

January 2003

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Carole C. Terry

*University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

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## Recommended Citation

Terry, Carole C. (2003) "Die Deutschen Von Marysville: The Germans of Marysville, 1850-11860," *Psi Sigma Siren*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 1 , Article 3.

Available at: [https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/psi\\_sigma\\_siren/vol1/iss1/3](https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/psi_sigma_siren/vol1/iss1/3)

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# DIE DEUTSCHEN VON MARYSVILLE: THE GERMANS OF MARYSVILLE, 1850-1860.

Carole C. Terry

*After the decline of California's surface diggings in the 1850s, the Gold Rush increasingly came to be remembered as the historical property of Anglo Americans, especially Anglo American men, and came to be associated in everyday language with facile notions of fast fortune.*

*Susan Johnson<sup>1</sup>*

Histories of California addressing the years after the discovery of gold neglect the impact of European-born ethnic minorities on their new residences, particularly those living in the smaller cities that grew to meet the demands of the gold miners. The white newcomers to California during the gold rush years were not a homogeneous collection of Anglo-Saxon protestants. German immigrants, despite their small numbers, were a significant presence in the growing permanent cities of California such as Marysville.<sup>2</sup> In that City, the third largest in California during the 1850s, the number of Germans who came and permanently stayed grew over the decade. Pushed by conditions in their homeland and pulled by the lure of economic prosperity, they formed themselves into an ethnically and culturally bound community in the midst of downtown Marysville. Through activities of their *Turnverein* and *Liederkrantz*, they reinforced their identity as Germans by maintaining the economic and cultural customs they had learned in their homeland. At the same time, they interacted with their Anglo-American neighbors, ultimately influencing them to add German traditions to the culture of the City.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Susan Lee Johnson, *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2000), 11.

<sup>2</sup> In this study, like others, "Germans" include those who identified themselves as born in the Germanic States in the Censuses of 1850 and 1852 which shared the same German culture or spoke in the German dialects. In addition, it includes those native-born who actively participated in the practice of German traditions in Marysville through membership in the *Turnverein* or *Liederkrantz*. See Rachel Davis-DuBois and Emma Scheweppe, eds., *The Germans in American Life* (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1972), 17; and Stephen Thernstrom, *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1981), 405.

<sup>3</sup> The word "*Turnverein*" literally means "to do gymnastic exercise" and was the appellation used for the fraternal associations formed by Germans across the United States. Singing societies were common in German immigrant societies, and Marysville's, like many others, called themselves "*Liederkrantz*." See Robert Knight Barney, "Forty-Eighters and the Rise of the Turnverein Movement in America," George Eisen and David K. Wiggins, eds.,

Marysville and the German immigrants who resided there, however, have received little attention from contemporary historians.<sup>4</sup> *Die Deutschen von Marysville* seeks to correct that omission and attempts to be a model for other, future re-examinations of California's Gold Rush histories to determine the impact of Germans on other California communities besides Marysville and the influence of other European-based ethnic immigrants on the development of California during this time.

Studies written before 1962 describe how Marysville, located at the confluence of the Yuba and Feather rivers, was a major staging area for miners where freight was trans-shipped by wagon or mule to serve the mines in the Northern Sierra Nevada. Yet even those writers did not acknowledge the influence of the German settlers in the City.<sup>5</sup> Historians Frederick C. Luebke and Karl Arndt and May Olsom believe studies regularly failed to incorporate German ethnicity because the trauma of World War One caused Germans to submerge their traditional culture and cease publishing their many German-language newspapers. Other writers, like Doris Wright in 1950, insisted that the European-born newcomers assimilated quickly into the dominant Anglo-American culture, a belief that may have predisposed William Chamberlain and other chroniclers of Maryville's past to ignore the Germans.<sup>6</sup> By researching contemporary Census and Directory materials, examining the extant Marysville newspapers of the 1850s, and identifying the

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*Ethnicity and Sport in North American History and Culture* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1994), 19-39, 20; Thernstrom, *Harvard*, 416.

<sup>4</sup>Although Susan Johnson addresses this oversight, her work concentrates on the Southern mines in California. Contemporary historians Malcolm Rohrbaugh and J. S. Holliday, for example, give fleeting mention of Marysville as a packing center. The Germans who settled in California are only briefly mentioned Richard White's recent overview of western history as well as that written by Robert V. Hine and John Mack Faragher. See Robert V. Hine and John Mack Faragher, *The American West: A New Interpretative History* (Yale University Press, 2000); J. S. Holliday, *Rush for Riches: Gold Fever and the Making of California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); J. S. Holliday, *The World Rushed In: The California Gold Rush Experience* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981); Malcolm Rohrbaugh, *Days of Gold: The California Gold Rush and the American Nation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); and Richard White, *"It's Your Misfortune and None of my Own: A New History of the American West"* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994).

<sup>5</sup> See William Henry Chamberlain, *History of Yuba County, California, with illustrations descriptive of its scenery, residences, public buildings, fine blocks and manufactories* (Oakland: Thompson & West, 1879); Peter J. Delay, *History of Yuba and Sutter Counties: with biographical sketches of the leading men and women of the counties who have been identified with their growth and development from the early days to the present* (Los Angeles: Historic Record Co., 1924); Sister M. Benilda Desmond, O.P., "The History of the City of Marysville, California 1852-1859" (Ph.D. diss., Catholic University of America, Washington D.C., June 1962); and Earl Ramey, "The Beginnings of Marysville," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, Part 1, XIV:3 (September, 1935), 195-229; Part 2 in *Ibid.*, XIV:4 (December, 1935), 375-407; and Part 3 in *Ibid.*, XV:1 (March, 1936), 21-57.

<sup>6</sup> Karl J. R. Arndt and May E. Olsom, comp. *German-American Newspapers and Periodicals 1732-1955*. (London: Verso, 1983), 8; DuBois, *Germans*, 7; Frederick C. Luebke, *Germans in the New World: Essays in the History of Immigration*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), xii; Thernstrom, *Harvard*, 406. Doris Marion Wright, "The Making of Cosmopolitan California: An Analysis of Immigration, 1848-1870," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, Part 1, XIX:4 (December 1940), 323-343, and Part 2 in *Ibid.*, XX:1 (January, 1941), 65-79; Part 2, 69.

individual Germans living in the City, one discovers how important they were in the city's development, particularly in the cultural arena.<sup>7</sup>

Historians studying the factors that “pushed” emigrants from the Germanic areas of Europe agree that economic deprivation was the initial reason so many left.<sup>8</sup> The flood of people began in the 1840s with the devastation wrought by the potato famine and the 250% to 300% rise in grain prices. Crop failures continued in the early 1850s. Wine vintages in the southwest, for example, were among the four worst years in the century. In addition, the tradition in the area of dividing up farms among sons upon the death of the owner resulted in farms too small to support families. In the northwest, rural lower classes were displaced by the increased industrialization and by the commercialization of agriculture. During the eight years beginning in 1846, almost 900,000 Germans arrived in America. One peak year was 1851 when 221,253 arrived, and during 1853 and 1854, 356,922 emigrated from their “homeland.” Political refugees from the failed 1848 Revolution added to the massive migration, but, although they were influential in

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<sup>7</sup> Although useful for comparative purposes, census figures from 1850 and 1852 are notorious for their unreliability and flaws for several reasons. Marysville was not incorporated as a town until 1851; therefore, its residents were not specifically listed in 1850. The California legislature changed Yuba county's borders three times between 1850 and 1851. Originally formed in February of 1850, the county's phenomenal population growth necessitated the exclusion of Nevada County in April of 1851 and Sierra County in 1852. Furthermore, the 1852 census did not record residents by city or town. The aggravated mobility of California's inhabitants impacted both the 1850 and 1852 censuses. In 1852, for example, individuals with the same name, age, birthplace and former residence were often listed two and three times; one individual appears five times. Furthermore, transcribing the nineteenth century penmanship of German names was difficult both for Alan Bowman in his 1850 synopsis and for the Daughters of the American Revolution transcribers. Alan P. Bowman, *Index to the 1850 Census of the State of California* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1972), x; California Governor 1852-1855, *Governor's Message and Report of the Secretary of State on the Census of 1852 of the State of California* (San Francisco: George Kerr, State Printer, 1852); Chamberlin, *Yuba*, 44, 45; Daughters of the American Revolution, “County of Yuba,” *California Census of 1852*, Vols. XII and XIII, N.p., 1935; Dennis E. Harris, “The California Census of 1852: A Note of Caution and Encouragement,” *The Pacific Historian* (23:1 Spring, 1984) 58-64, 60; Official Returns of the Assistant Marshals. *Seventh Census of the United States: 1850*, N.p. June 30, 1850; *Population Schedules of the Seventh Census of the United States*, Microfilm Copy 432, Roll 36, “California, Yuba County” (Washington: The National Archives, 1964); Ramey, “Beginnings,” Part 2, 375.

City directories provide historians with information not otherwise available, but that also can be inaccurate. The books were commercially based, often a more-or-less profitable sideline for printers, and, in Marysville, seem to exclude those laborers outside the merchant-based community such as miners and packers. Potential customers of the 1858 Directory, for example, had to purchase the volume -- that might have discouraged the lower income residents from listing. Whether there was a charge to be included is unknown, but the plethora of advertisements would suggest that merchants paid for this exposure. W. T. Ellis noted that in 1853 publishers of that year's directory had great difficulty gathering pertinent information. *Daily National Democrat*, 27 August 1858, 1:13 p. 2, col. 2; W. T. Ellis, *My Seventy-Two Years in the Romantic County of Yuba* (Eugene: University of Oregon, 1939), 22; and Walter D. Kamphoefner, Wolfgang Helbich, and Ulrike Sommer, *News from the Land of Freedom: German Immigrants Write Home*, trans. Susan Carter Vogel (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 41.

