

The Archival Record of German-Language Groups in Canada: A Survey

by ART GRENKE*

The archival record of Germans in Canada closely reflects their history, which was shaped by their settlement patterns and by rapid assimilation, excepting religious communities which used the German language to perpetuate their religious heritage and identity. Furthermore, social life among most German-language groups centred on their church institutions, which in turn retarded the development of secular organizations. These influences affected both the creation and the preservation of the archival record.

Although the presence of Germans in what now is Canada dates back to seventeenth-century New France, archival holdings concerning them are in many respects scant and cursory. To some extent, this reflects the pattern of German immigration, a pattern which encouraged rapid assimilation to the host society. This is true in particular of the immigrants to New France, and of discharged German soldiers who settled among French Canadians after the American War of Independence. Historical accounts suggest that Germans came to New France as individuals or in small groups.¹ Single men among them, when settling down, usually intermarried with the indigenous population. Evidence of their presence may be found in estate or local church records of the colony.

The same phenomenon may be observed in the case of soldiers recruited in the German states to serve in the British Army during the American War of Independence, who later settled in the Maritimes or [Upper] Canada.² Most of these settled in small groups, often among a majority non-German population. With few exceptions,³ they failed to form community organizations, religious or otherwise. Evidence of their presence may be found in local records, which might indicate a person with a German or German-sounding name having been granted or having purchased land, or belonging to an essentially English-Canadian community.

Archival evidence of the German presence is more extensive in cases where Germans immigrated and settled in larger groups, as was the case with the Germans who settled in Lunenburg County, Nova Scotia, or in Waterloo County, Upper Canada.⁴ Such settlements contributed to endogamy, which in turn encouraged German-language use and the preservation and perpetuation of values brought from the homeland. Group settlement also encouraged the development of institutions which perpetuated German values

and traditions. One such institution was the Church, which, using the German language, also perpetuated the sacred traditions brought from the ancestral homeland. In many areas of predominantly German settlement, moreover, German immigrant settlers had control of their schools, which were often used to teach the German language. Where the group was large enough, as in Waterloo County, a vigorous German secular tradition also developed, as was the case with many of the *Sängervereine*, which were active in the county, particularly in New Berlin.⁵ Furthermore, with such a heavy concentration of Germans, business activity could be carried on in the German language at the local level. Control by German settlers of both the rural and urban economy in turn enabled them to subsidize community activities and institutions.

Settlement patterns also played an important role in community development and, by extension, the creation of community records among Germans in western Canada. This was the case, for example, in the Mennonite East or West Reserve in Manitoba.⁶ Here German Mennonites from Russia undertook a concerted effort to establish bloc settlements, which ensured that local institutions, be they local government or educational institutions, were under community control. Early local school or municipal records were therefore essentially the records of this German speaking community. The same is true of the German Catholic St. Peter's colony in Saskatchewan.⁷

The same cannot be said in instances where Germans did not form bloc settlements. This is true, for example, of most of the German Lutheran settlers,⁸ who tended to scatter over a wider area. This frequently meant that they had little control over the municipalities in their areas of settlement or over their local school boards, and consequently were little able to use these institutions to preserve their heritage. Furthermore, the records of such local institutions are not so much the records of German Lutherans as they are the records of whatever ethno-cultural group(s) happened to be dominant in a particular area.

If one looks for a leitmotif, or theme unifying all areas of German-Canadian life, including community formation, institutional development and the archival heritage of German Canadians, then the object of the search may be found in religion. Social life in the German-Canadian community, no matter what the denominational affiliation, largely revolved around the Church.⁹ This was encouraged not only by the dominant role which religion played in the community, but also by the German settlers' many different geographical origins in Europe and America. The religious focus was further sharpened by frequent attacks on German culture and allegiance to Germany, especially during World War I and World War II; this was less the case with regard to the religious traditions which German immigrants brought from Europe.

The religious focus of German settlers was to influence their community development and, by extension, the creation and preservation of their archival heritage. The degree of its influence varied among the different denominations. Mennonites, for example, tended to view all aspects of community life, be it immigration, settlement or institutional life, as expressions of the religious experience. German Catholic oblates, who were instrumental in founding the St. Peter's colony in Saskatchewan, sought to place all aspects of community life under the guardianship of the Roman Catholic Church. The archives established by these groups reflect each tendency. German Lutherans, on the other hand, tended to make more rigid division between the spiritual and the worldly domain, the pastor confining his activities largely to serving the religious needs of his

parish. Archival holdings in Lutheran repositories document this relatively more circumscribed role which the Church set for itself in the community.

The strong religious orientation among Germans frequently restricted their involvement in secular community activities and hindered the development of their secular institutions. Whereas churches developed in the smallest German community, social clubs had difficulty establishing and perpetuating themselves. While churches survived the linguistic change from German to English in their later-generation membership, many of the clubs did not and declined even during the immigrant generation. Records of clubs such as the German Society of Winnipeg or the Germania Club of Hamilton, both of which survived for more than a century, show that clubs primarily served the immigrant generation.¹⁰ They functioned as a sort of halfway house, where the new arrival would stay until feeling confident enough to integrate into the Canadian host society.

The strong religious orientation among Germans ensured that archival institutions in the community developed largely within the framework of the church. Local churches created, and for the most part preserved, an archival record of their experiences. The larger German religious groups also established their own archives. Thus German Lutherans and Mennonites, as well as Roman Catholics, set up archival repositories. Archives were also established by German Baptists and Moravians.

Church Archives

Church archives were organized by theological and other educational institutions founded by German-language groups. The acquisition strategy of these archives has tended to be delimited by the role which religion serves for a particular denomination, as may be observed from the archival record held in church archives established by the German-language community.

Lutheran Archives

Established to train pastors for the different Lutheran synods working among Germans in Canada, Lutheran educational and theological institutions played an important role in the development of Lutheran church archives. We have in Canada today fundamentally two Lutheran synods: the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), an amalgamation of most German and Scandinavian Lutheran synodical bodies, and the Lutheran Church-Canada (LCC), a new name for the old Missouri Synod, which worked primarily among German Lutherans in Canada and the United States.

