

Book Review: *German Heritage Guide to the State of Ohio*, Don Heinrich Tolzmann, review by J. Gregory Redding, in *Yearbook of German-American Studies*, 40(2005), pp.180-181.

German Heritage Guide to the State of Ohio.

By Don Heinrich Tolzmann. Milford, OH: Little Miami Publishing, 2005. 88 pp. \$12.95.

Tolzmann follows up his 2003 *German Heritage Guide to the Greater Cincinnati Area* with this volume, which contextualizes that city within a state that is centrally located in the area of settlement known as the German Belt. According to the 1990 census, forty percent of Ohio residents claim some form of German ancestry. The influence of their forebears is felt throughout the state.

The layout of the book parallels that of the Cincinnati volume, beginning with a historical timeline of German settlement in Ohio. The first German immigrant to have some influence on the region was Johann Sodowsky, a Detroit-area trader who in 1728 set up an outpost that became known as Sandusky. Organized settlement began with the founding of Schoenbrunn in 1772 by the German Moravian missionary David Zeisberger. Other Moravian settlements were soon established. Tolzmann goes on to outline the various waves of German-speaking immigrants who settled in Ohio during the nineteenth century. Key moments include the arrival of the Thirtymers and the Forty-Eighters—the displaced intellectuals and progressives who profoundly impacted American civic life—and the large numbers of German Catholics who fled Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* of the 1870s. In the twentieth century Tolzmann highlights the anti-German sentiment that many of Ohio's German-Americans experienced during the Great War. One result of the hysteria was the passage of the Ake Law in 1919, which banned the teaching of German language below the eighth grade. The Second World War brought further difficulties for Americans of German descent, but by the 1950s German Day celebrations were being celebrated across Ohio. The Bicentennial in 1976 engendered new interest in America's ethnic heritage and with it a broader appreciation for the contributions of German-speaking immigrants.

Chapter two provides short biographies of prominent Ohio citizens with Germanic heritage, ranging chronologically from Sodowsky and Zeisberger in the eighteenth century to contemporaries like Guy Stern and Robert Ward, who respectively were founding members of the Lessing Society and the Society for German-American Studies. Many of the names will be familiar only to scholars of

German-Americana, but some people—such as Jerry Springer, Jack Nicklaus, Clark Gable, and Doris Day (actual surname: Kappelhof)—are part of American popular culture.

The remaining three chapters are dedicated to places that are associated with Ohio's German heritage. Here are found brief descriptions of historical sites such as Schoenbrunn, Gnadenhutten, Zoar, and the German Village in Columbus, as well as references to the many towns and cities across Ohio that were shaped in varying degrees by German-speaking settlers. For those who wish to conduct further research, Tolzmann lists a selection of relevant libraries, museums, archives, and historical societies from every corner of the state.

As was the case with the Cincinnati guide, this volume does not attempt to be comprehensive. The historical timeline and the "Who's Who" are necessarily selective, but the chapter on notable heritage sites could have been more inclusive. For example, Cleveland's German tradition could have received more attention, as could the Amish and Mennonite communities that dot Ohio. The Sauder and AuGlaize historical villages—though less authentic than Zoar and Schoenbrunn—can nevertheless contribute to our understanding of life for early immigrants. These historical sites are at least referenced in the final chapter, which points readers toward opportunities for further exploration of Ohio's German heritage.

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