<sup>8</sup> “Push” and “pull” are terms connected with the Laws of Migration originally articulated by E. G. Ravenstein. “Push refers to those forces existing in the place of origin that encourage or impel persons to emigrate. . . Pull refers to those attractive forces emanating from the migrants' goal that draws migrants.” Roger Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1991), 17.

establishing the *Turnvereine* that became a center of immigrant life, they accounted for only 4,000 to 10,000 of the total.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to the economic and political forces, Germans were well informed about the “pull” of America. The spread of information about their potential journey and their new destination was widespread. In the 1830s, for example, Gottfried Duden published *Auswanderungs-Gesellschaft* that encouraged Germans to come to Missouri to farm. In the 1840s, newspapers aimed at prospective emigrants appeared up to three times a week, and in the 1850s, publishers circulated fifty-eight guide-books about America. Ships’ companies advertised for “human cargo” to fill their ships on voyages from Europe to America. The strongest “pull” factor for emigrants were “America letters” sent to the homeland by new German-Americans encouraging family and friends to join them.<sup>10</sup> “The trek to America,” writes historian Walter Kamphoefner, “was anything but a leap in the dark.”<sup>11</sup>

In the late 1840s and 1850s, immigrants entered the United States through the port cities of Boston, New York, Richmond, Charleston and New Orleans. Some chose to settle in Pennsylvania, the long-time center of German-born Americans, New York’s *Kleindeutschland* or New Orleans’ growing German neighborhood. Most, however, joined long wagon trains going west or boarded river boats going north up the Mississippi River for the new frontier areas of Wisconsin, Missouri, Illinois and Ohio. St. Louis with its German settlement was the center of distribution for German immigrants, but many kept traveling West. Cincinnati was the final destination for many German political refugees called “48ers.” Milwaukee, a thoroughly German city, was calling itself the “Athens of the West.”<sup>12</sup> Newcomers in America as well as

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<sup>9</sup> Robert Henry Billigmeier, *Americans from Germany: A Study in Cultural Diversity* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1974), 69; John Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigration in Urban America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 15; Howard B. Furer, ed., *The Germans in America: 1607-1907* (Dobbs Ferry, NY: Oceana Publications, Inc., 1973), 30, 40, 42, 45; Kamphoefner, *News*, 2; Walter D. Kamphoefner, *The Westfalians: From Germany to Missouri* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 29, 38; Stanley Nadel, *Little Germany: Ethnicity, Religion and Class in New York City, 1845-1880* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 17-8; Thernstrom, *Harvard*, 410; Victor Wolfgang von Hagen, *The Germanic People in America* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976), 319; Carl F. Witte, *The Germans in America* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1967), 6, 11; Wright, “California,” Part 2, 69.

<sup>10</sup> DuBois, *Germans*, 54; Kamphoefner, *News*, 28-9; Kamphoefner, *Westfalians*, 7; Thernstrom, *Harvard*, 410; von Hagen, *People*, 328; Witte, *Germans*, 8.

<sup>11</sup> Kamphoefner, *Westfalians*, 5.

<sup>12</sup> Billigmeier, *Americans*, 61; Bodnar, *Transplanted*, 172; DuBois, *Germans*, 56; Albert B. Faust, *The German Element in the United States*, Vols. 1 and 2 (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1909), Vol. 1, 439, 466; Furer, *Germans*, 38; Furer, *Germans*, 44; Kamphoefner, *News*, 79; Reinhard Kondert, “The New Orleans German Society, 1846-1928,” *In Their Own Words*, 3:2 (1986), 57-79, 59; Theodore Mueller, “Milwaukee’s German Cultural

those back in the German “homeland” heard the siren calls from California, in the 1840s, “Land,” and “Prosperity,” and after 1849, “Gold.”

Well before gold was discovered, Germans had heard of what Walter Nugent calls “the California Dream,” the promise of prosperous, good life in a new home.<sup>13</sup> In the 1840s, Alexander von Humbolt’s “Intendancy of New California” was widely distributed throughout Europe. Among the many pamphlets published by emigration agents in 1848 were articles describing John Sutter’s New Helvetia on the American River and Captain B. Schmoelder’s proposed colony on the San Francisco bay. The news of gold increased the flow of Germans to the state -- 3,000 immigrated in 1849-1850 alone. Inexpensive steamship fares to San Francisco and numerous guide-books encouraged Germans to emigrate. Friedrich Gerstaecker’s *Kaliforniens Gold* and Dr. J. S. Schwarz’ *Brief eines Deutschen aus Californien*, both written in 1849, were widely circulated in Germany. Schwarz described the agricultural opportunities he saw in California as well as stories about mining. Some Germans already living in the United States – Midwestern Latin farmers untrained in the techniques of farming, New Yorkers living in crowded, dirty tenements, Pennsylvania artisans dislocated by advancing industrialization, and Missourians seeking relief from the grueling farm life – were all ready to come to California to find new wealth. Because Germans had founded three of the pioneer cities of the state, Sacramento, Stockton and Marysville, newcomers could reasonably hope to find fellow countrymen there who to practice the traditions of the “fatherland” and to help with social and economic contacts once they arrived in their new home.<sup>14</sup>

At least 80% of the arriving argonauts immediately left San Francisco to search for gold, traveling first to Sacramento, then to Marysville, and then to the surrounding gold mining areas. Placer gold had been discovered along the Yuba and Feather Rivers in 1848, and Marysville, situated at the confluence of the two and the northernmost point for river navigation, was the

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Heritage,” *Milwaukee History*, 10:3 (1987), 95-108; 108; Thernstrom, *Harvard*, 412; von Hagen, *People*, 318; Witte, *Germans*, 9.

<sup>13</sup> Walter Nugent, *Into the West: The Story of Its People* (New York: Vintage Books, 1999), 5.

<sup>14</sup> Billigheimer, *Americans*, 51; Bodnar, *Transplanted*, 65; Charles W. Bryan, Jr. , “From Marthasville to Marysville in 1850,” *Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society*, 19:2 (1963) 115-126,113; Peter Randolph Decker, “Social Mobility on the Urban Frontier: The San Francisco Merchants, 1850-1880” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1974), 65; Faust, *Element*. Vol 2, 37; Furer, *Germans*, 39; Erwin G. Gudde, *German Pioneers in Early California* (San Francisco: R. & E. Associates, 1970), 7,16, 22; George Peter Hammond, “German Interest in California before 1850” (Master’s Thesis, University of California, 1921, Reprinted in San Francisco: R. & E. Associates, 1971), 24, 26-7, 31, 41, 51; Nadel, *New York*, 34, 39; Holliday, *Rush*, 90; Nugent, *West*, 62; von Hagen, *People*, 319; Wright, *California*, Part 2, 69.

natural sight for a supply center for the northern diggings. Also, Marysville was the first significant settlement for those coming west through Noble's Pass in the Sierra Nevada. In January of 1850, Marysville's entrepreneurs advertised in Sacramento's *Placer Times* for settlers emphasizing the city's accessibility with steamer trips twice a week and a year-round road from Sacramento. The Marysville newspapers constantly told of claims that yielded great amounts of gold and sales of mining shares by those returning to the United States.<sup>15</sup> German immigrants generally preferred settling in cities and could have been attracted by this description of Marysville written in 1850:

You will see the go-head-iveness of the Yankee nation. In one fortnight's time, \$25,000 worth of lots at \$250 each were sold. In 10 days . . . 17 houses and stores were put up, and what was before a ranch – a collection of Indian huts and a corral for cattle – became a right smart little city.<sup>16</sup>

The first wave of miners to California and Marysville came from nearby geographical areas, and most came with the idea of quickly finding gold and returning home. Over the decade, however, the number of European-born immigrants, including Germans, increased as more and more came to California in search of an economically viable, permanent home. By 1860, the number of Californians born abroad equaled 43.4% of California's population, attesting that many experienced similar "push and pull" forces to those that influenced the Germans. As seen in Table 1, page 8, once the initial rush for gold subsided after 1852, the percentage of Germans of Marysville's total population rose steadily after 1853. Ida Pfeifer, when she visited Marysville in 1853, quoted estimates of the City's population that year of 6,000. Despite the City's decline in population to a total of 4,740 as cited in the 1860 Census, the proportion of Germans rose to 14.4%.<sup>17</sup> The California Dream for those planning to leave

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<sup>15</sup> Bryan, *Marysville*, 119, 121; Desmond, "Marysville," 23; J. S. Holliday, *World*, 187, 393; Donald Dale Jackson, *Gold Dust* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), 171, 241; Lewis Publishing Company, *Memorial and Biographical History of Northern California* (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1891), 287; Ramey, "Beginnings," Part 1, 195, 214.

<sup>16</sup> Franklin A. Buck letter written February 12, 1850, quoted in Holiday, *World*, 365; Kamphoefner, *Westfalians*, 80.

<sup>17</sup> Hubert Howe Bancroft, *The History of California, 1848-1859*, Vol. 6 in *The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft*, Vol. 23 (San Francisco: The History Company, 1888), 226; Billigheimer, *Americans*, 57; Bryan, *Marysville*, 113; Faust, *Element*, Vol. 2, 123-4; Joseph C. G. Kennedy, *Population of the United States in 1860, compiled from the Original Returns*, Vol.1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864), 32, 33, 34; Paula Mitchell Marks, *Precious Dust: The American Gold Rush Era, 1848-1900* (New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1994), 187; Kenneth S. Moore, Jr., "Fate of the California Gold Rush Miner" (Master's Thesis, California State University at Sacramento, 1970), 11, 25-6; Ida Pfeifer, *A Lady's Visit to California* (Oakland: Biobooks, 1950), 27; Ramey, "Beginnings," Part 2, 403; Wright, *California*, Part 2, 69.

the “fatherland” and eventually settle in Marysville seemed to encompass Germans looking for long term prosperity as much as those seeing the quick rewards of finding gold.

