

MANCHESTER'S GERMAN GENTLEMEN: IMMIGRANT INSTITUTIONS IN A PROVINCIAL CITY 1840-1920

Su Coates

There existed in Manchester in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century a large and influential community of Germans. Until the turn of the century Germans constituted the greatest number of foreign immigrants in England and Wales, for example, the 1871 census recorded 32,823. Not surprisingly, nearly 20,000 of these lived in London but the second largest group, over 5,000, lived in the North of England. Germans, initially attracted to Lancashire by the cotton trade, started coming to England as far back as the end of the eighteenth century but the main growth of the German community was from the 1830s onwards and it was at its peak of influence during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. By then, several hundred successful textile and merchanting firms were owned by Germans, although the most enduring influence of this community was in its civil, cultural, scientific and educational activities. A highly-developed community of ex-patriot Germans and their descendants grew up and produced many prominent citizens. Owens College and the Manchester School of Technology owe much to the scientific and philanthropic work of Beyer, Levinstein and Schuster, all of whom came to Britain because of some connection with the textile trade.

Despite their involvement in and contribution to Manchester in particular and Britain in general, the Germans still retained their identity as a national group until the First World War. According to the 1911 Census there were over 1,500 German nationals living in Manchester and Salford. Internment, repatriation and anti-German feeling and their consequent upheavals led to a decrease in their numbers and the dissolution of any identifiable community.¹

Gentlemen's Concert Hall Programme, 1856.

However, the latter part of the nineteenth century was a more positive time for the German community. It was said that:

If one proceeded to test the quality of the Manchester Royal Exchange minus its German element, it would be almost like sampling rum punch out of which some malicious mixer had left the rum. Should this seem an exaggeration, let the Master of the Exchange get up and bar the door someday and keep out the Teutons. Echoes of comparative emptiness would ring about the roof...²

And two years later:

their spoor here is unmistakable. You may see it in the names of the business houses, in the restaurants, where lagerbier flows..., in the Reform Club (they are all Liberals, of a kind) where nearly as much German as English can be heard spoken almost any mid-day of the week. One quarter of the residential outskirts of Manchester is almost their own, they form a large proportion of the patrons of our best concerts... the bulk (of Germans) living here can be regarded no longer as rivals, no longer even as Germans, for they are here 'to stay'. They settle here, found businesses and families and two generations sees them swallowed up in that great mixture we call the Anglo-Saxon race... They come here, make their mark in business, develop into good and public spirited citizens, are well-to-do and eminently law-abiding and never go back.³

This last comment is not entirely true, as many businessmen returned to Germany on their retirement. The wealthier Germans who stayed first settled in and around Faulkner, York and Moseley streets but as both their numbers and fortunes increased, German families moved out to form 'colonies' in Greenheys, Rusholme and Victoria Park, among the best parts of town. Some followed the dispersal pattern of the indigenous middle-class and went as far as Alderley, Lymm and Prestwich, whilst smaller merchants tended to live on Cheetham Hill Road.

The German community was assimilated into some aspects of Mancunian life completely whilst in others it remained a distinct cultural and ethnic group. In several respects there was an overlap, for example, although the Hallé Orchestra grew out of Manchester's Gentlemen's Concert Orchestra, it was well-known for playing "classical music, mostly German",⁴ and the Manchester Goethe Society was founded in 1886 in connection with the English Goethe Society. However, clubs and societies like the Albert and Schiller Clubs and the Society for the Relief of Really Deserving Distressed Foreigners were initiated by Germans, and, although open to all, remained or became markedly German in character. Indeed, any societies which were for the benefit of all foreigners resident in the city were almost bound to be dominated by the Germans as they were in the majority. Not

CONCERT HALL, MANCHESTER.

TUESDAY EVENING, JANUARY TWENTY-SECOND, 1856.

DESS CONCERT.

CHORAL.

Dr. Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy's Oration,
"ELIJAH,"

WILL BE PERFORMED

Principal Soloists:

Mrs BIRCH,
Mrs DOLBY,
Ms. LOCKNEY,
and
Ms. WEISS.

Conductor..... Mr CHARLES HALLÉ.
Leader..... Mr SEYMOUR.
Organist..... Mr. BARLOW.

TO COMMENCE AT HALF-PAST SEVEN O'CLOCK PRECISELY.

The Committee earnestly request the co-operation of the Subscribers in maintaining silence during the Performances!

Subscribers are reminded that the 11th Night will be devoted to the performance of "The Christmas Carol," in or without aid of the Orchestra, and that the Committee desire to be enabled to make the necessary arrangements for the performance of the same in the Theatre Royal, Manchester, on the 11th of December, 1856.

For names and lists, Program, &c. see separate Handbills.



Gentlemen's Concert Hall, Peter Street.

surprisingly, the German churches in Manchester were almost exclusively German in conception and character although they were often given the financial support of native benefactors.

Germans living in Victorian and Edwardian Manchester were not short of home comforts. For example, there was a German restaurant in the Midland Hotel in Hans Richter's day (he conducted the Hallé Orchestra from 1899-1911) and *Krause's* restaurant in the Barton Arcade was a popular meeting place in the 1870s.⁵ Another German restaurant, the *Eureka* in Market Street, supplied the newspaper *Allgemeine Zeitung*, in its coffee room, the *Manchester Guardian* advertised German publications in German and in the mid-1840s a German tailor from Aix-la-Chapelle set up shop in Princess Street, especially to meet the needs of "De Deutschen Herrren ansässig in Manchester".⁶ As well as the main clubs, the *Albert* and the *Schiller Anstalt*, there were other smaller ones.⁷

The local Germans formed societies for political reasons too, for example, German nationalism found an outlet in the *Deutscher National Verein*. However, the first German club of any substance to be founded in Manchester was the *Albert*, established sometime in the early 1840s.⁸ It was to provide a social centre for young German businessmen who had nowhere to amuse themselves in Manchester.⁹ Although thus initiated by the German community, the club was not intended to have an exclusively German membership but always retained a strong German character. The first three trustees were Martin Schunck, John Leisler and Dunkinfield Darbishire. As J.F.T. remarked, "The genial intercourse of English and German in our social circles outside was reflected inside the club, and also even in the original trustees"¹⁰

