their own attractive turn-out, wife and children seated high, and all well-dressed and happy-looking”.²²

Between 1907-10 several groups of immigrants, mostly from Westphalia Brunswick and Berlin, totalling 600 persons, came at the suggestion of H.F. Niemeyer, head of the Apostolic community. The two most important groups were one of 175 persons which arrived in 1909, and the other of 237 which arrived the following

year. The latter made the journey on the steamer *Seydlitz*, which was a shining example of good conditions in contrast with what earlier immigrants had endured, and was praised by the passengers. In 1912 a further 50 Apostolic families arrived and settled on the Binjour plateau. As the century progressed, the numbers lessened as conditions in Germany improved; 1883 saw over 2000, but even by 1890 there were 200 and by 1899 the number was down to 141.²³ Not until the two post-war periods were numbers to rise again.

PROMINENT INDIVIDUALS

One of the first and few Germans to work his way into the political system was J.C. Heussler, born in 1820 in Frankfurt, who came to Brisbane in 1854 where he went into business as a merchant. In 1863 he was named Consul for the Netherlands, in 1866 he entered the Legislative Council and became Acting Chairman, and in 1880 he became German Consul for Queensland. In July 1897 he was appointed Queensland's Commissioner to Germany to promote emigration and trade.²⁴

Another prominent in trade was Armand Ranniger, who up to 1870 was Prussian, thereafter German Consul until 1878. Wilhelm von Ploennies took over as Consul after Heussler's departure for Germany as Commissioner. He had been in Australia for eighteen years as a farmer and miner, and had seen a fair amount of the country, H.L.F. Ruthning came in 1863, was an official in the Bank of Queensland, becoming chief accountant. He completed his law studies while working for the firm of Little and Browne. He started in practice in Toowoomba, and eventually established his own firm which still exists. He helped in the settlement of new immigrants and was responsible for influencing German shipping firms to improve conditions on ships after an incident in 1872 with the *Mardus* on which many died, and in Queensland gained changes to harbour laws which imposed stiff fines on such ships where "the between-deck passengers were like pickled herrings".²⁵ He also influenced the German Federal Parliament to pass laws forcing shipping companies to meet standards, particularly the city of Hamburg, where shippers were under the protection, for financial reasons, of local government. In 1885-6 he acted as Consul in Heussler's absence. When he completed his term of office, his efforts on behalf of immigrants were recognized by Chancellor Bismarck. He was also one of the founding members of the DTV, and worked out the financial statutes of the Club, and was active in the affairs of the Lutheran Church.

The definitive contemporary work, *Fuehrer durch Queensland*, (Guide through Queensland) published in Brisbane in 1898, noted



H.L. Ruthning

five prominent medical practitioners: Hirschfeld and Lauterer in Brisbane, von Lossberg in Ipswich, Hoch in Cairns, and Kortum in Cooktown. There were 85 German-owned hotels, among them Lennons in Brisbane (W. Petermann), the Royal in Bundaberg (Peter Nielsen), the Imperial in Toowoomba (G. Feldmann), the Royal (H. Pohlmann), the Railway in Beenleigh (C. Palm), the Sovereign in Cooktown (A.V. Bremen), and the Reefer's Arms in Croydon (G. Bredhauer).²⁶

Dr. Eugen Hirschfeld came from Silesia, and "takes a leading part in social and scientific circles in the capital".²⁷ He was Honorary Doctor to the Royal Brisbane Hospital, the first such appointment for a German in Australia. A German nationalist, he was elected President of the *Deutsche Vereinigung*, an early society, and at one time was said to be considering election as the candidate for Logan. Dr. Lauterer had practised in Sydney before coming to Brisbane. He studied the medical application of Australian flora, and Aboriginal customs, and at one time was President of the Royal Society.

"Brisbane is the place where already for a long time before Separation a large number of German artisans and learned men had settled, and where there were early on German schools and churches. These institutions in conjunction with German societies have done much to keep German customs and culture alive".²⁸

While not entering into a discussion of the development of the Lutheran Church, which presents a topic in itself, mention must be

made of some aspects of this important part of German life in the colony. St. Andreas, with its school attached, was considered to have the best site in town. It was dedicated on 30 April 1882, with the first pastor being Mr. Schirmeister. A contemporary account describes the event as having a "true German character", with a large crowd having to stand outside, although the church could seat 350. The second church was at South Brisbane, being founded by Pastor Haussmann in 1862. The present Nazareth Church at Hawthorn Street, Woolloongabba is the descendant of this parish, the 'new' church, to which the German Emperor donated 400 Marks, being dedicated on 10 May 1896. The German language press reported at the time that:

"When from all sides there are complaints about the demise of German culture in the colony, it is a double pleasure to be able to report of the building of a new church. We believe, with thousands of our fellow-countrymen, that the German Church, the German associations, and the German press are the supports of German culture abroad."²⁹

Almost all of the Germans were Lutherans by confession, and there was no German Catholic priest working in Brisbane. The German-speaking Jews used the English synagogue where the rabbi in the 1880s was a German national. The Church coordinated and promoted ties with the old country; indeed, in 1891, £188 was raised to help flood relief in Silesia and Saxony.³⁰

FOUNDING OF GERMAN CLUB

There existed several German societies in Queensland, notably the Deutsche Vereinigung in north Brisbane, Teutonia in Toowoomba, and numerous debating and reading groups. All "carry a purely German character where customs and language are fostered."³¹ In 1870 several Germans under the leadership of Consul Ranniger formed an association to care for returned soldiers of the Franco-Prussian War and relatives of dead soldiers. As a result of the 1871 unification of German states, there arose a feeling of nationalism in some sections, and attempts were made to form an umbrella organization for the whole of Queensland. Unfortunately, when meetings were held in several country centres, local settlers who had left Germany because of military service or for religious reasons roundly jeered the Brisbane delegates and the attempt failed.