As most German and Scandinavian Lutheran churches have given up the ancestral language in their worship services in favour of English, the above named synods include few German-language congregations among their membership. The archival record acquired by Lutheran archives today is almost solely in the English language. However, Lutheran archival institutions are today as they have been in the past, interested in acquiring documentation in the German language insofar as this reflects the heritage of Lutherans in Canada. This documentation dates back primarily to the pre-World War I period.

Lutheran archival institutions in Canada hold chiefly the records of the established Lutheran Church, concentrating on synodical records. Thus the Archives of Wilfrid

Laurier University (Waterloo Lutheran University prior to 1973), in Waterloo, Ontario, holds the official records of the ELCIC, and of the synods which preceded it, principally the records of the Lutheran Synod of Eastern Canada and the records of the former Nova Scotia Synod. The archives also holds originals or copies of records from local congregations which formerly belonged — or still belong — to the forenamed synods, as well as printed material on Lutheranism in Canada.¹¹

The Saskatoon Lutheran Seminary houses the western archives of the ELCIC. It also holds the records of older synodical bodies which eventually came to make up the ELCIC, including minutes and reports of the Synod of Manitoba and Other Provinces and the Ohio Synod, as well as records of most other synods which served German Lutheran congregations in western Canada. In addition, the Saskatoon Lutheran Seminary archives holds minutes and reports of some of the rural congregations which have declined since World War II, personal fonds of leaders in the Lutheran Church in western Canada and published reports on Canadian Lutheranism.¹²

The archives of the Lutheran Historical Institute (Edmonton, Alberta) serves as the official repository of both the LCC in western Canada and the Alberta-British Columbia District of the LCC. It also holds minutes, reports and other records documenting the work of the Missouri Synod in Canada, the parent body of the LCC. In addition, the archives holds publications of the LCC and the Missouri Synod, as well as reports and correspondence of a few local churches, particularly in Alberta.¹³

Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Brock University (St. Catharines, Ontario), serves as the archival repository of the LCC in eastern Canada. It also holds records relating to the work of the Missouri Synod in eastern Canada, as well as records of congregations which belonged to this synod.¹⁴

Mennonite Archives

The work of acquiring and preserving the Mennonite community's archival record has been carried out chiefly by its educational institutions. This may be observed when one examines the holdings of the most important Mennonite archival institutions in Canada. The major Mennonite archives in eastern Canada is Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ontario. It holds the records of the Mennonite Conference of Ontario and the Eastern Ontario Mennonite Conference, as well as the records of other, smaller Mennonite conferences in Ontario. In addition, the archives holds the personal fonds of several prominent Mennonite historians, including materials collected during the 1930s by J. Burkholder when he was writing a history of Mennonites in Ontario, and papers accumulated by Frank H. Epp when he was writing a history of Mennonites in Canada.¹⁵ Most of the archival holdings of Conrad Grebel College pre-dating 1900 are in the German language.

In western Canada, there are two important Mennonite archives, both in Winnipeg. One is the archives of the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, which had its beginnings in the 1950s when A.H. Unruh sought to collect materials in order to write a history of the Mennonite Brethren Church. Today the archives serves as the official repository of the Mennonite Brethren Church in Canada. It holds official records of the Church, as well as the personal fonds of prominent pastors in the Church. In addition, the archives has also accumulated considerable documentation relating to Mennonite immigration and to Mennonite life in general.¹⁶ Documentation is in German and English, German-language documentation predominating in the pre-World War II period.

The archives of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, also in Winnipeg, serves as the official repository of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and of the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference. The archives also has an ambitious programme of collecting material on Mennonite life in general. This includes microfilmed journals such as *Mennonitische Blätter*, 1852-1941, immigrant letters, and memoirs — for example, the diary and letters of Johann L. Dueck, 1891-1893, which describe Dueck's coming to Canada — and the records of organizations such as the Mennonite German Society, founded after World War II in order to work for the preservation of the German language in the Mennonite community.¹⁷ A detailed inventory of the archival holdings of the Mennonite Heritage Centre was published in 1988,¹⁸ and descriptions of new acquisitions appear periodically in the *Mennonite Historian*. Material in the holdings of the archives is primarily in German for the pre-World War II period and in English for the post-World War II period.

In addition to the aforementioned archives, Mennonites also support a number of smaller archives, including the archives of the Evangelical Mennonite Conference (EMC) (Steinbach, Manitoba), the archives at the Columbia Bible College (Clearbrook, British Columbia), and the archives at Bethany Bible College (Hepburn, Saskatchewan).¹⁹ While concentrating on church records, these archives also include in their holdings community records on Mennonite life in general. Archival records held by these institutions tend to be in the German language for the pre-World War II period and in English after 1945.

German Catholic Archives

German Catholic archives, like those of other German religious groups, grew out of their educational institutions. Because of the international nature of the Roman Catholic Church, German Catholics were not required to dedicate themselves to the same extent as other groups ensuring that educational institutions would be founded in order to supply German-language congregations with German-speaking clergy. Nevertheless, German Catholics established a number of educational institutions, all of which hold archival materials pertaining to German Catholic life.