When the *Albert* club was opened in Clifford Street the annual subscription was £4 but rose to 5 guineas on the move to Dover Street. In 1869 the membership was 120, of whom half were foreigners, mainly Germans, and half British. Over the years the German members included Friedrich Engels (a committee member throughout the 1860s), Godfrey Ermen (his business partner), Dr. Louis Borchardt, Dr. Eduard Gumpert (both successful Mancunian physician friends of Engels and Marx), Charles Souchay, C.F. Schmidt, Theodore Merck, Hans Hasche and Ludwig Knoop. The club seems to have had a very harmonious atmosphere and been well regarded, for even the satirical magazine the *Sphinx*, when commenting on the number of ex-German members dead or retired in 1869, managed to comment:

*but sufficient remain to consolidate the society and to make it especially an adequate representative of a body of those foreign merchants who have done so much to dignify the honourable pursuits of commerce in our midst, and who, in gaining for themselves competent independence, have not forgotten how requisite for us all are the rational dissipation of social intercourse and innocent amusement.*¹¹

The *Albert* closed in 1888. As the German community in Manchester was still strong in numbers in 1888 it seems at first strange that the club should close. However, the writer in the *Sphinx* in 1869 mentioned that many of the old school, the original settlers, were already dead or had retired to Germany and he added, more significantly:

Considering that the Albert is a suburban club, that it is located in one corner of this great city nearly a mile and a half from the Exchange, and that of necessity its advantages can only be available when the labours of the day are over, it must be confessed that its success — though not uniform by any means — has been, under the circumstances, most astonishing.

The Schiller-Anstalt

By the late 1880s most of the wealthy professional men in Manchester, both German and British lived out of town in areas like Alderley Edge, so that the *Albert* was simply not conveniently placed and had been overshadowed by the *Schiller Anstalt* founded in 1860.

In contrast to the *Albert*, the *Schiller Anstalt Institute* was longer-lived but had a less harmonious career, was more German in character but had a less popular image in Manchester. The club grew out of the celebrations held in the Free Trade Hall on 11 November 1859 to mark the hundredth anniversary of Schiller's death. One of the principal organisers of the celebrations was Carl Siebel (1836 — 1868) described variously as a "distant relative" or "nephew" of Friedrich Engels. The organisers hoped to raise money to found a German club but in fact made a loss of £150. However, the German community resolved:



Friedrich Engels.

to cultivate amongst the Germans of this town and district those intellectual qualities which are distinctive of their German nationality, and which every truly patriotic man must desire to maintain and develop, even though residing permanently in another land. To reciprocate the advantages they derive from the truly cosmopolitan hospitality of England by furnishing to the English themselves and others more direct means of becoming acquainted with the literature, the art and the science in German.¹²

In February 1860 the first meeting was held with Siebel, a bad but hopeful poet, lecturing on modern German poetry and the *Schiller Anstalt* became the cultural and social focus of the Germans in Manchester.¹³ Dr. Louis Borchardt became the chairman of the first committee of the club which was established at the Carlton Buildings in Cooper Street. Carl Hallé was one of the vice-chairmen and other founding members included Philip Goldschmidt, Louis Behrens, S.L. Behrens, G. Ermen, A. Schwabe and H. Gaddum. Despite his initial opposition to the formation of a club Engels joined in May 1861 and became the centre of a radical group within the Institute which included Carl Schorlemmer, Dr. Eduard Gumpert, Borchardt, Wilhelm Wolff (who left the Schiller £100 when he died in 1864) and occasionally Karl Marx himself.

Engels said that Gumpert persuaded him to join and was frequently hostile towards the club complaining that it reminded him of the Fatherland in the way it was run, that is, like a beloved police state. In 1862 Engels complained to Siebel that the club, "was dominated by Jews whose extravagant schemes would lead to the bankruptcy of the institute". He nicknamed it "the Jerusalem Club". Despite this, Engels was on the committee in July 1864 and became chairman soon afterwards. He said that he accepted it to annoy the previous incumbent, Borchardt, with whom he was, by this time, on very stormy terms. (Borchardt was also an assimilated Jew). Yet Engels was an efficient and energetic chairman and was responsible for finding the club new premises at Rylands House, Chorlton-on-Medlock (250 Oxford Road) when the lease on the Cooper Street site expired. He resigned in 1870 when he left Manchester although he kept up his subscription to the *Albert*.

The *Schiller Anstalt* finally settled at 66 Nelson Street in 1885 on which occasion the Mayor, Philip Goldschmidt, attended. In its heyday the club had 600 members which was considerably more than the *Albert* and had a large library, a gymnasium, a skittle alley, a billiards room, an amateur dramatics society, a concert hall, and a male-voice choir conducted by Edward Hecht.¹⁴ Many other clubs such as a Travel Club and a Literary Club met in the Institute and regular programmes of lectures and musical activities were held. The Institute became famed for the high standard of its chamber concerts.¹⁵ However, the *Schiller Anstalt* finally suffered the same fate as the *Albert*, as members died or moved away from the town or even England, the club-house closed down in 1911 and the last concert was held, elsewhere, in 1912.

Engels was not the only one to feel that the *Schiller Anstalt* was both too German and too Jewish. In a scathing article in the *Sphinx* dated 16 October 1869 (the same year as the complimentary one on the *Albert*), called *Expelled from the Schiller Anstalt*, the writer described how one of the magazine's journalists had been made to resign from the Institute for "betraying the confidence of a private club."



Sir Charles Hallé.

The writer was quick to point out that the institute was a public and not a private club and that the animosity of its members had to be account for in some other way.

This is the first time that this extreme measure has been resorted to, and it is significant of the temper of the Germans in Manchester that it has been directed against an Englishmen, and for his behaviour outside the club.

The whole article is full of sarcastic and fatuous descriptions, such as:

...that Tabernacle in the Oxford Road, where ideas which might avert the decadence of the English race were freely exchanged, by mean whose political opinions had blossomed beneath the gentle forcing beams of a paternal Prussian rule...

and

...that free outgushing spirit that marks the mingled blood of earth's two noblest races, the German and the Jew.