Where the Germans had lived before coming to California are shown in Table 2, page 10. Census takers in 1852 asked not only for the Yuba County inhabitants’ birthplace but also

Table 1. Germans Living in Marysville, 1852-1860, as a Percentage of the Total

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	Germans	Total	Percentage
Yuba County, 1852	565	4,500	12.1%
Marysville, 1853	71	680	10.4
Marysville, 1855	178	1,503	11.8
Marysville, 1856	191	1,445	13.2
Marysville, 1860	681	4,740	14.4

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*Source: California Censuses of 1852, 1860. Appropriate City Directories.*

for their “previous residence,” and they recorded that approximately 77% of the German-born had stopped, either briefly or for a longer period of time, in the United States. The news of the discovery of gold would impact those living in the United States sooner than those across the Atlantic, and this might account for that high number. Of those, 69% came from those areas with large German settlements, New York, Louisiana and the Midwest, with only 20% from Germany; therefore, more gold seekers probably had already been residents in the United States than argonauts coming directly from Germany. Statistics in the Marysville Directory for 1856 show a different trend -- only 38% indicated a prior residence in the United States with over 58% coming directly from Germany. The early miners were as transient as the Anglo majority and

many returned to their American homes after one or two years. For example, those from the thriving German settlements in the Midwest dropped from 29% to 16%. The high percentage who had lived in New York and immigrated in 1852, over 29%, reflect the intolerable conditions of crowded tenements and widespread poverty there, and many stayed in Marysville, constituting over 11% of its 1856 German population. The later arrivals from Germany were looking for permanent homes and occupations in California, seeking to take advantage of long-term prospects for prosperity, rather than finding gold quickly and returning to the “homeland.”

The City of Marysville that greeted the newcomers in 1850, like others in California, was one of political and social chaos and confusion. The area had been settled in the early 1840s by German-born Charles W. Flügge and Theodor Cordua who obtained land grants from John Sutter and the Mexican Government. Cordua named his settlement Neu Mecklenburg, hired countrymen as employees and hoped to attract German farmers to his trading post. He began the riverboat freight and passenger transportation system from Marysville with a monthly packet in 1848.<sup>18</sup> The discovery of gold in the Yuba River in April of 1848 and the economic prospects of “Cordua’s Ranch” lured developers Theodore Sicard, Michael Nye, Charles Couvillaud, and J. M Ramirez to the area. That year, a series of land purchases by these and other speculators of Cordua’s lands began that resulted in the area being held by these four partners until 1850. During that time, an *alcade* and a sheriff ruled the town under Mexican law. By November of 1849, the “city” had grown from only two adobe structures into a tent city with three adobes and a zinc house (made of sheet metal) imported from San Francisco.<sup>19</sup>

A brief sketch of Marysville’s tumultuous history during 1850 illustrates the chaos brought by its rapid growth. Real estate transactions were numerous and extensive, but the initial economic base for the town was transshipment of supplies for the northern mines from steamboats and paddle wheelers docked at its river port to wagon trains and pack mules.

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<sup>18</sup> Flügge left after three months apparently after arguments with Cordua. Chamberlain, *Yuba*, x, 34, 37; Delay, *Yuba*, 43-4; Lewis, *California*, 282-3; Ramey, *Beginnings*, Part 1, 198, 203.

<sup>19</sup> See Ramey “The Beginnings of Marysville,” Part 1 for a detailed listing of the numerous and extensive land title exchanges. Bancroft, *History*, 463-4; Chamberlain, *Yuba*, 34-9; Delay, *Yuba*, 43; Desmond, “Marysville,” 12; Ramey, “Beginnings,” Part 1, 206-212, 214, and Part 2 in *Ibid.*, 382.

Table 2. Former Residences of Marysville's Germans in 1852 and 1856, as a Percentage of the Total German Population

	<u>1852</u>	<u>1856</u>
New York	29.62	10.68
Missouri	10.12	6.18
Louisiana	8.52	3.93
Pennsylvania	5.67	2.25
Illinois	5.32	1.69
Ohio	3.37	5.06
Wisconsin	2.30	1.12
Massachusetts	2.13	0.56
Texas	1.06	0.00
Iowa	1.06	0.00
Indiana	1.06	0.00
Alabama	1.06	1.12
Mississippi	1.06	0.56
New Jersey	0.53	0.56
South Carolina	0.35	0.56
Kentucky	0.35	1.12
Virginia	0.35	0.56
Maryland	0.35	0.00
Vermont	0.18	1.69
Tennessee	0.18	0.56
North Carolina, Georgia, Maine - 3 ea.	1.60	0.00
Connecticut, Michigan, Rhode Island, Florida - 1 ea.	0.71	0.00
<hr/> <b>Total from the United States</b>	<hr/> <b>76.95</b>	<hr/> <b>38.20</b>
Germany	19.86	58.43
France	0.89	1.69
Chile	0.89	0.00
Mexico	0.53	0.56
England	0.35	0.56
Australia, West Indies, Canada - 1 ea.	0.53	0.00
Denmark	0.00	0.56
<hr/> <b>Total from Foreign Countries</b>	<hr/> <b>23.05</b>	<hr/> <b>61.80</b>
<hr/> <b>Grand Total</b>	<hr/> <b>100.00</b>	<hr/> <b>100.00</b>

*Sources: California Census of 1852, 1856 City Directory*

In January of 1850, the name, Marysville, was formally adopted in honor of Charles Couvillaud's wife, Mary Murphy, a survivor of the ill-fated Donner party and the City's only lady resident. Stephen Field arrived that month, used his legal expertise to clear up land titles obtained from John Sutter, was elected *alcade*, and virtually ran the city until its incorporation in 1851. By February, there were approximately 500 permanent residents and Germans A. B. Cook and Peter Baker had built Marysville's first hotel, the United States.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Hubert Howe Bancroft, "California Inter Pocula," *The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft*, Vol. 35 (San Francisco: The History Company, 1888), 610; Chamberlain, *Yuba*, 39, 40-1, 44; Delay, *Yuba*, 134; Desmond, "Marysville," 16, 18; Holliday, *World*, 182; Lewis, *History*, 274; Ramey, *Beginnings*, Part 1, 210, 214, 216, 219, 221, and Part 3 in *Ibid.*, 21.

As newcomers poured into the City, it grew quickly so that by April it had 150 houses of all types, including 15-20 zinc houses and 5-10 wood structures, and a permanent population of 500 to 600 plus as many as 1,000 transients. The gambling halls and numerous saloons along the city's main streets confirmed that Marysville by now was definitely a miner's trading town. The *Marysville Herald* began publication in August of 1850, the first paper north of Sacramento, just in time to report the chaos in the judicial court. A dispute began June 7<sup>th</sup> when Steven Field, while defending John Sutter, strongly objected to a ruling by District Judge William R. Turner. (Authors' prejudices about one or the other combatant colors the records resulting in unclear, contradictory accounts.) The two men slandered each other in the *Herald* until December when they settled their differences peacefully, unlike others in the City who often resorted to dueling to resolve their altercations and arguments. Incorporation in February of 1851 assured Marysville's legal status. By the time Louise Clapp arrived in the spring of 1851, Marysville had grown into the third largest City in California with a town plaza surrounded by wood frame buildings and a boat landing at the foot of B Street even though many miners, disappointed with meager returns, had returned home.<sup>21</sup>

An editorial in the *Marysville Herald* in August of 1850 bemoaned the rapid growth of the City, complaining that because the majority of residents were individuals, not families, they lacked civic spirit, acting "but all for themselves."<sup>22</sup> Contemporary observer Hinton R. Helper also complained: "all were rushing madly, after their own fortunes."<sup>23</sup> Historians such as Hubert H. Bancroft contended that it was the gradual increase in the number of women that brought order to the chaotic gold country. The facts that Mary Murphy Covillaud was the only woman in Marysville in early 1850 and that by 1852 only 243 women were counted in the town's

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<sup>21</sup> Bancroft, "California", 623; Thomas D. Clark, *Gold Rush Dairy: Being the Journal of Elisha Douglas Perkins on the Overland Trail in the Spring and Summer of 1849* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1967), 184; Chamberlain, *Yuba*, 43, 54; Daley, *Yuba*, 123; Desmond, "Marysville," 16, 17; Holliday, *World*, 355; Lewis, *History*, 274, 284; Ramey, "Beginnings," Part 1, 224; Part 2 in *Ibid.*, 378-382, 482; and Part 3 in *Ibid.*, 21; Marlene Smith-Baranzini, "Out of the Shadows: Louise Clappe's Life and Early California Writing," *California History*, LVIII:4 (Winter 1999-2000), 238-261, 248.

<sup>22</sup> Quoted in Holiday, *World*, 369-70.

<sup>23</sup> Hinton R. Helper, *The Land of Gold: Reality vs. Fiction, 1855* (Baltimore: H. Taylor, 1855), 243. In 1851, Helper traveled to California via Cape Horn, returning to his home in North Carolina in 1854. As his adventure was most unprofitable, he constantly grumbled in his letters home. For example, according to John Baur, he spent three months sweating at one mine and only made ninety-three cents. He turned his adventure into a profit by writing *The Land of Gold*, a harsh criticism of the gold rush and those who participated in it. "Californians Elsewhere: The Golden State's Nineteenth-Century Citizens At Large," *Southern California Quarterly*, LXVI:2 (Summer, 1984), 89-132, 97.

population of 4,500 would seem to confirm that suggestion.<sup>24</sup> Historian David Goodman, in his study of gold rush communities, refutes these theories, arguing that it was the newcomers' innate love of order that caused them to try to conquer the chaos around them through implementing conventions and rituals they had known at home. The Anglo-American men brought the Eastern ideals of domesticity with them and sought to impose them on the disordered communities. In Marysville and other communities born during the gold rush, these impulses caused both the Anglos, and their German neighbors, to create and form associations to combat the turmoil and bring stability to their new environment.<sup>25</sup>

Marysville's inhabitants initiated and developed institutions very early in the City's history. Even though men, foreign and native-born, were the overwhelming majority of the City's population in 1850, Anglos and Germans supported the founding of three Protestant churches that year, the Congregational Church in April, the Methodist Episcopal Church in June and the Presbyterian Church in September. All three congregations built church structures in the following year. Roman Catholics instituted St. Joseph's Catholic Church with its first service in September of 1852. Most early church records are missing, but early historians list Peter Decker, E. Van Muller, H. S. Hoblitzell and John Hoesch as officers in these parishes. Because all four resided in the United States before coming to Marysville, they probably were conversant enough in English to feel comfortable in these congregations. The attendance records for Marysville's early churches could indicate whether those born in Germany also worshiped there despite any language difficulties. Nevertheless, as the number of foreign-born in Marysville grew, German-language churches were started to meet the needs of the newcomers -- the German Methodist Episcopal Church in 1860 and the Roman Catholic Church of the Immaculate Conception in 1871.<sup>26</sup>

As far as politically based institutions are concerned, at first Germans did not regularly get involved in that arena in their new American homes. Coming from a European background of principalities and duchies, they were unfamiliar with the workings of a democratic society and needed time to learn about its institutions. They saw politics as a corrupting occupation, preferring to remain farmers, craftsmen or merchants. Furthermore, not all had the ready

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<sup>24</sup> Bancroft, "California," 300, 305-6, 308; Bancroft, *History*, 232-3; Desmond, "Marysville," 30.