Important in this regard is the archives of St. Jerome's College (Waterloo, Ontario). The college had its beginnings in 1865 in St. Agathe, Ontario, and in 1866 was relocated to New Berlin, Ontario. It was established essentially in order to train priests and lay leaders for the German Catholic parishes in Waterloo County. The archives holds minute-books of the Board of Governors, St. Jerome's College, 1866 to the present. It holds papers of Eugen Funcken, founder of the college, 1857-1879; of Theobald Spetz, a German Catholic priest and historian, 1885-1921; and of G. Borho (1897-1977), a former president of St. Jerome's. There are also papers of other former instructors at the college, and of priests who served German Catholics in Waterloo County. Material relating to early German Catholic life in Waterloo County may also be found in the Congregation of the Resurrection Archives, Resurrection College, which separated from St. Jerome's to become an independent college in 1962. The archives holds the diary of Eugen Funcken, 1865-1888, as well as some of his correspondence and manuscripts of his poetic works, 1856-1888. It also holds the correspondence of Louis Funcken, 1864-1899, and of Theobald Spetz, 1890-1911. In addition, the archives holds St. Agatha, Maryhill and St. Clement's birth, marriage and death registers, 1838-1846, 1844-1885, as well as other records of German Catholic life in Waterloo County. Most of the

materials held by these institutions, except for the very early period, are in the English language.²⁰

Another important archival repository of German Catholics is St. Peter's Abbey (Münster, Saskatchewan). The Abbey was founded by German American Oblates who had been responsible for establishing the German Catholic settlement of St. Peter's, near Saskatoon. The archives holds correspondence of the Catholic Settlement Society, 1903-1905; minutes and correspondence of the *Volksverein deutschkanadischer Katholiken*, 1909-1939; correspondence of Rev. Bruno Doerfler, who played an active role in establishing St. Peter's, 1902-1918; and other materials relating to the abbey and German Catholic life in the area.²¹ The pre-World War II holdings are predominantly in the German language.

German Baptist and Moravian Archives

The North American Baptist College acquires historical records on German Baptists in western Canada. The College grew out of the Christian Training Institute, founded in 1940 to prepare German Baptists for the lay ministry. Its archives was brought into existence during the last few years through the initiative of Pastor Arnold Rapske, librarian at the College. It holds the records of the College and of its predecessors from the beginning to the present, records of the Northern Conference Mission Committees, 1905-1971, and also some records of local German Baptist churches in western Canada.²² German-language material relates primarily to the pre-World War II period.

With regard to German Moravians in Canada, three Canadian archives might be mentioned. The National Archives of Canada holds the Moravian Brethren: Labrador Missions sous-fonds (MG 17 D1). Records consist chiefly of copies from the archives of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (London, England), which document the work of German-speaking Moravians among the Inuit in Labrador. The Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archives, Memorial University, St. John's, holds the papers of Moravian missionaries in Labrador, such as F.W. Peacock, and extensive documents from and about Moravian Mission stations in Labrador. The Moravian Church Archives (Edmonton, Alberta), moreover, documents the religious life of German Moravians who immigrated to Canada in the 1890s, as well as their descendants. Stored in a vault in First Moravian Church, Edmonton, the archives was created largely through the efforts of Lydia Sampert, who began in the 1960s to collect materials on German Moravian immigrants. The archives holds the records of the Western Canadian District of the Moravian Church, as well as records of different local Moravian churches in western Canada. It also holds correspondence and other papers of Bishop Hoyler, who at the turn of the century established the Moravian Church in western Canada.²³ The early records are predominantly in the German language, post-World War II documents being primarily in English.

In addition to archives established by German-speaking religious groups, archival materials on Germans may also be found in church archives of the dominant sponsoring groups into which Germans were integrated. Mention in this regard might be made of the United Church Archives, Toronto, which holds records of the Reformed Church (German branch) and of the Evangelical United Brethren Church, both of which have become part of the United Church.²⁴ Records relating to German Catholics may be found in particular in the archives of the various archdioceses where Germans were concen-

trated. Records relating to German Catholics may also be found in archives of the different religious orders which served among them. For example, records relating to the settlement of German Catholics in Saskatchewan may be found in the archives of St. Mary's Province of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, in Saskatoon.²⁵ Records relating to German Catholic schools in Saskatchewan may be found in the archives of the Ursuline Mother House (Chatham, Ontario).²⁶ Many of these records, in particular from the pre-World War II period, are in the German language.

Archives in Canada which Document the Sacred as well as the Secular Dimension of the German-Canadian Experience

During the 1920s and 1930s, when the *Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen* in Germany undertook to collect materials relating to Germans in Canada, it included both secular and church records in its acquisition programme. This was the first time that a major effort was made to document not only the religious, but also the secular dimension of German-Canadian life. Similar efforts by German Canadians had to wait until more positive attitudes towards specific ethno-cultural groups evolved, and in 1972, the Historical Society of Mecklenburg Upper Canada embarked upon a programme of encouraging the study of German-Canadian history and of collecting materials relating to German-language groups. To date, however, the Society has acquired only a few fonds, one being the papers of the former World War II internee Oskar Demuth. This was acquired largely because, at the time, no other institution appeared to be interested in the papers. This archives has no paid staff and is housed in the office of a professor at the University of Toronto.²⁷ The Historical Society of Mecklenburg Upper Canada has also played a leading role in establishing the German Heritage Museum (Brampton, Ontario), which primarily holds artefacts relating to German life in Canada. Furthermore, the *German-Canadian Yearbook*, published by the Society since 1973, has stimulated interest in German-Canadian history and archives.

In addition to the Historical Society of Mecklenburg Upper Canada, some of the associations of ethnic Germans have developed archives, which serve chiefly to preserve the records of their own group. Thus the Canadian Baltic Immigration Aid Society established its own archives which consists primarily of correspondence and reports of the society and books collected during the past twenty years by Mattheas Küster. The archives is located in Küster's home in Edmonton, Alberta.²⁸ The Association of Danube Swabians in Canada also organized its own archives in the 1980s. These holdings consist chiefly of records of the umbrella organization and its member clubs, as well as of materials relating to the publication of the organization's newspaper, the *Heimatsbote*. For the most part not arranged, these archival holdings are stored in the Rhein Donau Club (Leamington, Ontario).²⁹

The most important initiative towards preserving the archival record documenting secular aspects of German-Canadian life came from outside the community and was concomitant with the growth of multiculturalism in Canada. The increased popularity of the phenomenon in the 1970s brought about the creation of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, which in cooperation with the Archives of Ontario has collected material relating to German-language groups in Ontario. A growing emphasis on multiculturalism has also encouraged provincial archives in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta

and British Columbia to collect materials on ethnic communities, a process which has resulted in the growth of collections on German-language groups in these institutions.