The *Sphinx's* different reactions to the *Albert* and the *Schiller Anstalt* are perhaps explained by the fact that the *Albert* did not make a great show of being German; it was for social purposes only, whereas the *Schiller Anstalt* had been founded specifically to promote things German. The fact that the *Schiller* was not primarily a social club did cause dissension within; an article published in 1870 remarked that "the present prosperity of the *Schiller Anstalt*" had only been achieved after a struggle between "the high advocates of culture and the advocates of conviviality."¹⁶ As far as the local press was concerned, it seems that the *Schiller Anstalt* overplayed its cultural role by being too German and underplayed the social side.

The German Church

In contrast, the middle-class Germans' religious activities in Manchester seem to have been thoroughly approved of, religious observance being a favourite Victorian symbol of respectability. In the same year as the two articles previously mentioned the German Church was subjected to the critical eye of the *Sphinx*. The journalist was evidently impressed by what he saw and by the pastor, the Rev. Hermann Edward Marotsky, in particular. He wrote that, "...none can fail to be struck with the quiet solemnity, the spirit of earnest devotion, which seems a part of the very place..." and "We can imagine no kind of preaching so likely to do good, at the present time, to any one of thoughtful mind. To such the German Church will seem like an oasis in the desert".¹⁷

Almost thirty years later, in 1897, an article similar in vein to that in the *Sphinx* appeared in another Manchester journal. The article, which was written to mark the return of the then pastor, Oscar Mauritz, to Germany was again full of praise for the German Church in Wright Street and, indeed for Germany.

*Many of the German families that have settled in Manchester are Protestant, and do not fail to remember that the Christian religion has been one of the chief factors in the greatness of their nation. 'Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.'...it would, indeed, be strange if in any country people who pride themselves so greatly on their love for their own Fatherland could forget those memories with which feelings the most sacred, and the most tender, are associated.*¹⁸

The writer was also eulogistic about the contribution that Germany, through Luther, had made to the Christian Church. This was probably the secret of the German Church's popularity: the fact that it was Protestant and similar to churches frequented by the English middle classes. It was not truly foreign or potentially heretical. Curt Friese implies that the middle-class Germans in Manchester actually tried to emulate the life around them: "They required a church of their own of the standard enjoyed by their social equals in England."¹⁹

The German Church in question (which must not be confused with the German Mission Church), was founded in 1853. The first pastor was H.E. Marotsky, and until 1871 the Church had no premises of its own but worshipped at the Dutch Protestant Church in Wright Street. The Church, "a plain, neat building capable of containing about 300 persons."²⁰ was purchased by the Germans in 1871 and remained there until 1948. The German Church was very definitely for the middle classes and flourished in a modest way. Prior to the First World War the number of worshippers is said to have been between 300 and 350, the average number of christenings and marriages each year being eleven and three respectively between 1855 and 1914. The congregation had a church hall in rented premises in Ducie Grove and also had strong links with a German Seamen's Home in Chester Road, Old Trafford, founded in 1906. The Church suffered later on in the nineteenth century from the same ailment that dogged the German clubs of Manchester; as the wealthier Germans moved to the suburbs they were less willing to return to Wright Street on Sundays. However, Manchester's German Church kept going and became a centre for the German Church in Britain. The first and third General Councils of the German Evangelical Church Communities in Great

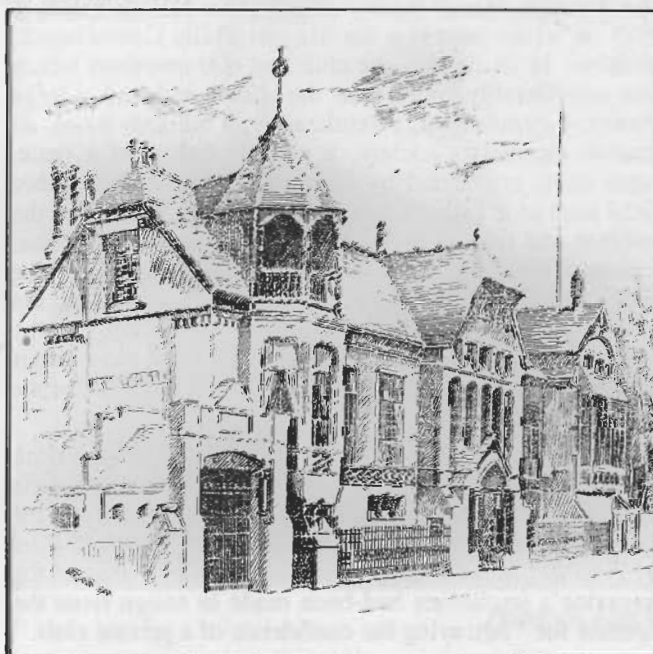
Britain and Ireland were held in Manchester in 1901 and 1910 respectively, and the Council's offices were also in Manchester. However, the Great War dealt the Church a severe blow. The pastor, Mr. Kramer, who had been in Manchester since 1905 was recalled to Germany a few months before the declaration of war and his deputy worked only a few months longer. As the congregation dispersed, the Church only just managed to retain its rights and status through the war and it took the Church community several years to come to life again after the war. Since then the *Deutsche Evangelische Kirche*, as it is now known, has suffered long periods without its own minister, sharing the services of pastor with Liverpool and Bradford although a new church building was consecrated in Stretford in 1963.

Between 1896 and 1914 a German church community existed in Newton, assisted by the main church in Wright Street. Services were started in 1896 by Rev. T.R. Waltenberg, vicar of St. Michael's Church, Newton, for Germans living in North Manchester. The congregation was mixed, English as well as German and worshipped at St. Michael's until 1899 when services were moved to the Anglican School of St. Catherine's and finally to a modest house in Gould Street in 1903. A weekly song club was also held to provide an opportunity for English members to learn German through song. However, despite assistance from the main church the community suffered desperately from a lack of funds and was quite unable to survive the outbreak of war:

*August 4th 1914. War declared. Newton Closed and bills 'To Let' posted on the outer walls. Before this was done, however, the school desks and platform were given to St. Michael's, some of the other furniture was sold 'to pay our way' and the rest given to the poorer members of the Congregation. The Tea Urns, Tea Services and Harmonium were sent to the Gemeindehaus in Lime Grove (Wright Street) where we trust they will long do even more useful service than they did in 'Dear Old Newton'.*²¹

The third German religious community in Manchester deserves to be studied at length but as it catered almost

The Schiller-Anstalt, Nelson Street.