<sup>25</sup> David Goodman, *Gold Seeking: Victoria and California in the 1850s* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 14, 65, 89, 92, 181-4, 186.

<sup>26</sup> Chamberlain, *Yuba*, 52-4; Ramey, "Beginnings," Part 3, 41; Helen Turner Shaver, *History of the First Presbyterian Church of Marysville, 1850-1975* (Marysville: First Presbyterian Church, 1985), 44.

command of the English language necessary to communicate to both native-born and foreign-born constituents.<sup>27</sup> By the end of the decade, however, Germans began to become involved in Marysville's political structure. G. W. Aubry was elected Alderman in the Third Ward in 1858. The following year, an editorial in the *Daily California Express* actively solicited the German voters, and perhaps they were instrumental in electing John Hoesch as Aubry's successor. Although born in Pennsylvania, Peter Decker, a prominent businessman and philanthropist in Marysville and Mayor in 1858, was active in German's *Turnverein* and may have helped educate the foreign-born newcomers in their civic responsibilities.<sup>28</sup>

One attempt to restore order adopted by the city's politicians may have disturbed the German newcomers. In April of 1851, city officials passed an ordinance closing all stores, barrooms and gambling parlors on Sunday to "promote better observance of the Sabbath." Although certainly not in favor of gambling and ruckus or rowdy behavior on Sunday, Germans believed the day should not be spent solely in church but should include gatherings of families and friends at festive picnics or dinners with music, dancing and beer-drinking. The ordinance was short-lived, however. As packers arrived in town the first Sunday and had to leave the following day, they demanded that the merchant-suppliers and entertainment venues be reopened. Marysville's businessmen acceded to them and opened their doors, despite the law. Gambling parlors had "closed doors" but with patrons inside. The law was repealed a week later.<sup>29</sup>

Fires were a constant source of chaos in California's gold rush towns, and Marysville was no exception. Two major fires occurred in 1851 and between the two, the entire business district was destroyed including the offices of the *Marysville Herald*. During the year 1854, three separate fires destroyed a major part of downtown. In July, over 200 buildings burned including the Presbyterian Church, St. Charles Hotel, the theater and courthouse. The City's response was to immediately form the Mutual Engine Company. Others followed in throughout the 1850s, and the membership rosters of number of companies included a number of Germans. Because many had been actively involved in volunteer firefighting in Midwestern cities, the organizers of the companies would value their expertise. By 1856, seven were officers of the various volunteer

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<sup>27</sup> DuBois, *Germans*, 172; Faust, *Element*, Vol. 2, 123-4; Thernstrom, *Harvard*, 421.

<sup>28</sup> G. Amy and Mix Smith, *Directory for the City of Marysville for the year commencing 1858* (Marysville: Daily News Book and Job Office, 1858), xv, 91; *Daily California Express*, 21 March 1859, 5:223, p. 2, col. 2; *Express*, 22 March 1859, 5:227, p. 2, col. 2.

<sup>29</sup> Bancroft, *History*, 464; Desmond, "Marysville," 30; Ramey, "Beginnings," Part 3, 24.

companies, and this number increased by three by 1858. The Municipal Fire Department had Jacob Levy as a second assistant chief in 1857-1858, and P. J. Welsh was the Chief Engineer from 1858 to 1960.<sup>30</sup>

Fraternal and benevolent organizations also benefited from Germans' membership. During the decade, the published rosters for the Masonic Lodges list five German members as officers and rosters for the Odd Fellows Lodges list seven. The fact that Germans were prominent enough in these organizations to become officers indicates that the lodges' membership rosters must also have included a number of Germans as "ordinary members." All were active in helping those who arrived in Marysville "sick, moneyless, and friendless." The Hebrew Benevolent Society, organized in 1855, included many Germans on their roster, including long-time resident Christian Scholl, bookseller H. Wagner, and musician Martin Simonson, to name a few. Increased German membership must have helped the society grow because new names appear as officers of the organization in subsequent City Directories.<sup>31</sup> Listings of the Society's members include non-Germans as well as Germans, so the Society was open to all newcomers of the Jewish faith regardless of birthplace. Marysville's newspapers regularly published notices of the Society's meetings held on the first Sunday of the month. According to newspaper editorials, the Society's annual balls were a highlight of Marysville's social calendar for members and non-members alike.<sup>32</sup>

Although the Germans joined with their Anglo neighbors to bring order to the chaotic environment in Marysville, they preferred to live and work close to one another as shown on Table 3, page 17. As John Bodnar and other historians note, Germans in particular preferred to reside in the same neighborhood -- generally, they were happiest when surrounded by fellow immigrants from the "homeland." Consequently, they tended to settle in specific neighborhoods such as the formally bordered communities such as in New York's

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<sup>30</sup>Amy, G. & O., *Marysville Directory for the year commencing November 1, 1856* (San Francisco: Commercial Book and Job Steam Printing Establishment, 1856), 117; Amy, 1858, 88; Chamberlain, *Yuba*, 66-67; Furer, *Germans*, 33; Ramey, "Beginnings," Part 3, 54; Smith-Baranzini, "Shadows," 256.

<sup>31</sup>The Masons were E. Newberger, E. Snowwhite, L. Lewis, P. Decker and M. Armer. The Odd Fellows were J. S. Benton, C. Levy, A. J. Lucas, J. H. Krause, H. Roseman, P. Decker and E. A. Kusel. Other founders of the Hebrew Benevolent Society were Bernard Baronne, Adam Sattler, and J. S. Bender, and H. Eilerman, J. Winkler and G. Gerichten appear as officers in 1857 records. Amy, 1856, 111-44; Amy, 1858, 104-8; Chamberlain, *Yuba*, 56-7, 62.

<sup>32</sup>An example of the notice is in the *Express*, 3 February 1859, V:187, p. 3, col. 4. *Express*, 18 October 1859, 6:103, p. 2, col. 1; *Express*, 20 October 1859, 6:105, p. 2, col. 1; *Marysville Herald*, 16 October 1856, VII:62, p. 2, col. 4; *Herald*, 9 September 1857, VIII:33, p. 2, col. 5; *Daily National Democrat*, 23 September 1859, III:36, p. 2, col. 4; *Democrat*, 20 October 1859 III:59, pg. 2, col. 1; *Democrat*, 21 October 1859 III:60, pg. 2, col. 1.

*Kleindeutschland*, ethnically-specific communities such as in Milwaukee or Cincinnati, or in a loosely bound neighborhoods such as in Marysville.<sup>33</sup>

The German newcomers to Marysville did not form a formal community but intermingled with their Anglo neighbors. Table 3 shows that the majority of them, however, clustered together within a few blocks around the main business district. Each block, according to the 1856 map of Marysville in was divided into four units facing the street, but each could contain one- or two-room business establishments or multi-stored, brick buildings.<sup>34</sup> The numeral shown within each block specifies the number of Germans living there. The italicized letters show the locations of the German owned and/or operated hotels, saloons or restaurants in the area. Although some lived outside the downtown area, most Germans elected to settle within the eight blocks surrounded by E, First, C, and Third Streets.<sup>35</sup> Because most of the Marysville's inhabitants, Anglo and German, were single men and because the 1856 Directory has few "dwelling" listings, many probably lived at their place of business. Both Anglo and German businessmen would want to be close to their customers, but the Germans also demanded adjacent venues where they could gather together socially, enjoy communicating in their "mother tongue," and continue practicing the customs they enjoyed in the "fatherland." This accounts for the 23 hotels and saloons shown within their neighborhood. The proximity of their residences and social sites, all within easy walking distance from one another, would foster

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<sup>33</sup> Bancroft, *History*, 227, 235; Bodnar, *Transplanted*, xvii, 15, 142, 172, 205; Furer, *Germans*, 39, 118; Kondert, "New Orleans," 59; Mueller, "Milwaukee," 98; Nadel, *New York*, 47, 58; Witte, *Germans*, 11.

<sup>34</sup> N. Wescott and W. S. Watson, comp., *The Official Map of the City of Marysville, California* (San Francisco: Britton & Rey, 1856).

<sup>35</sup> Amy, 1856, 11-20.



their sense of togetherness and help them continue practicing their cultural customs and rituals. At the same time, as aggressive entrepreneurs, the Germans chose to be close to their customers to increase their chances for economic success.

