GERMAN IMMIGRANTS

Edited article by Mrs Jenny Paterson (reprinted from August 1986 A&DHS Bulletin No 241 and originally written for the Burwood-Drummoyne Family History Group, 1986)

German Immigrants from Baden and Nassau

The Macarthur family set the ball rolling in 1838 with the importation of six families of German vintners from the Rheingau to be employed in the development of viticulture on their property at Camden. The experiment was successful and five years later another group was recruited. By the time the contracts of this group were due to expire, moves were being made by a number of wealthy landholders in NSW to persuade the Colonial Government to pay bounties for the importation of foreign workers skilled in the cultivation of the vine, and in other fields where British expertise was not available. The regulation of April 7, 1847 gave the government's authorization, and a list of persons to whom permission had been granted to import foreign workers under the scheme was drawn up.

In 1850 the Hamburg Consul in Sydney, Wilhelm Kirchner, gathered up a number of letters written home to relatives and friends, including 16 of them in the second edition of his book "Australia and its advantages for Emigrants." By far the longest and most descriptive letter in the book is that written by Peter Frauenfelder to his numerous relations in the Mannheim-Heidelberg area of Baden. There is also a letter from Sebastian Schubach and two from his wife, Maria Eva Schubach. These two families, together with that of Heinrich Rau, spent two years working on the William Walker & Co property of Kyeamba, after which they moved to Albury and settled there. They leased land and planted the first grape vines in the town, thus beginning an industry which became an important one in Albury before the turn of the century. In 1870 a group of townspeople honoured the three pioneers with a presentation of inscribed silver jugs in recognition of their contribution to the prosperity of the town.

Encouraged, no doubt, by further letters from Peter Frauenfelder and his two associates, a stream of families began to leave the towns of the Rheingau and north Baden for Australia, and a number of single people as well. Since the government bounties were only paid for married people and their families, a number of Baden couples (Catholic) married in Hamburg on the way through. We know from Peter Frauenfelder's letter that ten couples were married by the captain in a single ceremony on board the "Beulah" during the sea voyage.

As a result of this wave of immigration Albury supported a large group of immigrant Germans more than a decade before the migration of Lutheran groups up the Murray River from South Australia began in 1867. These Lutheran groups set up their settlements in the districts immediately surrounding Albury, in Jindera, Gerogery and Walla Walla. Although there were some protestant families among the earlier group, the majority were Catholic. By 1857 so great had become the German attendance of the Sunday Mass, that the newly appointed Irish parish priest, Rev Cornelius Twomey, decided that he ought to learn German. In October of that year it was reported in the *Border Post*, that the reverend gentleman had just preached his first sermon to the Germans of Albury in their native tongue. On August 11, 1858 the *Border Post* reported in German and English the first German Ball in Albury on the previous Tuesday. Despite pouring rain and muddy streets, there was a good roll-up and the occasion continued with good food, wine and dancing till daybreak.

GERMAN SETTLERS IN THIS DISTRICT

German speaking people played an important part in the settlement of the Border District. The district's first German settler was John Pabst (born Leipzig 1804), a shepherd who migrated in 1825. He was running the Woolpack Inn at Holbrook in 1840 and lived in the area until his death in 1867. His wife was Irish. It was from Mr Pabst that Holbrook's earlier name, Germanton, was derived. The name was changed amid anti-German sentiments in 1915, ironically the year after John Pabst's grandson, Fred Pabst, had enlisted in the AIF. The Pabst and Purtell families were connected by marriage and many descendants live locally today.

Albury's first Germans were the wine-makers John Frauenfelder, Sebastian Schubach and Henry Rau, who arrived with their families in 1851. Relatives of these families soon joined them from Germany. By 1857, other Germans in Albury and Thurgoona were the families of: Bell, Bromm, Dallinger, Darkel, Dick, Dreikluft, Eisenhauer, Fleiner, Gaber, Gehrig, Hartwich, Hertzen, Herzog, Hirt, Kleingendorff, Knobel, Kochn, Kolb, Merkel, Mohr, Moor, Popp, Power, Reis, Schneider, Schulters, Schwabe, Wiedner, Winter and Zoeller.

It was no wonder that they felt they needed their own German newspaper, but had to be content with German advertisements in George Mott's *Border Post*. An Irish priest at St Brigid's, Fr Twomey, learned German so that he could preach to them. The Frauenfelders gave the land for Thurgoona's Catholic chapel.

Among Wodonga's first Germans in the 1860s were the Schlink, Trudewind, Pfeiffer and Klinge families.

A new migration of Germans began in 1866, but these were Lutheran, people who had lived in South Australia for up to 20 years or so, mostly around Light Pass, Ebenezer and Tanunda. They included not only middle-aged men such as J C Scholz (Jindera) and J G Klemke (Walla Walla) and J G Bartel (Leneva) but young men born in South Australia in the 1840s, such as J G Schubert (Baranduda).

The attraction for these men was the NSW system of land sales, which offered much better terms than those prevailing in the Barossa Valley and elsewhere in South Australia. This migration was the second great upheaval of their lives. Lutheran families who settled from Baranduda to Walla Walla were linked by marriage as well as language and religion.

Mr Scholz brought 40 families to Jindera in 1866-67, and Klemke led 56 people in 14 covered wagons and two spring carts in 1868, first to Albury, then on to Jindera and Walla. Gerogery and Burrumbuttock areas attracted several of the families in later years, the latter's original settlers including the Frohling, Greschke, Lindner, Severin and Wettern families, all still in the area.

An interesting subject for research would be the original towns and villages of these people, only a few of which are known. The Geier family came from Schriberau, south of Hamburg, the Lindners from Buckwaldchen, Luben, Silesia and one of the Schulz families from Nauabour in Silesia, Zwecks from Bromberg.

There was, of course, no nation of Germany until 1871, only Prussia and a multiplicity of States and principalities. International boundaries have changed so much since then that descendants of "German" settlers would be wise to investigate if the original towns are now in Poland or elsewhere.

Germans continued to arrive in Australia until 1914 and there were German-speaking tradesmen working in Albury in the 1930s, some of whom returned home. In the great post-war

migration that started through Bonegilla in December, 1947, Germans were among the tens of thousands who arrived. Theirs is a different story and time will prove their impact to have been as great as that of their earlier compatriots.