Since the establishment of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism in 1964, the federal government has also given greater attention to the multicultural dimension of Canadian life. This led the then Public Archives of Canada to establish the Multicultural Archives Programme in 1972, in order to collect and make available to researchers archival materials relating to Canadian ethnic groups other than French or English. The National Archives, like the various provincial archives, but unlike most religious archives in the German community, includes in its acquisition strategy records pertaining to all aspects of German-Canadian life. As a consequence, the National Archives has acquired a considerable amount of historical material on German-language groups. A survey of the German-Canadian archival record today must therefore take cognizance of holdings in government and community archival institutions, both in Canada and elsewhere, which have made an effort to acquire and/or preserve materials relating to Germans in Canada. Especially important in this regard are the holdings of the National Archives of Canada.

Archival Sources on German-Language Groups Held by the National Archives of Canada

Materials relating to the German-language community may be found in different divisions of the National Archives. Of special importance is the Government Archives Division, which holds records on German-language groups in Canada received from federal government departments or agencies which had contact with these groups. In this regard, the greater the contact between a government department and an ethno-cultural group, the larger the department's archival records for this group. Government departments which had been involved in immigration are therefore of special importance. Until 1917, immigration first had been the responsibility of the Department of Agriculture (RG 17, NA) and then of the Department of the Interior (RG 15, NA). In 1917, however, the Department of Immigration and Colonization was established, and since then Immigration has existed as a separate department, except for the period 1936-1949, when it was the responsibility of the Department of Mines and Resources. The Department of Citizenship and Immigration existed from 1949 to 1966, when the Department of Manpower and Immigration was established (known since 1977 as the Department of Employment and Immigration). Records on immigration from German-speaking areas of Europe and America are to be found in the files of all these departments.

Immigration records in the holdings of the Government Archives Division are voluminous and varied. They include correspondence or memoranda dealing with conditions in Europe which led German-speaking people to emigrate; correspondence, shipping lists and other records created by employees of the Department of Immigration as they brought people into the country; and advertisements as well as financial records providing information on how money was expended by the government in order to recruit immigrants.

Records of government departments not directly involved in immigration also contain references to German-speaking immigrants. Thus records of the Department of External Affairs (RG 25) repeatedly make reference to German, Austrian or Swiss immigration. Between the two World Wars, moreover, much of Canada's immigrant recruitment in Continental Europe was carried on by Canada's two major railways, the CNR and the CPR. References to the immigration of German-speaking people and their

settlement in Canada occur in records held by the Department of Colonization and Agriculture of Canadian National Railway (RG 30).

Government departments and agencies collected considerable information on German and Austrian Canadians during both World Wars. Orders regulating the activities of German and Austrian Canadians may be found in files of the Department of Justice (RG 13) and in the files of the Privy Council Office (RG 2). Files relating to the censorship of German-language publications or to regulations for monitoring the entry into Canada of German-American publications are found in the records of the Chief Press Censor (RG 6 E1). Files documenting efforts by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to oversee the activities of German and Austrian Canadians during the war years are found in records of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RG 18) and the Department of National Defence (RG 24).

Government departments which monitored the activities of German and Austrian Canadians during the war years did not collect information on them only during that period, even though the number of files accumulated by these departments or agencies increased considerably during the war years. Files on German-language groups were also created by other government departments. Occasional files on these groups may be found, for example, in records of the Department of Labour (RG 27) and the Governor General's Office (RG 7). It should be emphasized that only those government departments or agencies which were directly involved in the affairs of the German-language communities created files on them. Such information was collected for the government or its various agencies and was retained inasmuch as it suited government needs.³⁰

Material on Germans may also be found in other divisions of the National Archives. The Documentary Art and Photography Division holds works by Canadian artists who originated from German-speaking countries. These include works by William von Möll Berczy, Peter Rindisbacher, Cornelius Krieghoff and Henry Pauls. Although the Cartographic and Architectural Division holds very few maps relating specifically to the settlement of German-language groups in Canada, some of its maps show settlement patterns of different ethno-cultural groups, including Germans, especially in western Canada. The Moving Image and Sound Archives Division holds some visual material relating to post-World War II German immigration. It also holds film clips of notable personalities originating from German-speaking countries, such as Gerhard Herzberg, Andreas Bieler and Emanuel Hahn.

Records of institutions established by German-speaking communities, as well as papers of prominent community members, may be found in the Manuscript Division of the National Archives. Many of these sources were collected through the Division's Multicultural Archives Programme. A brief description of the nature and content of these fonds is available.³¹

Archival Sources on German-Language Groups Held by Provincial Archives

The various provincial archives also hold a considerable amount of material on German-language groups in Canada. Important in this regard are school and municipal records which relate to areas of German settlement. Thus, the Public Archives of Nova Scotia holds records of schools in Lunenburg County, as well as numerous newspaper clippings and graphic materials relating to business activities in Lunenburg, showing its

growth as a ship-building and fishing centre.³² The Archives of Ontario holds municipal records from areas originally settled by Germans. For example, the Archives holds City of Waterloo municipal records, including assessment rolls, 1878-1974, and financial records, 1894-1924; County of Waterloo municipal records, including Council minutes, 1850-1948, and financial records, 1856-1886. Records of the Department of Education held by the Ontario Archives make repeated reference to German bilingual schools which existed in the province prior to 1916.³³ The Provincial Archives of Manitoba holds a microfilm of the settlement register, West Reserve, 1878-1883, and materials pertaining to Mennonite schools in southern Manitoba.³⁴ The Department of Education files for the 5,260 Saskatchewan school districts, held by the Saskatchewan Archives Board, are an important source for the study of German-language groups, especially as there are a number of larger German settlements in Saskatchewan and about 17 per cent of the province's population is of German origin.³⁵

In addition to school and municipal records, provincial archives also hold important personal fonds and material relating to German immigration or community life in the different provinces. Thus, references to the Steeves family, and records relating to the settlement of German-speaking people in New Brunswick, may be found in the Provincial Archives of New Brunswick.³⁶ Personal fonds, such as the papers of Nicoline D. Becker, as well as taped interviews with German immigrants, are to be found in the British Columbia Archives and Records Service. This institution also holds the papers of John Sebastian Helmcken, who helped to negotiate British Columbia's entry into the Canadian federation.³⁷