In the 1850s, Marysville grew into California's most prominent town north of Sacramento, attracting businessmen and entrepreneurs from the United States and Germany. Because boats with as shallow a draft as ten inches could tie up at her landing dock at the end of B Street, Marysville's transportation industry thrived, first for people and materiel for the mines and later for agricultural products. Miners would head for the Sierra Nevada from Sacramento on steamers and paddle wheelers to Marysville, overnight in hotels, then board stages for the mining camps. Supplies would follow the same route, loaded on mule trains or mule-drawn wagons that operated daily. The all weather road from Sacramento to Marysville supplemented the river trade – the trip took only 4 hours and 25 minutes. (Roads from Sacramento directly to the mines were impassable in winter due to rains making the marshy lands like bogs.) Supplies during a year could total 100 tons – each miner consumed at least a pound of supplies daily. Packers employed 400 men and 2,500 mules on the route from Marysville to Downieville, and as many as 1,000 mules could leave Marysville in a single day. Mules were the pack-animal of choice because they could travel nonstop between 9:00 am until sunset and could feed on grasses along the road during the spring, summer and autumn.<sup>36</sup>

As the decade progressed, placer mining in Yuba County decreased as the easily obtained gold in the rivers was exhausted, and the townspeople of Marysville looked to the transportation of agricultural products from surrounding farmlands as a further economic base for their town. A high demand for grain in the early 1850s stimulated the growth of farming, and by 1855, fruits such as melons were one of the most important crops of the Marysville region. Levees were built and bogs were drained so that farmers could grow crops on the surrounding lowlands. The second generation of immigrants in the mid-1850s as well as many of the original argonauts

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<sup>36</sup> Bancroft, *History*, 463; Bancroft, "California," 327, 329; A. C. W. Bethel, "The Golden Skein: California's Gold-Rush Transportation Network," *California History*, LXXXVII:4 (Winter 1998-1999) 250-275, 259; Julian Dana, *The Sacramento, River of Gold* (St. Clair Shores, MI: Scholarly Press, 1971), 223; Delay, *Yuba*, 81; Desmond, "Marysville," 5; Erwin G. Gudde, *California Gold Camps: A geographical and historical dictionary of camps, towns and localities where gold was found and mined; wayside stations and trading centers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 209; Holiday, *Rush* 182, 189; Joseph Henry Jackson, *Anybody's Gold: The Story of California's Mining Towns* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1941), 431; James Mason Hutchings, "Packing in the Mountains of California," *American West*, 2:3 (1965), 92-95; Marks, *Dust*, 186; Robert Phelps, "All Hands have Gone Downtown: Urban Places in Gold Rush California," *California History*, LXXIX:2 (Summer, 2000), 113-140, 115; Ramey, "Beginnings," Part 2, 383; Thernstrom, *Harvard*, 412.

turned to farming. City boosters persuaded California's farmers to hold the State Fair in Marysville for five days in 1858. Another indication of the attention given to agriculture was the increase in newspaper advertising for farming equipment and supplies over that for mining supplies.<sup>37</sup>

Mining was not abandoned, however. In early 1852, a new system of hydraulic mining began near Marysville where miners would direct torrential streams of water onto hills and valleys to wash out the hidden gold. This method created two long-term problems for the city: the diversion of water from river beds, and the creation of "slickens," sand and gravel, that gradually raised river bottoms and polluted the Feather, Bear, Yuba and American Rivers. When heavy wintertime rains occurred, the massive floods of the rivers blanketed the surrounding fields with a slick combination of clay and sand, topped with pebbles. Marysville's businessmen and politicians did not recognize the enormity of the problem until the 1860s and 1870s, and despite the threat of the farmlands' deterioration, agricultural production kept increasing during the 1850s. The tonnage of agricultural products sent downriver would increase until that volume of freight equaled the amount coming north from Sacramento.<sup>38</sup>

Because German businessmen were generally interested in founding and developing successful businesses or occupations in areas of economic potential, Marysville and its ongoing prosperity would have seemed to be an ideal place to settle. Because they enjoyed a reputation among Anglos as practical, hardworking men, the native-born majority would have welcomed them. Rather than becoming involved in the transportation industry in Marysville, however, these German immigrants worked in the same occupations as they had traditionally in their former homes, whether in the United States or Germany. Merchandising, hotel-keeping, restaurants, saloons, brewing and music were economic endeavors that attracted the largest number of German immigrants. The newcomers also worked as bakers, carpenters, and leather workers of all kinds, skills most often associated with Germans in their former homes. Packing, stage-coach driving and freight transportation did not interest the German entrepreneurs.<sup>39</sup> Table 4, page 21, gives an overview of the specific years of 1853, 1855, 1856, and 1860, demonstrating

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<sup>37</sup> Gudde, *Camps*, 327; Desmond, "Marysville," 93, 95-96, 113; Lewis, *History*, 207; Jackson, *Dust*, 315; Moore, "Fate," 25, 38; Rohrbough, *Days*, 226.

<sup>38</sup> Bethel, "Network," 258; Chamberlain, *Yuba*, 2; Dana, *River*, 145-6, 152, 183; Desmond, "Marysville," 8, 9, 102, 105, 113; Ramey, "Beginnings," Part 3, 51.

<sup>39</sup> Billigmeier, *Americans*, 49; Desmond, "Marysville," 35, 37; Faust, *Element*, 74; Thernstrom, *Harvard*, 413; Witte, *Germans*, 11.

how the majority of Germans would work continuously in their traditional merchandising, craft and the service industries over the seven-year period. In 1853, 89% chose those fields – only .5% would work in the packing industry even though it was the dominant enterprise of the city. More Germans would work in packing and freight during the period increasing the percentage to 12% 1860, but, by 1860, the overwhelming majority, 69%, still stayed in endeavors traditional to their culture. Perhaps they preferred employment that would keep them close to their German neighbors rather than travel afield with mule trains. But, as a group, they became successful and powerful in the merchandizing and craft professions they chose from the beginning of the town's history.

The newspapers and City Directories from the 1850s in Marysville as well as accounts of the city's historians provide numerous examples of early German entrepreneurs who were willing to invest their time and energy to assure the city would grow. In merchandizing, the Hochstatder & Brothers and Hudson & Eilerman were prominent dealers in dry goods. L. Keser started his tailoring concern in 1850 and Louis Feder built his hat business in 1853 – both were thriving in 1860. Others that operated continuously until 1860 were John Keller's liquor

Table 4. Occupations of Germans in Marysville

	1853	1855	1856	1860
<i>Merchants</i>				
Clothing, Dry Goods, Variety, Crockery	12	20	16	19
Groceries, Produce	2	4	7	10
Liquor Tobacco, Books, Confectioners	4	12	13	15
Unspecified	10	12	16	41
Clerks	8	24	14	21
<i>Craftsmen and Manufacturers</i>				
Barbers	0	4	3	6
Brewers, Coopers	1	2	2	7
Butchers, Bakers	3	11	15	24
Carpenters, Woodworkers, Painters, Plumber	2	11	11	21
Tailors, Shoemakers, Tanners	5	10	12	32
Watchmakers, Gunsmiths, Locksmiths	2	4	5	6
Misc: Millers, Tanners, Makers of Billiard-tables, Organs, Sewing Machines, Cider	3	7	12	12
<i>Packing and Freight Industry</i>				
Teamsters, Stage Drivers	1	4	6	17
Blacksmiths	1	3	3	14
Saddlers, Harness Makers	1	4	2	6
Wagonmakers, Wheelrights	1	3	5	11
<i>Service Industries</i>				
Hoteliers	8	7	7	12
Restaurant and/or Saloons	6	14	20	54
City Baths, Gymnasiums	0	0	0	2
Pawnbrokers	2	1	1	3
<i>Miscellaneous Services:</i>				
Barbers	0	3	4	6
Bookkeepers, Teachers	0	0	0	4
Doctors, Druggists, Midwives	0	2	3	5
Musicians, Dance Instructors	1	3	2	7
City Officials, Utilities	0	4	2	6
<i>Farmers, Gardeners</i>	1	1	2	11
<i>Miners</i>	0	1	0	4
<i>Laborers, Servants</i>	0	1	0	25
<i>Unknown Occupations</i>	5	6	8	8
Total	79	178	191	409

Source: California Census of 1860, Appropriate City Directories.

business, started in 1850, Christian Scholl's gun store, also begun in 1850, Isaac Glazier's "Cigar Store," started in 1852, and Jacob Levy's clothing store, started in 1853. Entrepreneurs in the crafts included woodworkers Aubrey and Bender making sashes and doors for the town's booming construction industry. Leather tanning had Drake and Spindler starting their Pioneer Tannery in 1852, joined by Heitmann and Hoelcher's Feather River Tannery in 1858. At his City Bakery, Max Armer advertised "Crackers for the Million" for sale. For lodging, A. B. Cook and Peter Baker built the United States Hotel in 1850, and John Smith assumed its management in 1852. Marysville historian Earl Ramey stated that it was by far the most popular hotel in

town. These are only a few examples of the business Germans founded and developed to meet the demands of all of Marysville's townsfolk, Anglo and German.<sup>40</sup>

But the entrepreneurs did not neglect their own countrymen. Despite their small numbers, Germans customers readily supported enterprises that met their specific needs. In 1850 an advertisement in the *Marysville Herald* announced the formation of John Rueger and George Engler's Marysville Brewery to provide beer for the German newcomers who preferred that beverage to whiskey. Jacob Geiss founded his California Brewery and Garden in 1855 to provide an additional social venue for Germans and Anglos alike, and John Eckel developed his outdoor gardens in 1858 for picnicking and sharpshooting. German language newspapers and books were in such demand that in 1853 bookstore owner Henry Wagner specifically advertised that he included German books in his inventory. His competitors, G. and O. Amy, were also careful to advertise that they carried European Journals and German Papers in their store. Both the foreign and native born must have appreciated the medical skills the Germans brought to Marysville. Ads for midwife Mary Young stated she was a *Deutsch Hebamme*, G. Horning specified he ran a "German Drug Store," and Dr. Eugene Herzer specified he was trained in the *Deutschen Arzt* of medicine.<sup>41</sup>

In addition to continuing in professions they traditionally occupied in their former homes, Marysville's Germans demonstrated another strong practice with roots in their "homeland," that of economically helping newcomers as they arrived. Their involvement in the benevolent institutions in the city addressing the poverty of newcomers is one example. Another is that, when tracing the individual settlers, one discovers that a number of German newcomers were immediately hired by their countrymen to join them in their firms.<sup>42</sup> Some of these employees later formed their own successful businesses. Marcus Bromberger began in 1855 at Goodman & Co. and in 1856 Dedrick Neiserman started at Snowwhite's bakery, but, by 1860, both had their own merchant businesses.<sup>43</sup> Although it lacked formal borders, economic opportunity and

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<sup>40</sup> Chamberlain, *Yuba*, 69-71; Samuel Colville, *Marysville Directory for the Year Commencing November 1, 1855* (San Francisco: Monson & Valentine, 1855) 2, 3; Daley, *Yuba*, 153-4; Desmond, "Marysville," 35, 37; Ramey, "Beginnings," Part 2, 394, 398, Part 3, 45; Thernstrom, *Harvard*, 421.

<sup>41</sup> Colville, *1855*, 3; *Democrat*, 13 August 1858, 1:2, p. 3, col. 2; *Democrat*, 26 September 1858, 1:39 p. 3, col. 7; *Express*, 13 February 1859, 2:2 p. 1, col. 5; *Herald*, 6 August 1850 1:1, p. 3, col. 4; *Herald*, 9 September 1850 1:11, p. 1, col. 4; *Herald*, 9 December 1856, VII:108, p. 3, col. 3; *Herald*, 9 December 1856, VII:108 p. 1, col. 4.