Dr. Hans Richter.

exclusively for the poor it will be considered here only where it throws some light on the wealthier Germans of the city.²² Although this Church called itself the German Evangelical Church it was (and will be referred to here as) a mission church. The pastor himself admitted this: "...our place of worship has all the appearance and charges of a mission house in a distant land."²³ As were the two other German churches, the mission Church was Lutheran but here services were in German. Because those who attended the church were always poor and frequently itinerant, it was almost an impossible task to build up "a regular, well-attended and self-supporting congregation". This thankless task fell to the lot of a very strong personality, the Rev. Joseph Steinthal. The Mission Church began in approximately 1853, founded with the active support of charitable English businessmen to help the poor Germans of Manchester in their spiritual and material needs. For the first twenty-one years services were held in a rented room at 6 John Dalton Street for it took until 1874 before sufficient funds were raised to consecrate a purpose-built church in Cheetham, near Ducie bridge. It is not known when exactly the Mission Church ceased to function but Friese states that Steinthal spent thirty-five years in office, making it 1888 when he retired, and it is quite likely that the Church was unable to continue without its exceptional pastor. Steinthal also ran an elementary school as well as the expected Sunday school. The German Elementary Day School was for children of any denomination or race, religious instruction being "left to the ministers of the various denominations to whom the parents of the children belong." And "no child shall be refused admission to this school on account of poverty, or the misconduct of its parents".²⁴ Fees depended on the means of the parents and the poorest families got preference. In 1855 the school had about 40 pupils and 90 in 1875 but attendances fluctuated.

In 1855-6 it was estimated that 100 members of the congregation were communicants and in 1875 there were 90 communicants out of a congregation of 300. As with the school, attendances were erratic and keeping the church alive was a hard and frequently disheartening task. Steinthal evidently did not have a good relationship with the wealthier Germans in the city for he never mentioned the church in Wright Street in his reports and frequently

complained bitterly about the lack of support from his richer countrymen. He was a determined and sanctimonious man and although the church probably could not have existed without him, his attitudes may have offended his potential beneficiaries.

Steinthal was rather anti-Semitic or at least Manchester's rich Jews were often the target of his wrath, which immediately isolated a good proportion of the Germans in Manchester. In 1864 he wrote:

Very few are aware, that those successful German merchants in this city, whose splendid residences and warehouses duly represent their princely income are, with the exception of about twenty firms, 'modern cosmopolitans' viz Jews — who have thrown off the mosaic Gospel. Most of them have made life easy... They believe themselves too clever for any man who preaches the Gospel and they glory at being shotproof, against the warnings of future punishment... I really confess I see no signs that my labour has done them any good.

Not that the remaining middle-class Germans escaped his ire,

*...do not refer us back to our rich countrymen in this country. I have little faith in the result of our appeal to them, Belial will not build up Christ's kingdom. If we wanted money, for proving the Bible to be fable, or for the spread of that comfortable religion 'Unitarianism', or for a School, where religion is excluded, we would not require your help. Plenty of money might be got here.*²⁵

It appears that Steinthal had received little support from the rich Germans which is curious as they readily supported so many charities. However, support was not totally lacking. Although the original committee for the church and school had only three German members out of 14, by 1864 five out of six were German and in 1867 all nine were German. In 1855, 44 out of 47 subscribers to the school fund were German although very few gave to the church fund. This initial enthusiasm seems to have waned because by 1875, out of 378 subscribers to the church, day and Sunday schools only 48 have German names.²⁶ This apathy may have reflected a general, and growing, attitude towards religion. As early as 1860, Steinthal wrote:

*One would naturally suppose that such a numerous community should have three or four well-attended places of worship, but, I grieve to say, the attendance at our place of worship is anything but what might be desired or expected; and it is a reflection on the character of my countrymen, not only in Manchester but throughout England, that none of their places of worship are self-supporting.*²⁷

The Foreign Library

If the middle class Germans of Manchester were not particularly interested in promoting religion, they were enthusiastic about literature. Although the Manchester Foreign Library was set up to serve the whole community, it quickly became another German stronghold.²⁸ The Library was begun in 1830 by two Englishmen, William Duckworth and J. Spencer, and two Germans, M.P. Schlesinger and E.H. Levysohn. Its location moved several times but all its premises were in or near St. Ann's Square. It was decided originally that the Library committee should be made up of eight natives of the United Kingdom and seven foreigners; not unexpectedly

seven of the first foreigners were Germans. Over the years that followed German committee members included Martin Schunck, P.F. Willert, Charles Souchay, Gustavus Kling, Emil Liebert, Julius Sichel, H.M. Steinthal, H.E. Marotsky, Henry Gaddum, Frederick Zimmern — in fact, many of the most prominent Germans of the city.

Although the Foreign Library catered for French, Spanish, and Italian readers as well as German, the latter predominated in every way and they soon infiltrated the 'native' committee members too. In 1842 John Leisler and P.F. Willert suddenly appeared on the committee as natives and at the general meeting of that year Octavio Kissel moved, seconded by Leisler, "that the words 'British subjects' be substituted for the words, 'natives of the United Kingdom' in the first rule of the library's constitution." By 1847 Kissel was himself on the committee as a British subject, having taken out British citizenship. In 1849 there were two Germans on the British subjects' side out of seven men and seven Germans out of eight on the foreigners' side. It does not come as a surprise, therefore, to find that in the same year the committee decided that it should be made up of any 12 members of the library, regardless of nationality, and in 1850 nine out of the 12 committee members were German. This trend continued, although there were usually never more than 10 Germans on the committee, the remaining places being taken by an Englishman and a Frenchman. P.F. Willert was the Library's treasurer from its foundation and the positions of president (or chairman) and secretary were frequently occupied by Germans from 1851 onwards. In 1860 the committee decided to grant the use of the Library's rooms to the Presbyterians of the German Protestant Church, Wright Street for their monthly meetings. However, the Germans deserved the influence they had, as 78 out of the 120 proprietors of the library in 1868 had German names, unless the fact that the Library was dominated by Germans kept other nationalities away. The Germans were the largest single group of foreigners in Manchester so the Foreign Library could be seen as being fairly representative. The committee spent between two and three times more on German books with the French coming a strong second with Italian and Spanish trailing far behind. Nevertheless, it seems that the Library would have liked more variety:

The Chairman (Emil Liebert) stated that though the Library was in a sound and flourishing condition, with the balance of £77 in hand, the number of subscribers did not increase. Most of the members were German, and it was surprising that there were not more English and French residents in Manchester who took advantage of the facilities for obtaining French, German, Italian and Spanish literature provided at this Library.