The Public Archives of Nova Scotia holds records relating to German and Swiss immigration to Nova Scotia, including journals and letters of Colonel Charles Lawrence, dealing with the founding of Lunenburg in 1753, as well as a register of the first Lunenburg settlers, and fonds of various Lunenburg families. It also holds parish records, such as the registers of St. George's (Anglican) Church, Halifax, as well as microfilm copies of such registers from churches in Lunenburg, Chester, Mahone Bay, etc.³⁸

Through the work of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, the Archives of Ontario has obtained personal fonds as well as records of corporate bodies relating to Ontario's German-language community. Most of these materials are microfilm copies, and consist to a large extent of the fonds of post-World War II immigrant families. In addition, the Archives of Ontario holds microfilm copies of minutes and other records of the Canadian Society for German Relief, as well as a few records of local clubs formed by post-World War II immigrants.³⁹

The Saskatchewan Archives Board holds oral history interviews, genealogies and some family fonds relating to German-speaking people. The archives holds records of the German Canadian Benevolent Society, Regina, 1927-1942, as well as some material on the Volksverein deutschkanadischer Katholiken, 1905-1938.⁴⁰ The Provincial Archives of Alberta holds letters from Otto Bernstein to his mother in Germany, 1913-1914; letters by Andreas Lilge, 1893-1908, relating to the Moravians at Bruderheim; and memoirs of Leopold Lippert, 1894-1895, describing his emigration from Volhynia, Russia, and his settlement in Bruderheim, Alberta.⁴¹

Other Institutions in Canada Holding Materials on German-Language Groups

Regional Archives and Museums

In addition to the national and the provincial archives, there are a number of regional archives and museums in Canada which hold material on German-language groups: the Glenbow Museum Archives (Calgary, Alberta) holds land records of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which document the involvement of the railway company in settling German, Austrian and Swiss immigrants in western Canada. Moreover, the Archives also holds the personal fonds of German, Austrian and Swiss immigrants who settled in southern Alberta, including photographs illustrating their experiences there.⁴²

The Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature (Winnipeg), which collects materials on ethno-cultural groups in the prairie region, holds sound recordings as well as a few photographs relating to German immigration to Winnipeg and Manitoba generally.⁴³ The Fisheries Museum of the Atlantic (Lunenburg, Nova Scotia) holds the Lunenburg Heritage Society Collection, which includes a few photographs of the town of Lunenburg, land records relating to the settlement of Lunenburg County and several German family bibles.⁴⁴

University Archives

A number of university archives hold materials relating to German-language groups. Berczy family papers are included in the Baby Collection at the Université de Montréal. The Rosa Breithaupt Clark fonds is held by the University of Waterloo. The Breithaupt family were an important family in New Berlin (Kitchener). The archives of Wilfrid Laurier University holds the W.D. Euler fonds, and the K-W Community Concert Association fonds, relating largely to the celebration of Oktoberfest in the Kitchener-Waterloo area. The University of Toronto holds most of the papers of Hermann Boeschstein, a former professor at the university who during World War II took a position with the International YMCA in order to work with German prisoners of war and internees in Canada. The University of Manitoba holds the papers of Frederick Philip Grove, a writer of German origin who became noted for his realistic depiction of western-Canadian pioneer life. The University of Victoria holds the papers of Else Seel and Carl Weisberger, both German-Canadian writers. The University of British Columbia holds correspondence and other papers of the Commercial Attaché of the German Consul General at Montréal, 1937-1939. In addition, the Western Pictorial Index at the University of Winnipeg holds some 50,000 slides documenting aspects of western-Canadian life; the finding aid for these graphic materials makes reference to Germans, Austrians and Swiss in western Canada.

Local Archives

There are a number of local libraries and museums which hold historical materials on German-language groups in Canada. Few of these institutions, however, appear to have deliberately collected such archival material. Rather, it appears to have been brought to them over the years, and in time, small collections of archival material were accumulated. Mention might be made here of the Kitchener Public Library (Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario), which holds the Waterloo Historical Society Archives containing holographs

and letters in German relating to Kitchener-Waterloo. In addition, the library also holds photographs and other material relating to the *Sängerfest*, as well as to other aspects of German life in the area. Material relating to the German element in Waterloo County may also be found in libraries elsewhere in the county, including the Cambridge Public Library, Waterloo Public Library, and Waterloo Regional Library in its Baden, Elmira, New Hamburg, St. Clement's and St. Jacob's branches.

The archives of Doon Heritage Crossroads (Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario) holds some 4,000 photographic images and 1,000 postcards, as well as a large collection of directories, almanacs, pamphlets, land documents and similar material. Much of this holding relates to the German-speaking element in the Kitchener-Waterloo area. Joseph Schneider Haus (Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario) holds some 6,000 slides and 3,000 photographs and negatives which document Canadian folk art and German-Canadian architecture. Also in the Kitchener-Waterloo area, the Historical Society of St. Boniface and Maryhill Community holds material relating to early German settlement in the area, including school photographs, and registers of St. Boniface School, as well as baptismal and other records of St. Boniface Church, 1834 to the present.⁴⁵ Early records are in the German language. The Jordan Historical Museum of the Twenty (Jordan, Ontario), moreover, holds land title deeds, letters and other textual documents which depict aspects of early Pennsylvania-German life in Ontario.⁴⁶

In western Canada, the Mennonite Heritage Village (Steinbach, Manitoba) holds a few letters and land records as part of its general collection. Most archival records relating to Mennonite life in Steinbach and area, however, are located in the archives of the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies and of the Mennonite Heritage Centre, both in Winnipeg.⁴⁷ The Strasbourg and District Museum (Strasbourg, Saskatchewan) holds photographs and land records relating to German life in the Strasbourg area.⁴⁸ The Barr Colony Cultural Heritage Museum (Lloydminster, Saskatchewan) holds some 250 paintings by Count Berthold von Imhoff, a German-Canadian artist.⁴⁹

Archival Holdings Outside Canada Relating to German-Language Groups in This Country