<sup>42</sup> For example, Max Armer hired Mack Curr in his City Bakery; E. Snowwhite hired L. Veltas in his bakery; and L. Meyer hired H. Hons as a bartender in his Mechanics' Saloon. Amy, *1856*, 53, 90; Colville, *1855*, 14.

<sup>43</sup> Amy, *1856*, 70; Colville, *1855*, 9; *Population Returns of the Eighth Census of the United States, 1860*, Microfilm Copy 653, Roll 72, "California," Vol. 9, "Yuba County" (Washington: The National Archives, 1967), 899, 923.

tradition helped bind the German community together. Saloons and beer gardens, breweries, medical skills, and bookstores owned and operated by Germans catered to the particular tastes of the immigrants.

The informal neighborhood the Germans formed and the traditional economic occupations they practiced are two indications that they maintained their German identity. The discovery that they also aggressively practiced and persistently adhered to the customs and rituals of their “homeland” only underscores that fact. In the face of the Anglo-American culture foreign to them, they stayed culturally connected with not only their “fatherland” but also with Germans living in the United States. The Marysville Germans copied and repeated the rituals and practices of other Germans regardless of where they lived -- in one of the Germanic principalities in Europe, in closely-knit communities such as *Kleindeutschland*, or in the German-based cities of Cincinnati and Milwaukee.<sup>44</sup>

Culturally, the Germans’ underlying doctrine was that a nation’s population should extend itself beyond its commercial activities of just manufacturing, farming or merchandizing. They were critical of the priorities they observed in the Americans around them, working and making money to the exclusion of relaxation or cultural endeavors. They believed that a society to succeed must include activities in art, literature, science and thought.<sup>45</sup> The German ideal of a healthful life was to work hard and live thriftily like their American neighbors, but also to play hard and joyously by adding cultural appreciation and festive celebration to their every-day existence. This can be summed up in the German word “*Gemütlichkeit*” which means “joy of living.” For Germans, relaxing after work was important to keep a mind and body healthy, which explains their involvement in celebrations, formal and informal, social contacts, a love of music and social gatherings.<sup>46</sup> Across America, Germans festively gathered together to celebrate life, whether in singing societies, beer gardens, family picnics or holiday gatherings. In Marysville in particular, the Germans’ almost stubborn reluctance to abandon their culture influenced their Anglo-American neighbors so that, despite their small numbers, the native-born

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<sup>44</sup>Barney, “Turnverein,” 27; Billigmeier, *Americans*, 61; Conzen, “Culture,” 45; Furer, *Germans*, 38; Mueller, “Milwaukee,” 95-98; Nadel, *New York*, 104-7; Witte, *Germans*, 11.

<sup>45</sup>Kathleen Neils Conzen, “Ethnicity as Festive Culture: Nineteenth Century German America on Parade,” Werner Sollors, ed., *The Invention of Ethnicity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.), 51; Faust, *Element*, Vol. 2, 250.

<sup>46</sup>DuBois, *Germans*, 67, 69; Faust, *Element*, Vol. 2, 378; George Henderson and Thompson Olasiji, *Migrants, Immigrants, and Slaves: Racial and Ethnic Groups in America* (New York: University Press of America, Inc., 1955), 109.

had adopted many of the German's rituals and customs by the end of the decade. They influenced their Anglo-American neighborhoods through cooperating with them in two areas: planning celebratory events and orchestrating musical performances. At the same time, they actively practiced their own ethnically centered observances through their clubs, the *Turnverein* social society and *Liederkrantz* singing group.

Throughout the decade, Germans helped organize many of Marysville's grand balls, a major social activity in the City. As early as 1851 when John Reuger and George Engler organized a Grand Ball at their Marysville Hotel and Brewery, for example, the *Marysville Herald* proclaimed it a "most pleasant affair" enjoyed by the whole community, German and Anglo.<sup>47</sup> Fire companies held regular balls, and those with German members often included them among the Marshals of the dances. Yuba Fire Company and the Warren Engine Company, for example, both called on German members to help plan festivities. The Germans also helped stage the Firemen's Balls organized by the combined fire companies and called on their Williams Coronet Band to add to the festivities.<sup>48</sup> The Odd Fellows, when they held their Grand Ball in 1859, called on German members to help with the planning.<sup>49</sup> The Hebrew Benevolent Society started holding balls in October of 1856 and always included many Germans among its officials. The Society always invited the general public to attend, and according to the *National Daily Democrat*, at a Ball held in 1859, 212 dined on the dinner the Society provided and 50 couples danced to the latest tunes, indicating that attendees included both Anglos and Germans.<sup>50</sup> Other benefit balls such the Gift Ball and Concert held by Professor Grambss, M. Armer and B. Eilerman in 1858 were also proclaimed successes.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> *Herald*, 3 January 1851, I:44, p. 2, col. 3; *Herald*, 10 January 1851, I:46, p. 3, col. 3. Copies of the *Marysville Herald* and *Daily California Express* for the years 1852 through mid 1855 are not available to document social activities during those years.

<sup>48</sup> The Yuba and Warren Companies' organizers included L. Glassen, P. J. Welsh, Max Armer, Charles Snowwhite, Jacob Levy and J. S. Bender. C. F. Scholl, Marcus Marcuse and Jacob Levy helped with the Fireman's Balls in 1856 and 1859. *Express*, 20 January 1859, 5:174, p. 3, col. 4; *Express*, 20 December 1859, 6:156, p. 2, col. 4; *Herald*, 26 September 1856, VII:45, p. 2, col. 5; *Herald*, 24 September 1857, VIII:40, p. 2, col. 4; *Herald*, 5 February 1858, IV:194, p. 2, col. 4.

<sup>49</sup> E. A. Kusel and John Flathman were the German representatives. *Express*, 11 April 1859, 5:244, p. 2, col. 3.

<sup>50</sup> S. Worms, H. Wagner, I. Glazier, M. Marcus, S. Goodman and the brothers Kusel were among the planners. The roster of members of the Hebrew Benevolent Society listed in Chamberlain's history includes a large number of Germans; however, some seem to be of other ethnic backgrounds. Chamberlain, *Yuba*, 57, 62; *Democrat*, 23 September 1859, III:36, p. 2., col. 4; *Democrat*, 20 October 1859, III:59, p. 2, col 1; *Democrat*, 21 October 1859, III:60, p. 2, col. 1.

<sup>51</sup> *Democrat*, 1 October 1858, 1:42, p. 2, col. 4; *Democrat*, 27 October 1858, 1:59, p. 2, col. 4.

Germans across the United States extended their rituals to American holidays, and Marysville was no exception. Crucial for the addition of better music and better social representation for the Anglo holiday of July 4<sup>th</sup>, for example, was the increased German membership on the planning committees for the festivities over the decade.<sup>52</sup> Germans helped plan American-type events such as bar-be-ques sponsored by the city fathers as well as “public dinners” in German-owned venues when the City lacked money to fund a civic celebration. In 1859, Louis Glassen and Jacob Levy were on the official planning committee for the July 4<sup>th</sup> festivities, and they helped plan a dinner and dance out at the Grove in the countryside outside Marysville, arranging for wagons to pick up celebrants at the major hotels in town.<sup>53</sup> Besides July 4<sup>th</sup>, Germans influenced Marysville’s celebrations of other special days. The Masons’ St. John’s Day celebration in 1850 included a full procession and parade with brass bands, a traditional part of many German celebrations. In 1857, Jacob Geiss provided an opportunity for Marysville’s Anglos to become familiar with the customs of Easter eggs and bunnies begun in the “homeland” by sponsoring an Easter ball and offering to pick up celebrants at the U. S. and Western Hotels.<sup>54</sup> The consistent and steady involvement of Germans in planning festivities for Anglo-based holidays meant that the German ethic of joyful celebration was becoming more and more acceptable.

The celebration of the weekly “holiday” of Sunday was a major concern to the Germans both across America and in Marysville. They were highly critical of the Anglo-American custom of treating Sunday merely as a day for church going and piety rather than joyful celebration. In Marysville, as in other German communities, the newcomers celebrated Sunday with family gatherings in taverns or beer gardens operated by John Reuger, John Eckel or Jacob Geiss where one could talk, play cards, enjoy beer and listen to German music.<sup>55</sup> On the first Sunday in May, repeating traditions practiced in the East, Germans celebrated *Mai Fest* across

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<sup>52</sup> Conzen, “Culture,” 62; Faust, *Element*, Vol. 2, 383; Thernstrom, *Harvard*, 424.

<sup>53</sup> *Express*, 26 April 1859, 5:257, p 2, col. 1; *Express*, 30 May 1859, 5:387, p. 2, col. 4; *Express*, 4 July 1859, 6:13, p. 2, col. 2; *Herald*, 29 June 1856, VI:235, p. 3, col. 3; *Herald*, 4 July 1857, VII:280, p. 2, col. 4. The Fourth of July celebrations before 1856 in Marysville are undocumented. The *Herald* started publication in August of 1851, and issues covering the months of July in the years before 1856 are unavailable.

<sup>54</sup> *Herald*, 31 December 1850, 1:43, p. 2, col. 3; *Herald*, 12 April 1857, VII:213, p. 3, col. 5; *Herald*, 15 April 1857, VII:215, p. 2, col. 5.