This plea was repeated in 1891 and in 1892 the Portico Library suggested that it amalgamated with the Exchange and Foreign Libraries since its finances were in a bad state and the other two were in a good position. The committee refused to even put this suggestion to the shareholders. However, from 1899 the number of volumes borrowed from the Foreign Library each year began to drop from between 1,000 and 3,000 each year. The number of volumes bought declined from 265 in 1896 to 90 in 1902 and the number of non-proprietary subscribers also began to fall away from the usual 55-60 each year to 49 in 1902. In 1902, the committee decided to ask the secretary of the Union of Lancashire and Cheshire Institutes to recommend the Library to students, but nothing came of

this. In 1903 only 64 new volumes were bought and non-proprietary subscribers equalled a mere 33 and the library had a balance of only £2-19s-11d. In July a general meeting was held to consider the advisability of winding up the Foreign Library:

Mr (Noah) Kolp supported and added his expressions of regret that the Library had to be given up but it was not the fault of the Committee who had been forced also by the current battle for light literature to buy nothing but novels. In spite of that and though the Library offered the best choice and most convenient facilities for the lending of the books the general English public had shown too great indifference — an astonishing fact in these days of commercial rivalry between nations. Mr. C.F. Collman attributed the apparent indifference to the love for serials and periodicals.²⁹

It was decided to negotiate with the Free Reference Library to see if it would take over the Foreign Library's collection.

Thus before the outbreak of the First World War, Manchester saw the end of several strongly German institutions, the *Albert* and *Schiller* clubs, the Foreign Library and the German Mission Church. The only ones which kept going against difficult odds up until and throughout the war were the German Church in Wright Street and the carefully named Society for the Relief of Really Deserving Distressed Foreigners. There is no clear-cut explanation of why the German clubs declined some years before the outbreak of war. The reason is possibly two-fold: firstly the wealthy middle class Germans (and English) gradually moved out of the centre of Manchester to places as far afield as Alderley Edge and Prestwich so that the clubs were no longer easily accessible; and, secondly, as the Germans who settled here permanently became more anglicised and produced 'English' children no doubt the need for things teutonic waned. The church in Wright Street only just survived the war but even that is remarkable since it was so very German in character and as religious fervour had decreased. However, the Church as a whole has a certain tenacity which may have assisted the congregation in a spiritual, if not material, way. The Society for the Relief of Really Deserving Distressed Foreigners was, of course, supplying a physical need. Although Manchester's wealthy German community did not give the Rev. Joseph Steinthal much financial assistance, they were the mainstays of this charity.³⁰

Distressed Foreigners'

The first meeting of the Society for the Relief of Really Deserving Distressed Foreigners took place at the offices of Messrs Wolff, Hasche and Co. on 3 December 1847. The Society was set up to deal with destitute foreigners of every nationality as their presence in Manchester was something of an embarrassment to the local foreign merchants. At the first meeting it was decided to hold a subscribers' meeting every December and to solicit subscriptions from resident merchants and others. Although the Society was set up to aid foreigners of all nationalities, most support came from Germans and most aid went to destitute Germans. The Society only helped 'genuine' cases, not professional beggars, and usually assisted their passage home. The Society's chairman from 1847 to 1873 was Martin Schunck; most of the city's prominent Germans served on the committees and most of the local German firms, as well as rich individuals,

subscribed to the charity. Eleven of the 12 members of the first committee had German names and 34 of the first 38 subscribers. This trend continued up until 1920. Committee members over the years included members of the Behrens, Schuster and Schwabe families, Emil Liebert, Charles Souchay, H.M. Stenthal, Joseph Steintal, Philip Godschmidt, Henry Gaddum, Friedrich Engels, Ernest Delius, Frederick Zimmern and many other distinguished Germans.

The Society employed an honorary physician including, at one time, Louis Borchardt who also gave his services free to the German Mission Church. From 1853 a mendicity officer was employed and, from 1879, an interpreter. The Society worked closely with the Manchester and Salford District Provident Society's Mendicity Department, with whom they shared a secretary from 1870, and with the local Jewish Board of Guardians as a considerable number of those helped were Jews.

The Society was a serious and properly organised charity and in 1886 the committee were:

*glad to be able to report the invaluable aid it (the Society) has been enabled to render to a large number of distressing cases of need and misfortune, in many instances brought about by no improvidence or want of thrift on the part of the recipients but from causes over which they could possibly have no control, amongst which may be mentioned sickness, dullness of trade, etc...*³¹

Between 1848 and 1886 the Society relieved 17,088 applicants and refused 3,458. The year 1 December 1885 to 1 December 1886 was typical.

Applicants to the Society for the Relief of Really Deserving Distressed Foreigners 1885 — 1886

Natives of:	Relieved	Refused	Total:
Asia	2	1	3
Africa	2	1	3
America	36	10	46
Austro-Hung. Empire	81	6	87
Scandinavia	20	4	24
France	35	6	41
German Empire	363	45	408
Holland and Belgium	16	1	17
Italy	9	2	11
Poland	48	14	62
Roumania	3	1	4
Russia	40	7	47
Spain and Portugal	-	1	1
Turkey and Greece	8	-	8
TOTAL	663	99	762

Extract from Manchester Charities (1903) showing German-inspired societies.

CHARITIES.

Manchester Hebrew Bread, Meat, and Coal Society.

President—L. A. Franks, 95, Deansgate.
Hon. Secretary—Sidney Gershon, 44, Oldham Street.

Manchester Hebrew Philanthropic and Loan Society.

(Without Interest.)