In addition to archives in Canada, there are also a number of archival institutions outside the country which hold material on German-language groups in Canada. In Europe, for example, the Archives fédérales (Berne, Switzerland) holds documentation relating to Swiss emigration to Canada, their settlement here and their organizational life in this country.⁵⁰ A number of German archives also hold Canada-related material. The repositories of the Bundesarchiv (Koblenz and Potsdam), for example, holds records of German consulates in Canada, as well as records relating to German migrations to Canada and Canadian-German trade. The Bundesarchiv in Koblenz also holds the records of the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, which during the 1920s and 1930s collected historical materials relating to Germans in Canada.⁵¹

Various German *Länder*, or state archives, also hold materials relating to Canada. Thus, the Hessisches Staatsarchiv (Marburg) and the Niedersächsisches Staatsarchiv (Wolfenbüttel) hold records relating to German auxiliary troops serving in the British Army during the American War of Independence.⁵²

A research project by Professor Wolfgang Helbich resulted in the accumulation of letters relating to German emigration to Canada, at Bochum University. Begun in 1982, the project has resulted in the accumulation of some 5,000 letters, most of them written by German emigrants to the Americas and to Australia. A few of these letters concern German emigration to Canada.⁵³

During the early years of settlement especially, a number of religious institutions in Germany were active in supplying German congregations in Canada with pastors; seminaries in Breklum and Kropp supplied German congregations in Ontario and western Canada. Records documenting their work may be found in the archives of the Nordelbische Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche (Kiel, Germany). Similar records may be found in the archives of the Hermannsburg Mission (Hermannsburg), which sent some 200 pastors to serve German-speaking congregations in North America. Records documenting the work of German missionaries in North America may also be found in the Loehe Archives in Neuendettelsau and in the Brunn Archives in Oberursel.⁵⁴ The Kirchenarchiv Hamburg, moreover, holds the records of the Lutheran Emigrant Mission, which worked among German emigrants to Canada.⁵⁵ The records in its holdings relate primarily to the inter-war period.

As many of Canada's early Lutheran and Reformed churches were merely northern extensions of American religious bodies, it is therefore natural that records relating to German Lutheran and Reformed churches in Canada would be found in United States archives. The following American archival institutions hold important records documenting German religious life in Canada. The archives of the Reformed Church of America (Pennsylvania) holds records relating to the work of some of the pastors sent to Canada at the turn of the last century in order to establish the Reformed Church. It also holds historical accounts of the different German-language Reformed churches established in Canada.⁵⁶ The Concordia Historical Institute (St. Louis, Missouri) holds material on the work of the Missouri Synod among German-speaking Lutherans in Canada.⁵⁷ Mount Airy Seminary (Philadelphia) holds records pertaining to the work of the General Council, which supplied pastors and financial aid to Canadian Lutheran churches during the early years of settlement.⁵⁸ Wartburg Seminary (Dubuque, Iowa) also holds records documenting the work of the Ohio Synod among German Lutherans, particularly in western Canada.⁵⁹

Summary

One can make several generalizations about archival holdings relating to the German-language groups in Canada. In some respects, these holdings consist largely of the archival record of immigrant communities, which in many instances tended to exist as long as the immigrant generation kept them alive. The children and grandchildren of the immigrants, however, were absorbed into the dominant host society. The people thus affected came increasingly to view themselves, not as German-Canadian but as English- or French-Canadian having a German ancestor somewhere in their background.

Furthermore, it is the religious dimension of life which is most completely documented in the archival record of German-language groups. Such records may be found in the different religious archives established by German immigrants in Canada. Others are found in church archives in the United States and Europe. In some cases, such as the Mennonites, holdings of church archives relate to a fairly broad spectrum of community

activities. By contrast, Lutheran and Baptist church archives hold primarily official church records.

By comparison with church records, archival holdings on the secular life of German-language groups tend to suffer numerous gaps. This is evident, for example, when one looks at clubs. With few exceptions, such as the German Society of Montreal, which has an archival record dating back to 1835, German secular voluntary associations lack a continuous record of their activities. Societies dating back more than 100 years, such as the Germania Club of Hamilton, retain few documents which give evidence of their long existence. Part of the problem, of course, is that club records were often confiscated by federal authorities during the war years and not returned. In all too many instances, however, organizational files were simply lost or destroyed as the children of immigrants left the clubs and became integrated into the larger cultural milieu. Of course, even in cases where a society retains records dating back more than 100 years, these records chiefly show how the different waves of immigrants made use of these organizations as they themselves were gradually being absorbed by the host society.

The archival record is most extensive for secular voluntary associations established by German-language groups after World War II. The National Archives has persuaded organizations such as the Trans-Canada Alliance of German Canadians and the Central Organization of Sudeten German Clubs to donate their dormant files to the NA. Interest by Canadian institutions has also encouraged German-Canadian community groups to establish their own archives, as in the case of the Baltic Germans and the Danube Swabians.

The gaps evident in the archival record of German clubs is also observable in other areas of life, which fell outside the acquisition sphere of church archives in the German-Canadian community. This may be seen when one compares archival materials available on Mennonite immigration or settlement with similar materials available on ethnic German Baptists or Lutherans. It is evident when one looks at the archival record of German-Canadian businesses, moreover, the German-language press in Canada or other aspects of German-Canadian secular life. In each instance, one finds again and again that records which were not of interest to religious institutions seem to have disappeared.

For the historian or sociologist seeking to understand and describe the experience(s) of German-language groups in Canada, this uneven archival record presents a number of problems. Ultimately, the problems lead to one central question: What can be done to fill the many gaps which exist in the documentary record, especially relating to secular dimensions of German-Canadian life? To some extent, these gaps can be filled by information gleaned from secondary sources. These would include published sources such as biographies or local histories, which frequently appear in anniversary books or similar types of publications.⁶⁰ Other secondary sources would include newspapers or periodicals. The National Library in Ottawa has made a significant effort to collect copies of the 200 or so such publications which have appeared in the German-language community.⁶¹ In some instances, interviews may help to fill the gaps. In others, the historical record will remain a grey area unless the ever-continuing search by archivists and historians working in the field fills up the gaps one by one.