<sup>55</sup> Barney, “Turnverein,” 27; Nadel, *New York*, 105; Witte, *Germans*, 8, 11. Late 19<sup>th</sup> century historians Chamberlain and Bancroft were critical in turn of the Germans’ success in introducing “continental Sunday.” Chamberlain bemoaned the lack of regard of the gold-rush Californians regard for the Sabbath, and Bancroft exclaimed there was a “complete return to primitive ideas regarding Sunday.” Bancroft, “California,” 297; Chamberlain, *Yuba*, 42.

the western frontier. Marysville's residents often celebrated with day-long picnic excursions to Long Bar, nine miles outside Marysville at Krause's Union Hotel and Joseph Vick's ranch. The advertisements for events at all five of these venues invited all City dwellers, not just Germans, to attend. Even the local school, Notre Dame Academy, sponsored a May Day Festival in 1858.<sup>56</sup>

The holiday that the Germans influenced most, nationally and in Marysville, was Christmas. Due to their influence, Marysville's celebration of Christmas took on a joyful note rather than one of solemnity. Christmas trees, the use of evergreens, the icon of Santa Claus and the custom of gift-giving, especially to children, were all German customs introduced in the United States in the late 1840s and 1850s. Editorials and advertisements in Marysville's newspapers trace how over the years the Anglo residents increasingly adopted these customs. In 1855, for example, the *Marysville Herald* ran an editorial describing the custom of giving gifts for its readers. In 1856, Schultz and Wilker, the German confectioners, advertised Christmas candies for sale in December. The next year, gifts were advertised for sale by merchants, churches festooned with evergreens celebrated with Christmas Fairs and Sunday School exhibits, and a Christmas dinner was open to all. Adam Schmidt, at his Young America Saloon, added to the celebration by lighting barrels and old boxes to illuminate Christmas night. By 1859, merchant H. Weil proclaimed himself agent for Santa Claus, and both German and Anglo merchants advertised gifts for the holidays.<sup>57</sup>

Besides influencing Marysville's residents to add festiveness to their celebratory events, the Germans sought to expand their Anglo neighbors' appreciation of music and dance, just as their countrymen had in other American communities.<sup>58</sup> Throughout the decade, German immigrant Professor F. Grambss was a leader in this effort. Beginning in 1851, he actively promoted concerts for the benefit of the entire community, German and native alike, and editorials in the *Marysville Herald* proclaimed his weekly series an outstanding success. Violin-

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<sup>56</sup>Conzen, "Culture," 45, 59; *Democrat*, 24 August 1858, 1:14, p. 1, col. 4; *Express*, 3 May 1858, 4:268, p. 2, col. 1; *Express*, 25 December 1858, 1:115, p. 2, col. 4; *Express*, 18 January 1859, V:173, p. 2, col. 3; *Express*, 9 April 1859, 5:243, p. 2, col. 4; *Express*, 11 April 1859, 5:245, p. 2, col. 4; *Herald*, 4 July 1857, VII:280, p. 2, col. 1; Marks, *Dust*, 306-7; Mueller, "Milwaukee," 97; Nadel, *New York*, 107.

<sup>57</sup>*Democrat*, 9 December 1859, III:101, p. 3, col. 3; DuBois, *Germans*, 70; *Herald*, 24 December 1855, VI:772, p. 2, col. 1; *Herald*, 14 December 1856, VII:113, p. 3, col. 3; *Herald*, 18 December 1857, VIII: 111, p. 2, col. 4; *Herald*, 22 December 1857, VIII:114, p. 2, col. 1; *Herald*, 24 December 1857, VIII:115, p. 2, col. 1; *Herald*, 25 December 1857, VIII:117, p. 2, col. 5; *Herald*, 27 December 1857, VIII:118, p. 2, col. 1; Faust, *Element*, Vol. 2, 383-4. Witte, *Germans*, 11; von Hagen, *People*, 326.

<sup>58</sup>Henderson, *Migrants*, 107; Thernstrom, *Harvard*, 416; Witte, *Germans*, 17.

player Martin Simonson also performed often in trios and ensembles for the enjoyment of the townspeople. In 1858, Grambss helped form the Marysville Choral Harmonic Society composed largely of Marysville's native-born, and the group entertained the city with annual concerts. Dancing was an important component of the Grand Balls held in Marysville, and Mrs. Louise Baker and her daughter, Emma, offered lessons at their Select Dancing Academy in 1857 at H. Wagner's book store. The newly built *Turnhalle* of the *Turnverein* was the site of their "Grand Souriee" on November 2<sup>nd</sup> of that year. When Albert Peri and his wife immigrated to Marysville in 1858, they also offered lessons in the latest dances and regularly held *Dansants* in the city's hotels. An editorial in the *National Daily Democrat* encouraged attendance at the *Dansant* held in December of 1858, noting that a good time would be had by all.<sup>59</sup>

Club life was a strong tradition for all Germans, whether living in the United States or the "fatherland." It was an extension of the Germans' fondness for social contact and shared activities with one another. By participating in their ethnically based organizations, immigrants strengthened their cultural bonds and shared memories and rituals with other Germans no matter where they lived. The *Turnverein* was the organization that offered the German-born a center for social and political gatherings and provided a place for the expression of German traditions and culture. Political refugees, "48ers," founded the first *Turnverein* in Cincinnati in 1848 to continue the old country precepts of the value of mental and physical exercise through discussion and debate and gymnastic activities. Wherever there was a sizeable German population, they formed a *Turnverein* so that by 1859, 390 were established across the United States with 71 in the West.<sup>60</sup>

Marysville's *Turnverein* was organized in May of 1856 and its officers and members planned regular social gatherings for the Germans in their town. They organized annual *Mai Fest* celebrations, and the one held in 1859 at the Vick House in Long Bar was hailed in a newspaper editorial as a successful cotillion and picnic held by "our German Friends," and the

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<sup>59</sup> *Democrat*, 14 December 1858, I:105, p. 2, col. 4; *Democrat*, 15 December 1858, I:106, p. 2, col. 1; *Democrat*, 30 December 1858, I:118, p. 2, col. 1; *Democrat*, 27 October 1859, III:65, p. 2, col. 4; *Express*, 24 February 1859, 5:196, p. 2, col. 4; *Express*, 20 January 1859, V:174, p. 3, col. 4; *Express*, 8 February 1859, V:191, p. 2, col. 4; *Herald*, 26 April 1851, I:84, p. 3, col. 2; *Herald*, 29 April 1851, I:85, p. 2, col. 4; *Herald*, 3 April 1857, VII:205, p. 2, col. 4; *Herald*, 8 October 1857, VIII:52, p. 2, col. 4; *Herald*, 28 October 1857, VIII:69, p. 2, col. 4; Ramey, "Beginnings," Part 3, 45-6.

<sup>60</sup> Barney, "Turnverein," 19, 20, 21, 28; Conzen, "Culture," 49; Henderson, *Migrants*, 109; Luebke, *Germans*, 7; Mueller, "Milwaukee," 98; Nadel, *New York*, 109, 110, 113; Thernstrom, *Harvard*, 416, 417; Witte, *Germans*, 12.

paper encouraged the participants to repeat it.<sup>61</sup> The *Turnverein* began holding annual balls in 1857, and attendance was open to all the city's residents. The *Daily National Democrat* proclaimed the event well attended and a success. The membership of the *Turnverein* listed in its advertisement for the ball included both German-born and native-born with German ancestry such as prominent businessmen P. J. Welsh and Peter Decker. The *Turnverein* thus attracted members anxious to continue their German social and cultural traditions, regardless of the place of their birth.<sup>62</sup>

The most publicly active club of Germans was the *Liederkrantz* singing society that combined the tradition of club life with the Germans' love of music. It was organized in the fall of 1855, predating the *Turnverein* by one year. Professor B. W. Arnold was its first musical leader that year, but in 1856, Professor Grambss succeeded to that position. Beginning in 1857, they held annual *Liederkrantz Balls*, generally around the holiday season and open to all residents. The second, held on New Year's Day in 1858, included a full orchestra for the attendees' enjoyment. The third, held in December 29 of that same year, was managed and directed by H. Eilerman, J. F. Flathmann, and Professor Grambss, and according to a newspaper reporter, a large fashionable audience enjoyed the festivities. The fourth, arranged by H. Steil and A. Mullendorf and held December 28<sup>th</sup> of 1859 at the Water Works Hall, was again labeled a superb affair by the local newspaper.<sup>63</sup>

Brief mention should be made of another German cultural tradition prominent in immigrant communities across the country – sharpshooting. Although there was no former *Schutzenverein* in Marysville, advertisements in the local papers indicated that towards the end of the decade, there were opportunities for both Germans and Anglos to enjoy the sport. Zabriski's Gardens held a pigeon shooting tournament in 1858, and Eckel's Garden advertised daily shooting every day between December 25, 1858, and January 1, 1859. The newspaper also

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<sup>61</sup> The organizers were Bernard Barron, Adam Sattler and Charles Specht, and included, among others, long-time residents Martin Simonson, Christian Scholl and J. C. Bender. Chamberlain, *Yuba*, 62; *Express*, 3 May 1859, 0 V:263 p., 2, col. 1; *Express*, 9 May 1859, 5:269, p. 2, col. 1.

<sup>62</sup> *Democrat*, 30 October 1858, 1:67, p. 2, col. 4; *Democrat*, 17 November 1858, 1:82, p. 2, col. 1; *Democrat*, 18 November 1858, 1:83, p. 2, col. 1. Records of the *Turnverein* activities are scarce perhaps because some events were held for members only and therefore would not be noted in the newspaper. Further, since the society disbanded around 1918, records and minutes are not readily accessible. Eric L. Pumroy and Katja Rampelmann, *Research Guide to the Turner Movement in the United States* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996), 291.

<sup>63</sup> The organizers included L. Schein, L. Glassen, E. Snowwhite, J. F. Flathman and R. Blume. *Democrat*, 18 December 14, 1:105, p. 2, col. 4; *Express*, 4 January 1858, 4:166, p. 2, col. 1; *Express*, 29 December 1859, 6:163, p. 2, col. 1.

announced a notice of a meeting of the Sacramento Rifle Club in September of 1859.<sup>64</sup> Interest in sharpshooting was great enough to warrant such notices and advertisements.