Up to this point there existed the Germania Club in Brisbane, in good financial circumstances, with a choir. It met in the Globe Hotel in Adelaide Street, as it had no premises of its own. It was decided to obtain such, and a meeting was held in July 1882, led by Messrs.

Luever, Viertel, Schnurr, Just and Knoch. Within a few weeks 45 others showed interest, and for finance pledged one shilling a week. A Mr. Mueller in Vulture Street had laid out a skittles course next to his house, and members of the new association met there. However, his four-roomed house was too small, and the meetings moved to the Plough Inn in Stanley Street. By this time there was a large enough membership, and on 27 May 1883, steps were taken to form the *Deutscher Turn-Verein*, with Mr. C. Hocker as Chairman.³²

“The men who sat around the large table in the hall of the Hotel were the leading representatives of the German colony at that time. The names of many of these are inseparable from the history, not only of Germans in Queensland, but also of Queensland as a whole.”³³

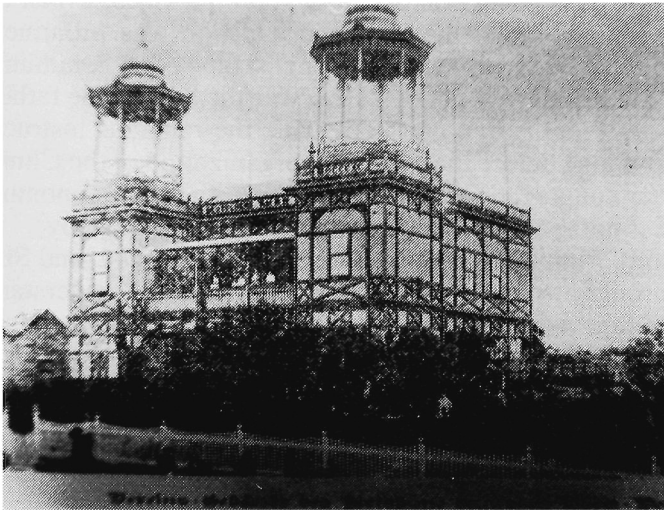
R. Jaeschke, the editor of the “*Nord-Australische Zeitung*” suggested that the Club secure its existence with a share issue: it was agreed to issue 2000 shares at £1 each, and in addition the membership fee was fixed at one shilling a month. It was also decided to purchase a plot of land in Melbourne Street or its vicinity for the erection of premises at a later date. Jaeschke was chosen to be the first President, with C. Juergens as Vice-President and F. Weinthal as Secretary. “The choice of Herr Jaeschke . . . was fully justified by his energetic activities during the next two years in office.”³⁴

The name *Turn-Verein* (Gymnastics Club) needs some explanation. Such clubs grew as a covert means of national resistance during the Napoleonic occupation of Germany, and after liberation in 1815 continued to be a focus for the promotion of national ideas as well as providing recreational facilities. As the Club did not have its own premises, those who wished to participate in gymnastics had to do so in a rented room at the Plough Inn. However, by May 1884, enough capital had been saved to purchase a piece of land for £300 in Manning Street, and it was fully paid for by January the following year. The site was next to the then sawmill and timber store of Grimley and Kepton. In April 1886 a building committee was formed, and in 1887 the commission to build a hall was given to a Mr. Lather for £862. Finally, on 24 May 1887, a great ball and festivities marked an inauguration of the new building.

Two years later, on 16 February 1899, disaster struck: fire destroyed the wooden building and its contents, including the growing library which played such an important part in the life of the Club. On the same evening a special meeting was held at Tattersall’s Hotel to assess the situation and plan for the future. The meeting

place for the Club was now the Palace Hotel on the corner of Melbourne and Stanley Streets. One of the Club's first steps was to sell the Manning Street property for £750. The trustees were given the job of finding a new location, and at this stage, J.C. Heussler offered to sell what is now the present site in Vulture Street, 3.4 acres, for £850, and this was accepted.³⁵

Construction of the new Club began in 1890 with a majority of German builder's labourers. Costs were a problem, and a £1000 loan had to be taken out. Because of the flood and a bank crisis, capital was hard to obtain and interest rates rose to 8%. This was obviously a critical time for the Club, but perseverance saw it through. The new building was constructed of wood and pressed sheet iron, on two floors, and flanked at the street end by two towers with a tall flagpole. On the ground floor there was a large drinking hall, before the War being decorated with portraits and busts of the Emperor and other personalities. On 24 May 1890, the new Turnhalle was opened with a banquet and ball.³⁶



Original German Club in Vulture Street, South Brisbane.