Notes

- * The term "German" is used here to refer to Canadians of German cultural background. Although most of these people originated from Germany, Austria or Switzerland, some also trace their roots back to areas of Eastern Europe, such as Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Ukraine, where smaller German enclaves had established themselves over the centuries.
- 1 For an examination of the history of the German element in French Canada, see H.W. Debor, *Die Deutschen in der Provinz Québec, 1664-1964* (Montréal, 1964); Jean-Pierre Wilhelmy, *Les mercenaires allemands au Québec, du XVII^e siècle et leur rapport à la population* (Beloeil, Québec, 1984).
 - 2 The following works shed light on either the recruitment or the settlement process: Max von Eelking, *Die deutschen Hülfsstruppen im nordamerikanischen Befreiungskrieg, 1776 bis 1783* 2 (Hannover, 1863); Clifford N. Smith, *Mercenaries from Hessen-Hanau Who Remained in Canada and the United States after the American Revolution* (DeKalb, Illinois, 1976); Virginia DeMarce, *German Military Settlers in Canada after the American Revolution* (Sparta, 1984).
 - 3 An exception is described by James R. McCartney, "Sectarian Strife in Dundas County: A Lutheran-Episcopal Land Endowment Controversy, 1784-1846," *Ontario History* 54, no. 2 (June 1962), pp. 69-86.
 - 4 For an analysis of German settlement in Nova Scotia see Winthrop P. Bell, *The "Foreign Protestants" and the Settlement of Nova Scotia: The History of a Piece of Arrested British Colonial Policy in the Eighteenth Century* (Toronto, 1961). For German participation in the settlement of Upper Canada, see G.I. Heintz, "German Immigrants into Upper Canada and Ontario from 1783 to the Present Day" (MA Thesis, Queen's University, 1938); Gottlieb Leibbrandt, *Little Paradise: Aus Geschichte und Leben der Deutschkanadier in der County Waterloo, Ontario, 1800-1975* (Kitchener, 1977); and Joseph W. Fretz, *The Mennonites in Ontario* (Waterloo, 1967). Furthermore, the records of such local institutions are not so much the records of German Lutherans as they are the records of whatever ethno-cultural group(s) happened to be dominant in a particular area.
 - 5 This is examined in Leibbrandt, *Little Paradise*, pp. 165-88.
 - 6 One of the most detailed accounts dealing with settlement and community formation on both the East and West Reserve is E.K. Francis, *In Search of Utopia: The Mennonites in Manitoba* (Glencoe, 1955).
 - 7 For the establishment of Muenster and for German Catholic schools in the area, see *Memories of Muenster's 70 Progressive Years, 1903-1973* (Muenster, 1973); Kurt G. Tischler, "The German Canadians in Saskatchewan with Particular Reference to the Language Problem, 1900-1930," (MA Thesis, University of Saskatchewan at Saskatoon, 1978); Clinton O. White, "Education Among German Catholic Settlers in Saskatchewan, 1903-1918: A Reinterpretation," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 16, no. 1 (1984), pp. 78-97.
 - 8 For an examination of the settlement patterns of different German groups see Heinz Lehmann, *The German Canadians, 1750-1937: Immigration, Settlement and Culture*, trans., ed. and intr. by Gerhard Bassler (St. John's, 1986). An analysis of German settlement in western Canada may also be found in A. Grenke, "The Formation and Early Development of an Urban Ethnic Community: A Case Study of the Germans in Winnipeg, 1872-1919," (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1975), pp. 78-111.
 - 9 This not only may be seen from the studies already mentioned, but also becomes evident from studies of different German religious groups: for example, Carl R. Cronmiller, *A History of the Lutheran Church in Canada*, vol. 1 (The Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Canada, 1961); Theobald Spetz, *The Catholic Church in Waterloo County* (Hamilton, 1916); John R. Weinlick, *The Moravian Church in Canada* (Winston-Salem, 1966); and Frank H. Epp, *Mennonites in Canada, 1920-1940: A People's Struggle for Survival* (Toronto, 1982).
 - 10 This becomes evident when one examines the official histories of these clubs: for example, *Germania, 100 Jahre* (1964), and *Jubilaeumbuch, 1892-1992: 100 Years [of the] German Society of Winnipeg* (1992).

- 11 D'Arcy Hande and Erich Schulz, "Struggling to Establish a National Identity: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and Its Archives," *Archivaria* 30 (Summer 1990), p. 66. The article discusses the emergence of Lutheran archives in Canada and the problems associated with it.
- 12 *Ibid.*, p. 66.
- 13 Interview with Pastor Norman Threinen, 17 October 1989, who established the archives. The author also made a survey of the holdings of the repository.
- 14 Interview with Pastor Norman Threinen, 17 October 1989, and discussion with Helena Bilger of Delhi, Ontario, who serves as archivist for Concordia Lutheran Seminary in St. Catharines.
- 15 Lawrence Klippenstein, "Mennonite Archives in Canada," *Archivaria* 31 (Winter 1990-91), pp. 42-43.
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 42.
- 17 *Ibid.*, p. 43.
- 18 Lawrence Klippenstein, A. Ens, and M. Franz, *Resources for Canadian Mennonite Studies: An Inventory and Guide to Archival Holdings at the Mennonite Heritage Centre* (Winnipeg, 1988).
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 43. For a listing of Mennonite archives in Canada and elsewhere, see Lawrence Klippenstein and Jim Suderman, *Directory of Mennonite Archives and Historical Libraries*, 3rd ed. (Winnipeg, 1990).
- 20 Elizabeth MacNaughton and Pat Wagner, *Guide to Historical Resources in the Regional Municipality of Waterloo* (Waterloo, 1989), pp. 24-25; discussion with the Reverend John Finn, who serves as archivist for Resurrection College, 4 November 1992.
- 21 Survey of holdings made by author during visit to archives, September 1976.
- 22 Discussions with Pastor Arnold Rapske, 16 October 1989 and 2 November 1992. Also see Arnold Rapske, "North American Baptist Archives Survey—1982" (a non-thesis project, University of Alberta, 1982).
- 23 Discussions with Lydia Sampert, 17 October 1989; survey of the holdings of the archives by the author on that date.
- 24 For more detailed information, see Ruth Wilson (Project Coordinator), *A Record of Service: A Guide to Holdings of the Central Archives of the United Church of Canada* (Toronto, 1992).
- 25 The archives is located in St. Joseph's Parish, 535 8th Street East, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The author made a survey of the holdings during a visit to the archives in September 1976.
- 26 The archives of the Ursulines (Vibank, Saskatchewan), for example, were transferred to Chatham after the closing of Vibank House.
- 27 The records are in the office of Professor Hartmut Froeschle, St. Michael's College, University of Toronto.
- 28 Most of the material consists of publications; an inventory is available for the fonds.
- 29 Discussion with Peter Schoenherr (Kingsville, Ontario), 27 May 1992, who is currently serving as archivist for the association.
- 30 The *Ethnic Index*, compiled in the summer of 1978, lists material on specific national and religious minority groups found in records held by the then Federal Archives Division of the PAC.
- 31 Arthur Grenke, *Archival Sources for the Study of German Language Groups in Canada* (Ottawa, 1989).
- 32 Listing of pertinent sources prepared by the author during a visit to the Public Archives of Nova Scotia in the summer of 1974.
- 33 MacNaughton and Wagner, *Guide to Historical Resources*, pp. 4-5.
- 34 Source investigation by author, 6-10 November 1989.