President—Max Hesse.
Treasurer—A. J. S. Bies.
Hon. Secretary—L. A. Isaacs, 64, Elizabeth Street, Cheetham.

Manchester Hospital Work Society.

Hon. Secretary—Mrs. Tom Jones, Neuburg, Victoria Park.
Treasurer—Mrs. A. M. Edge, 252, Oxford Road.

Manchester Jewish Ladies' Visiting Association.

President—Mrs. Behrens.
Vice-President—Mrs. S. Simon.
Treasurer—Mrs. N. Laski.
Hon. Secretary—Rev. L. M. Simmons, LL.B., B.A., Belmont, Higher Broughton.

Manchester Naturalisation Society.

Jews' School, Derby Street, Cheetham; Hill Road.
Chairman—Julius Solomon.
Treasurers—H. L. Rothband and N. Laski.
Hon. Secretary—Rev. H. Levin, 5, Elizabeth Street, Cheetham Hill Road.

Manchester Society for the Protection of Animals from Vivisection.

Treasurer—Mrs. Herbert Phillips.
Secretary—Miss G. Nash, 9, Albert Square.

Mission Refuge for Fallen Women.

5, St. John's Parade, Deansgate.

Chairman—Rev. Canon Henn, B.A., Heaton Chapel Rectory, near Stockport.
Hon. Treasurer—E. N. Galloway, Knott Mill Iron Works.
Hon. Secretary—Rev. J. A. Winstanley, M.A., The Cathedral, Manchester.

Mrs. Macalpine's Homes.

Rescue Home for Women—45, Webster Street, Greenhays.
Maternity Home, Hope House, 45, Webster Street, Greenhays.
Office: 80, Greenhays Lane.
Superintendent and Secretary—Mrs. Collier.
Assistant Secretary—Miss Brayshaw.
Hon. Medical Officer—C. W. Brown, M.B., C.M. (Edin.).
Hon. Solicitors—Messrs. Holt, Risque & Robson.
Hon. Treasurer—Rev. C. S. Macalpine, B.D.

National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Manchester, Salford, and District Branch—415, Temple Chambers, 35, Brazennose St.
Local Hon. Secretary—Harold Agnew.
Hon. Treasurer—Chas. J. Miller.
Assistant Secretary—Miss Rose.

CHARITIES.

Servants' Home and Registry,

52, Grosvenor Street, Chorlton-upon-Medlock.

Treasurer—Charles J. Hoywood, Chaseley, Pendleton.
Hon. Secretary—Miss J. A. Potter, Heald Grove, Rusholme.
Matron—Miss Jelcoat.

Terms: 6s. per week for Board and Lodging.

Society for the Relief of Really Deserving Distressed Foreigners in Manchester.

President—William Kessler.
Treasurer—Edward Goetz.
Secretary—C. Herbert Davies, 6, Queen Street, Albert Square.

Soldiers and Sailors Families' Association, Manchester Division.

Hon. Secretary—The Rev. G. J. Lovett, St. Werburgh's Rectory, Chorlton-cum-Hardy.
Chairman and Treasurer of Parent Association—Colonel James Glides, C.B.
Secretary—Capt. Wickham Legg, 25, Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster, S.W.

"Sunday Chronicle" Cinderella Club.

President—Edward Hulton.
Hon. Secretary—Thomas Longworth, Mark Lane, Manchester.

The University Settlement, Manchester.

Men's House 17, Manor Street, Ardwick.
Women's House Manchester Art Museum, Ancoats Hall.
President—Alfred Hopkinson, Q.C., M.A., B.C.L.
Chairman—Professor T. F. Tout, M.A.
Vice-Chairman—Professor A. S. Wilkins, Litt. D., LL.D.
Warden of the Men's House—Sidney McDougall, B.A.
Warden of the Women's House—Miss Alice Crompton, M.A.
Honorary Treasurer—
Honorary Secretaries—H. Pilkington Turner, B.A., LL.B., St. Ann's Passage, Manchester; William Bailey, 51, Parkfield Street, Moss Side, Manchester.

This Settlement is founded in the hope that it may become common ground on which men and women of various classes may meet in goodwill, sympathy, and friendship; that the residents may learn something of the conditions of an industrial neighbourhood, and share its interests, and endeavour to live among their neighbours as simple and religious life.

Westwood Charity Almshouses,

Raby Street, Moss Side.

Preference to those connected with The Atlas Works.

Treasurer—Angus Tulloch, Solicitor, Princess Street.
Hon. Secretary—Rev. S. B. Ainley, St. James's Rectory, Moss Side.

Whalley Range Orphanage (late Greenhays),

Upper Chorlton Road.

Hon. Physician—D. J. Leach, M.D.
Hon. Surgeon—Dr. Crookwell.
Hon. Dentist—John Masters.
Treasurer—William J. Galloway, M.P.
Hon. Secretary—Mrs. Galloway, The Cottage, Old Trafford.
Matron—Miss Caldecott.

Of the above, 518 were given food, clothing or tools, 113 were given assisted passages home and 32 were sent to other towns having proved that work could be found there.

By 1890 the Society had aided 19,334 people and refused 3,835. Yet its German character was still evident and in 1896 it was reported that the Danish Consul had set up his own organisation to relieve distressed Danes in Manchester because he had subscribed to the Society on the understanding that Danes would get special attention and this had not been so.