The aims of the Club were set out as follows:

1. The furthering of members' welfare through the arrangement of charity concerts and for flood victims and those in hospital.
2. The furthering of the welfare of Germans in Queensland by the provision of a meeting place for discussion, social gatherings, and the perusal of good German books and journals; by the promotion of the German spirit and German customs, and the love of the German language

and homeland through the holding of national festivals, concerts and the fostering of German song; and by the supporting of German churches and schools; and the provision of job information for Germans.

In the late 1890's a German-language supplement to the *Queenslander* was produced by Hermann Schmidt. He attempted to persuade the proprietors to let it become an independent organ, as it was felt that it was only there to win readers for the "Queenslander". The editor, Lukin, wished to retain editorial and political control, so after negotiations with the printers Schmidt succeeded in forming a group to print the *Nord-Australische Zeitung*. He was unable to participate fully due to the demands of his job at the Brisbane Grammar School. Nevertheless, the newspaper was the organ in which "the national, social and economic interests of the Germans are represented and fostered".³⁷

THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM

From the very inception of the German parishes, which acted as the main social units, the language question was prominent. The Germans lived and worked in an English-speaking community, and learned the language at school. How was the faith of the fathers to be preserved? The Church had to provide the religious instruction for youth, and long before the synodical organization of the Church took place, the congregations realized this need. Parish-denominational schools, notably Bethania, Philadelphia (Eagleby), Elkana (Alberton), Pimpama Island, St. Paul's Toowoomba, and St. John's Maryborough, were established. According to the understanding of the time, the solution lay in making the growing generation bilingual. Thus the German language was to be preserved, not as an end in itself, but as a means of imparting the Lutheran faith and keeping a strong identity with it. Many believed that the loss of the German language meant the loss of the Lutheran faith, because they could not understand how it could be expressed in the English language.

It was a losing battle. Children, passing through a parish school and being educated in two languages were not able to compete in English — the language of business and officialdom — and there were always those who did not attend the parish school. It gradually became clear that it was impossible to keep the congregations of the Lutheran Church exclusively German. This was observed also by circles in Germany that were interested in the retention of German language and customs. A branch of the *Deutscher Sprachverband* (German Language Association) was organized in Brisbane. Its members paid annual dues and solicited contributions which were subsidized from Germany. In 1914 the fund, which had been

deposited with the Commonwealth Bank, amounted to nearly £400.³⁸ With the outbreak of the War, all such efforts came to an end. It marked a watershed in the history of the German-speaking population, and saw the demise of the language with the next generation.

During the War, Lutheran was generally taken as synonymous with German national. Though the worship in churches was still carried out in German, it was not interfered with, but the religious instruction of children, even when conducted in English, was hindered. By 1916 a number of pastors had been interned, some of whom were Australian-born. This further demoralized the German community.

Another contributing factor to the demise of the language was the fact that the majority of the German settlers in Queensland had come from economically and socially depressed circumstances, and their mother-tongue was "Low German" dialects. School and Church taught them the *lingua franca* of "High German", but this always remained as a foreign language. Thus the Church, the one binding element, increasingly did not speak the language of the home in the new country. There are still a few "old timers" who remember what it was like before the War, in families where they had to speak German at home, and English outside it, and who still have a few phrases of German on their tongue. Soon they too will be gone, and with them the unique experiences of growing up in a different Australia.

FOOTNOTES

1. A. Lodewycke, *Die Deutschen in Australien*, (Stuttgart: Ausland und Heimat Verlags AG, 1932), 11.
2. *Ibid.*, 11-12
3. *Ibid.*, 14
4. *Ibid.*, 15
5. *Ibid.*, 15-17
6. *Ibid.*, 20
7. *Ibid.*, 21
8. *Ibid.*, 22-24
9. *Ibid.*, 31
10. Lang, ii, 295, quoted *ibid.*, 32
11. F.O. Thiele, *100 Years of the Lutheran Church in Queensland*, (Brisbane: Watson, Ferguson, 1939), 3.

12. Ibid., 3-4
13. Lodewyckx, 60
14. Thiele, 5
15. Ibid., 6
16. Ibid., 9
17. Lodewyckx, 60
18. Ibid., 61, E. Meuhling, **Fuehrer durch Queensland**, (Brisbane: Nord-Australische Zeitung, 1898), 76.
19. Lodewyckx, 62, Muehling, 77.
20. Lodewyckx, 63
21. Ibid
22. Muehling, 78
23. Lodewyckx, 65
24. Meuhling, 96
25. Ibid., 99
26. Ibid., 80
27. Ibid., 101
28. Ibid., 107
29. Ibid., 112
30. Ibid., 85
3. Ibid., 80
32. Ibid., 86
33. B. Frederich, **Die Geschichte des Deutschen Turn-Vereins**, (Brisbane: German Club, 1933), 3
34. Ibid
35. Muehling, 88
36. Ibid., 89, Frederich, 5
37. Muehling, 115
38. Thiele, 90