- 35 Reply to research enquiry from author regarding German-language materials held by the Saskatchewan Archives, 20 July 1990; "A Preliminary Guide to Sources for Ethnic Studies in the Archives of Saskatchewan," 1976. See also Ethel Starbird, "The People who Made Saskatchewan," *National Geographic* 55, no. 5 (May 1979), pp. 651-79.
- 36 Response to research enquiry from author, 22 October 1990.
- 37 Response to research enquiry from author, 27 August 1990; Public Archives of Canada, *Union List of Manuscripts in Canadian Repositories*, rev. ed., I (Ottawa, 1975), p. 564.
- 38 Survey conducted by author during summer of 1974.
- 39 Response to research enquiry from author, 3 August 1990; Ewald Schaefer, "Preserving the Historical Record: The German Holdings at the Multicultural History Society of Toronto," *Canadiana Germanica* 35 (1982), pp. 12-15.
- 40 Response to enquiry, 20 July 1990; "A Preliminary Guide to Sources for Ethnic Studies in the Archives of Saskatchewan" [1976]; and Alan B. Anderson, *German, Mennonite and Hutterite Communities in Saskatchewan: An Inventory of Sources* (Saskatchewan German Council, 1988). Anderson presents a good survey of both primary and secondary sources on Germans in Saskatchewan.
- 41 From a survey of relevant holdings carried out by the author in October 1989.
- 42 From a survey of relevant holdings conducted by the author in October 1989; response to enquiry, 11 November 1989.
- 43 From a survey carried out by author in November 1989.
- 44 Response to research enquiry from author, 27 April 1992.
- 45 A more detailed description of these holdings may be found under relevant headings in MacNaughton and Wagner, *Guide to Historical Resources in the Regional Municipality of Waterloo*.
- 46 Response to enquiry by the author, 28 April 1992.
- 47 Response to enquiry by the author, 2 September 1990. The personal fonds of Delbert Plett (Steinbach, Manitoba) also holds a considerable amount of material relating to Mennonite life in that area.
- 48 Survey of holdings conducted by author in summer 1976.
- 49 Information from Professor F. Seliger (28 May 1992), who has done considerable work on von Imhoff.
- 50 Insight into these holdings may be gleaned from sources mentioned in E. H. Bovay's *Le Canada et les Suisses, 1604-1974* (Fribourg, 1976), pp. 279, 286, 288, 290, 293; see also Albert B. Faust, *Guide to the Materials for American History in Swiss and Austrian Archives* (New York, 1966).
- 51 Holdings of the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen were microfilmed by the Public Archives of Canada in 1984.
- 52 Selected segments of these holdings were copied by the National Archives of Canada. Insight into them may be found in Marion Dexter Learned, *Guide to Manuscript Materials Relating to American History in the German State Archives* (Washington, 1912).
- 53 Photocopies of letters relating to Canada were received from Professor Helbich in 1988. (Most if not all of this accumulation was published.)
- 54 O.W. Heick, *Deutsche Pastoren aus den Predigerseminaren des "Martineums" in Breklum und "Eben-Ezers" in Kropp* (Brekum, 1978); discussions with Professor N. Threinen, 23 June and 29 October 1992. The Moravian archives in Herhut, Germany, London, England, and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, moreover, all hold records pertinent to two centuries of German cultural work among the Inuit in Labrador.
- 55 Information from the finding aid to the holdings of the Lutheran Emigrant Mission.
- 56 The author made use of these records in the early 1970s, when preparing his doctoral dissertation on Germans in Winnipeg and western Canada (*supra*, note 8), pp. 78-111.

- 57 Unpublished paper by D'Arcy Hande and Erich Schulz, entitled "Struggling to Establish a National Identity: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and Its Archives," p. 12.
- 58 *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- 59 *Ibid.*, p. 13. For more detailed information on records pertaining to the activities of American Lutheran synods among German Lutherans in Canada, see Joel W. Lundeen, *Preserving Yesterday for Tomorrow: A Guide to the Archives of the Lutheran Church in America* (Chicago, 1977); Helen M. Knubel, ed., *An Introductory Guide to Lutheran Archives and Collections* (New York, 1981).
- 60 The most comprehensive recent bibliographic source on Germans in Canada is Harmut Froeschle and Lothar Zimmermann, *German Canadiana: A Bibliography* (Toronto, 1990).
- 61 For holdings in the National Library of Canada and elsewhere, see Ruth Bogusis, comp., *Checklist of Canadian Ethnic Serials* (Ottawa, 1981).