The turn of the century witnessed the deaths of many of the Society's stalwarts. In 1899 the deaths were recorded of Emil Liebert and Henry Simon; the former had been the Society's treasurer since 1862. William Kessler followed in 1901. He had been a founding member and the chairman since 1873. 1907 saw the death of another honorary physician, Dr. Julius Dreschfeld and indeed many of the old faces were beginning to disappear. The following year Edward Goetz, who had been president since 1901, died and the minute book for May 1908 records, with characteristic pride that: "As a member of the foreign colony of the City, he had proved himself worthy of his German nationality, no less than of his British citizenship. As a merchant of high repute he took his part in the philanthropic movements in the City."³²

Despite these deaths, links with Germany were still strong as in February 1914 the Society received £500 from the Kaiser's Jubilee Fund. However these links were to cause the Society some discomfort with the declaration of war in August of the same year. On 11 August a special meeting was held at which the president, Charles Brumm, asked whether special aid should be given to distressed people on account of the war. He drew attention to "the fact that our Society might run some risk by aiding enemies of the country." In reply Mr. F. Zimmern stated that "our funds were there for the purpose of assisting needy aliens, not only Germans and Austrians... (and) he thought we might run the risk"³³

On 19 August 1914 a special sub-committee was set up to deal with distress caused by the war with Frederick Zimmern as chairman. He

*acquainted the Chief Constable of this work which chiefly dealt with German and Austrian subjects who were stranded and lived here as registered aliens. The Chief Constable gave his permission but asked that this work should be done as quietly as possible.*³⁴

However, permission was not given to aid new cases, only to continue relieving those already on the books. By August 1915 the Society's funds were low and it considered holding an appeal but decided that it would not be wise in the circumstances and realised stock instead. It was also discussed whether to reorganise the committee to make it more representative and less identified with one nationality. However no change was made. At this time the German Church in Wright Street put 21 Lime Grove at the disposal of the Society for relief purposes. Throughout the remaining months of 1915, the Society struggled with the British German Foundation, one of its main benefactors, which was threatening to cut its grant. Eventually it did, and in December the committee wondered whether to wind up the Society but, in January, decided to keep going. In May 1916 the Jewish Board of Guardians took over all Jewish cases. The Society also received help from the German Society of Benevolence,

the Manchester Board of Guardian and the American Consul, but in April 1917 Zimmern resigned as Honorary Secretary of the Manchester Branch of the British German Foundation. In September he launched a special appeal on behalf of the German-born wives of internees. Zimmern anticipated that large numbers of interned men would be repatriated and he was anxious to ensure that their wives and families would be able to follow them and that they received poor relief if necessary in the meantime. The secretary of the Poor Law Officers' Association said they were willing to help but without special instructions from the Local Government Board, German-born wives of internees could not be put on the same footing as English-born wives. The Board later endorsed this.



Professor Julius Dreschfeld.

In April 1918 the committee discussed the wisdom of using 21 Lime Grove as a relief centre when it was so closely identified with the German community. It was decided to use it because it was free but

*the committee while expressing every sympathy with those of German nationality emphasised the fact that we were an International Society knowing no distinction of race or creed.*³⁵

In September, the Society began to think again about the desirability of reorganising the committee to make it more representative of different nationalities. Throughout December and the following January, the future was debated and an appeal was made to the public in the form of a circularised letter. However, in March 1920, it was decided to invite the Boards of Guardians to elect representatives to serve on the committee. This was done by May and over the next few years other charitable bodies were invited to elect members so that the committee was soon devoid of all foreigners, not just Germans. As always the Society was in financial straits and, in September 1927, it was unanimously resolved that the District Provident Society should take over the works and funds of the Society.

The atmosphere in Manchester during the war years was, of course, reflected in the local press. The mood in August 1914 was, initially, one of sadness. A very moderate article called 'The Curse of War: Duty not Mania,'



Professor Arthur Schuster.

appeared in the *Manchester City News*. It read:

This is one of the saddest moments in our national history. We are forced against our will to take up arms against a nation which has many ties uniting it to ourselves, a nation we admire, a nation whose people have freely intermingled with us, and been welcome in our midst. Think what it means, for instance, in a city like Manchester. But a few weeks ago England and Germany were on common ground, were engaged in all the amenities of social life, were at each other's houses and clubs, were co-operating in their businesses and in their pleasure. And now! We have to strike at the men we do not hate! We have to desolate homes we respect. Could anything be more poignant than this fratricidal strife? But we have to heed the call of the country. It is Duty and not war-fever, that inspires us — not lust for blood but love of the Motherland has swayed our emotion and directed our acts... (Et cetera)³⁶

However, another extract from the *Manchester City News*, this time dated 22 July 1918, sums up what was generally felt about Germans in Manchester by the end of the war. It contrasts sharply with those remarks made in August 1914.

Nowhere in Great Britain had the Teuton taint been made more pronounced than in Manchester (British toleration had been grossly abused) and aliens should never be granted a vote, and no voice in the ruling affairs of the land. That privilege should be reserved for the British alone.

Such was the position by 1920. The comparatively few Germans who remained in Britain were forced to keep a low profile as anti-German feeling was still intense and British chauvinism on the increase. October 1920 saw in Manchester, the merger of the 'British for the British Movement', with the 'British Empire Union'. Ordinary English Mancunians felt that they had been imposed upon, their trust betrayed. German Mancunians sadly recognised the need to play down their Teutonic origins as was seen with the reorganisation of the Committee of the Society for the Relief of Really Deserving Distressed Foreigners. No longer could, or did, Germans in Manchester form a recognisable community. Only one out of their three churches survived, all their clubs had gone.

In short, the First World War destroyed Manchester's German community³⁷ and the feeling of ill-will that prevailed after the war and the coming of the Second World War sealed its fate. The city that once boasted of its strong links with Germany chose to forget them and it is therefore no wonder that today few Mancunians realise that such an influential and prosperous community as the Germans once formed, ever existed. The fact that Friedrich Engels once lived and worked in Manchester is treated as an isolated incident, not part of a general movement of German merchants to England. Likewise the names of Halle, Beyer and Behrens are familiar but are not seen in context; they are known but few people question their existence or ask why the men settled here.

Consequently the debt that not only the city but the nation as a whole owe to the Germans of Manchester in terms of the contribution to science, education, art, music, politics and commerce goes virtually unrecognised. It is to Manchester's credit that the German community was able to develop in the way it did. The city did not discourage their Teutonic immigrants, and was specially tolerant of the more wealthy among them; Manchester provided the cultural, academic and commercial climate in which they were able to thrive. It can only remain a matter for speculation how Manchester would have developed in the absence of her Germans. However, once suspects that the quality of life may not have been as rich.