The German's persistent practice of *Gemütlichkeit* and their aggressive marketing techniques did not always make them popular among some of their Anglo neighbors. Their stance promoting a joyful celebration of Sunday, for example, brought them in conflict with many Americans. Economically, American miners felt that foreigners were taking gold that "rightfully belonged to U. S. Citizens." In 1849, for example, William Downie led a demonstration against Irish, Hawaiians and the Germans who did not speak English. This nativist attitude prompted California legislators to pass a foreign miners' tax in 1850. Although local sheriffs enforced the tax and more often looked for payment from the Chinese and Hispanics, the European-born miners still felt some impact. Often, they just refused to pay which probably only increased the prejudice their Anglo counterparts felt.<sup>65</sup>

During the 1850s, the German settlements in New York, St. Louis, Cincinnati and Milwaukee experienced agitations and demonstrations by nativists protesting the immigrants' cultural practices and political and economic influence -- sometimes these led to bloody conflicts. A result was the rise of the Know Nothing political party, which held that foreign-born residents were basically unfit for citizenship and the franchise until they relinquished all active interest in their "homeland" and became fully assimilated. According to historian Peyton Hurt, in California from 1854 to 1857, the Know Nothing Party came to power but basically as a reform movement against political corruption. It softened its nativist stance, but some followers still argued against foreign-born involvement in politics. The Know Nothing party's success in California was brief – it was summarily defeated in 1857 because it failed to institute any reforms. Furthermore, support for the party with its nativist stance fell because of the high percentage of foreign-born and Catholic voters living in the state.<sup>66</sup>

The Know Nothing Party briefly came to power in Marysville in 1855 when the editor of the *Marysville Herald*, James Allen, was elected mayor. The Party's voice in the *Herald* was heard in its editorials against the European "pauper emigrants" arriving in Marysville and

<sup>64</sup> *Democrat*, 25 August 1858, 1:15, p. 1, col. 4; *Democrat*, 25 December 1858, 1:115, p. 2, col. 4; *Express*, 14 September 1859 6:74, p. 2, col. 1; Witte, *Germans*, 12-13 .

<sup>65</sup> Conzen, "Culture," 54; Desmond, "Marysville," 24; Furer, *Germans*, 42; Holiday, *Rush*, 128; Peyton Hurt, "The Rise and Fall of the 'Know Nothings' in California," *Quarterly of the California Historical Society*, Part 1 IX:1 (March, 1930), 16-49; Part 2 in *Ibid*, IX:2 (June, 1930), 99-128; Part 1, 19; Nadel, *New York*, 112; von Hagen, *People*, 326.

<sup>66</sup> Furer, *Germans*, 42, 45; Hurt, "Know Nothings," Part 1, 16 and in *Ibid*, Part 2, 118-9.

supporting a law to prevent non-residents from voting. The Germans many activities, including those of the *Turnverein* and *Liederkrantz*, were largely reported during the mid-1850s in the *Herald's* competitor, the Democrat-based *Daily California Express*. The *Herald* eventually turned to support the Republican Party and, like elsewhere in California, slavery rather than Americanism became the predominant issue. The increasing numbers and proportion of the Germans in the City could also account for an increasing acknowledgment in the media of its activities and influence. By 1859, for example, German-based happenings in San Francisco and as far way as Cincinnati often appeared in the newspapers – editorial recognition of Marysville's growing German community.<sup>67</sup>

Victor von Hagen contends that these Know-Nothing nativist attacks caused the immigrants to retreat into their Germanic identity and increase the exercise of their cultural practices originating in their “homeland.”<sup>68</sup> The Germans of Marysville also aggressively continued the residential, economic and cultural patterns they brought with them from either Germany or German-American enclaves in the United States. Benedict Anderson labels this phenomenon an “imagined community.” He emphasizes that the spirit of nationalism crossed political borders and bound groups together through ethnic and linguistic affinity; however, the Germans' consistent and continuous observances of their particular traditions and rites wherever they settled in the United States indicates his theory can be expanded beyond political nationalism to include culture.<sup>69</sup> In Marysville, they culturally connected with an imagined community whose boundaries stretched across America back to their “homeland.”

In Marysville, this imagined connection was not static because the members of the German enclave were themselves discarding regional distinctions associated with the “homeland.” The separate principalities in German area of Europe did not unify under one political flag until 1871. In 1850, the California census often identified the newcomers as coming from Württemberg, Baden, or another specific area. When reviewing the Censuses of 1852 and 1860 and newspaper articles over the decade, one finds that the immigrants increasingly called themselves “German” even though the country did not yet exist as a political

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<sup>67</sup> Desmond, “Marysville,” 47; *Express*, 13 May 1859, 5:273 p. 2, col. 1; *Express*, 21 May 1859 5:280 p. 2, col. 1 ; *Express*, 9 September 1859 6:72 p. 2, col. 1; *Express*, 23 December 1859 6:163 p. 2, col. 1; *Herald*, June, 1855 and September 1855, quoted in Desmond, “Marysville,” 44, 46; Hurt, “Know Nothings,” Part 1, 33; and in *Ibid*, Part 2, 119 .

<sup>68</sup> von Hagen, *People*, 370.

<sup>69</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, Verso, 1983), 6, 7, 14, 19, 84.

entity. Faced with regional linguistic Germanic dialects, plus the problem of communicating with the Anglo majority in English, the newcomers would be forced to use *hochdeutsch*, the common form of the German language universally understood. This growing “Germanness” is a foreshadowing of the cultural system growing in Germany after 1871 called *heimat*. Alan Confino explains that literally translated, *heimat* means homeland but that the word encompasses a cultural and ethnic concept and ideal of “German” which grew to break down regional barriers within the new political entity. Since the idea of *heimat* originated in the 1850s in the Palatinate region of Southern Germany, perhaps the concept was brought to Marysville by the immigrants from there and passed on to their countrymen in Marysville. Like their counterparts in the “fatherland,” Marysville’s Germans were strengthening their collective memory of their German roots and culture through their conscious and persistent practice of the rituals they remembered from the “fatherland.”<sup>70</sup> The immigrants’ intense collective memory, coupled with their identification with an imagined community with fellow Germans, explains why, over the decade, they did not immediately assimilate into the dominant Anglo culture but first shed their regional peculiarities. Other German enclaves across America were experiencing the same changes. In New York’s *Kleindeutschland*, for example, Stanley Nagel found that the immigrants’ self-identification relating identity to particular localities began to decrease and they began to see themselves as “German-American.”<sup>71</sup>

In addition to ignoring the particular German region that their neighbors came from, Marysville’s Germans did not differentiate between Jewish and Gentile religious preferences in when forming groups within their community. This togetherness under one cultural umbrella duplicated the experiences of those living in other nineteenth-century American neighborhoods. The first migration of German Jews to America began in 1830s as a result of economic depression rather than religious persecution. They readily joined the *Turnverein* and art and music-oriented societies wherever they settled, knowing that the American German Gentiles would accept them more readily into ethnically based groups than the Gentiles living in the “fatherland.” In New York, for example, the mutual aide societies and other Jewish *Vereine*

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<sup>70</sup> Benedict, *Communities*, 84, 138. Alan Confino, *The Nation as a Local Metaphor: Württemberg, Imperial Germany and National Memory, 1871-1919* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 8-10; 97-8.

<sup>71</sup> Nadel, *New York*, 159.

were only different from the non-Jewish groups because of the members' origins.<sup>72</sup> Often, the Jews said of themselves that they were "more German than Jewish."<sup>73</sup> In Marysville, Jewish and non-Jewish Germans lived in the same neighborhood and joined the same Anglo-based associations -- fire companies, Masons, and Odd Fellows. Members of Marysville's *Turnverein* and *Liederkrantz* were also Jew and Gentile.<sup>74</sup>

Regardless of where they came from or what religion they professed, the German community of Marysville consciously reinforced an ethnic commonality by living together, working together and playing together. Their persistence in maintaining their "Germanness" and practicing their German customs in the Anglo-dominated town eventually influenced the majority to adopt some of their traditions. Interviews with descendants of the immigrants and recollections of old-time residents indicate that the Germans never stopped enjoying their culture.<sup>75</sup> At the same time, some Germans were beginning to break away from their traditional economic pursuits, move into the political arena, and become more and more involved in Anglo-based organizations. Not only would the population increase of Germans in the proportion to Anglos foster this change, but also the Germans would become more fluent in English and better able to understand their American neighbors. If assimilation, however, means a turning away from a group's original roots, this did not occur in Marysville. The Germans stood outside the Anglo-American mainstream while simultaneously interacting and influencing it. What they did was create a new identity – that of Marysville-German-American, able to exist in and influence both worlds.

If Marysville is a microcosm of Gold Rush California, this phenomenon demands a re-thinking of the era's histories. The concept of homogeneous Anglo-communities is

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<sup>72</sup> Furer, *Germans*, 41; Kramer, William M. and Norton B. Stern, "The Turnverein: A German Experience for Western Jewery," *Western States Jewish History*, 16:3 (1984), 227-229; Nadel, *New York*, 99, 101; von Hagen, *People*, 322, 371.

<sup>73</sup> von Hagen, *People*, 371.

<sup>74</sup> Amy, *1856*, 112-113, 116-129; Amy, *1858*, 88-90, 95, 105-107; Chamberlain, 57, 58, 62; Colville, *1855*, 90, 94-96. The Jewish Germans in Marysville were identified through their membership in either the Hebrew Benevolent Society or the Independent Order of B'Nai B'Rith listed in the Directories and Chamberlain. Others of Jewish origin probably lived in Marysville, but, unless someone was specifically identified in this manner in the written records, I did not assume any religious persuasion.

<sup>75</sup> These recollections of *Mai Fest* celebrations – which continue to the present day – are drawn from interviews with the following Marysville area resident conducted by the author: Ann Mathews Dais, Oral Interview conducted August 20, 2001. Clyda Greely, in 1967, recalled the German celebrations of Christmas ethnically based – food and dancing at home and fancy dress balls in hotels decorated with evergreens. Ann Mathews Dais, Oral Interview conducted August 20, 2001. Clyda Greely, "Christmas in Marysville – Long Ago," *Sutter County Historical Society New Bulletin*, VI:3 (October, 1967), 13-20.

compromised by the discovery of the influence of the Germans in Marysville. Contemporary scholars need to look at the histories of other smaller, urban communities through a lens colored by a recognition of influences other those of the Anglo majority. They need to re-examine the cities and towns of California's Gold Rush era to discover how ethnic minorities, heretofore ignored, shaped the growth and culture of those places. Identifying individual settlers in the California cities and studying contemporary newspaper and individual accounts illuminate residential patterns, economic configurations and cultural relationships in the post- gold rush communities. If the findings concerning Marysville outlined in this study can be duplicated in other communities, the white immigrants seeking prosperity in California, whether native or foreign born, embraced a broad, ethnically diverse culture, not one limited to Anglo-Saxon Protestantism centered in the Eastern United States.