NOTES

1. The wider influence of the German community in Manchester and its decline is treated in more depth in my M.A. thesis, S.D.F. Thomas, 'Some Aspects of the German Community in Manchester circa 1870-1920' Manchester University, 1980. Other more recent works include: C.C. Aronsfeld, 'Immigration into Britain: The Germans', *History Today*, 35, Aug. 1985; Rosemary Ashton, *Little German: German Refugees in Victorian Britain* (Oxford, 1986); Panikos Panayi, *German Business Interests in Britain During the First World War* (Paper given to the Economic History Conference, Exeter, 1989); and with references to Manchester, Roy Whitfield, *Frederick Engels in Manchester* (Working Class movement Library, 1988); *ibid*, 'The Double Life of Friedrich Engels', *Manchester Regional History Review*, 2:1, Spring/Summer 1988, pp. 20-6; Panayi, 'The Lancashire Anti-German Riots of 1915', *Manchester Regional History Review*, 2:2 Autumn/Winter, 1988/9, pp.3-11.
2. *Manchester Guardian*, 4 July, 18880.
3. *Manchester City News*, 29 April, 1890.
4. N. Cardus, *Second Innings* (1950), p. 8.
5. N. Cardus Music in Manchester, in W.H. Brindley ed., *The Soul of Manchester* (Manchester, 1929), p. 179.
6. See B. Williams *The Making of Manchester Jewry 1740 — 1875* (Manchester, 1976) p. 169.
7. According to J.A. Petch, 'Dover House (315 Oxford Road): A Link with Frederick Engels', *Translations of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society*, 72 (1962), there was a German nationals' club called The Geneva on the site of the by-then extinct Albert Club from 1910-1914.
8. W.O. Henderson, in his *Life of Friedrich Engels* (1976), says 1842. An article in the *Manchester Guardian* in Feb. 1888 says 1843 and an article in the *Sphinx*, 1 May 1869, makes it 1844.
9. *Sphinx*, 1 May, 1869.
10. *Manchester Guardian*, Feb. 1888.
11. *Sphinx*, 1 May 1869.
12. C. Friese, *Some Thoughts on the History of the Germans and Their Church Communities in Manchester Especially in the Nineteenth Century* (a pamphlet of indeterminate origins, possibly privately printed by the Deutsche Evangelische Kirche, and written sometime during the 1970s), p. 29.

13. See Henderson, *Life of Engels* for Carl Siebel and Engels' association with the Schiller Anstalt.
14. N.J. Frangopulo, 'Foreign Communities in Victorian Manchester', *Manchester Review* 10 (1965), p. 199.
15. Many distinguished European quartets played there and artists like Richard Strauss, Pablo Casals and Joachim, see Frangopulo, *ibid*, p. 201 and Friese *op. cit.*, pp. 29-33.
16. Quoted in Henderson, *op. cit.*, p. 228. For some relevant comments on the contradictory nature of local reaction to immigrant groups, see B. Williams, 'The Anti-Semitism of Tolerance: Middle-Class Manchester and the Jews 1870 — 1900' in A.J. Kidd & K.W. Roberts eds., *City, Class and Culture* (1985).
17. *Sphinx* 27 June 1869.
18. *Manchester Faces and Places*, III, June 1897, No. 9, p. 154.
19. Friese, *op. cit.*, p. 23. Friese is the most helpful source as there is very little material surviving the Church prior to the First World War.
20. *Manchester Faces and Places*.
21. Mrs J. Winn Smith, *A Brief (and Incomplete) History of Deutsche Evangelische Gemeindefarbeit in Newton, North Manchester, 1896 — 1914*, cited in Friese, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
22. See Friese, and the *Annual Reports of the German Evangelical Church and School in Manchester 1855-1875*, in the Manchester Central Reference Library.
23. *Fifth Annual Report of the German Evangelical Church and School*, 1860.
24. *Second Annual Report*, 1855.
25. J. Steinthal, *An Appeal, on behalf of the support of the German Evangelical Church, Worshipping at 6, John Dalton Street, Manchester, and also for Help Towards the Erection of a Suitable Church and School Buildings*, (Manchester, 1864), pp. 5-6.
26. *Second Annual Report of the German Evangelical Church and School*, 1855; *Twenty-First Annual Report*, 1875.
27. *Fifth Annual Report*, 1860.
28. See Minutes of the *Manchester Foreign Library*, Vol I, 1830 - 73 and Vol II, 1873-1903. Manchester Central Reference Library BR. MSF. 027.3 MI
29. Collmann was the library's vice-president and Manchester's German Consul.
30. *The Society for The Relief of Really Deserving Distressed Foreigners*. See Minutes of Meetings, 1847-1907 and 1907-1927. Manchester Central Reference Library, M294/2/1/1-2; Monthly Reports 1871-1915, Manchester Central Reference Library, M294/2/2/1-3; Annual Reports 1879-1884, Manchester Central Reference Library, M294/2/3/1-2.
31. Distressed Foreigners Society, 39th. Annual Report, 1886, p. 7.
32. Distressed Foreigners Society, Minutes for May 1908.
33. *Ibid*, 11 August 1914.
34. *Ibid*, 19 August 1914.
35. *Ibid*, April 1918.
36. *Manchester City News*, 8 August 1914.
37. The Census figures do not agree. The 1921 Census of Aliens (*Public Record Office*, H.O. 45, 11522.287235, 1915-24) suggests a figure of 476 for Manchester. The ordinary Census for 1921 reduces this even further, recording a mere 1,662 aliens for the whole of England and Wales. Discrepancies apart, there had been a considerable decrease on pre-war numbers.

CENTRE FOR THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND MEDICINE

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

The Centre has been established to support research and teaching in this expanding and exciting field of history. It concentrates on the period from the industrial revolution to the present, and has strong interests in local, regional and social history. It incorporates the Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine.

Present research topics include: history of hospitals and medical services, especially in the North West; women, children and health; public health engineering; bio-medical sciences and technologies; science in and around Manchester; the aircraft, chemical and computing industries, and the development of engineering. Other research interests could be accommodated. There is an active programme of workshops, seminars, etc.

We welcome enquiries from graduates wishing to undertake study or research, full-time or part-time, for MSc or PhD degrees. History of Science, Technology and Medicine is now being introduced in schools, both in science and history programmes. Teachers (and museum staff) interested in these developments are invited to contact the Centre.

Please write to:

**Joan Mottram,
Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine,
Mathematics Tower,
University of Manchester,
MANCHESTER M13 9PL.**