RESOURCE PROTECTION PLANNING PROJECT

EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT IN NORTHWESTERN OKLAHOMA

REGION TWO

Project Director and Editor: Mary Ann Anders

Text and Research: Richard C. Rohrs

Project Assistant: Suzanne Haynes

Oklahoma Historic Preservation Survey

History Department

Oklahoma State University

Stillwater, Oklahoma

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Introduction:

The immigrant population of Oklahoma was never as sizable as most other states. Most immigration from northern and western Europe and the British Isles into the United States occurred during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries long before the opening of Oklahoma Territory to white settlement. Subsequent migrations of Europeans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were comprised mostly of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe who preferred settlement in major urban areas to the north and east of Oklahoma. The peculiar manner by which land was distributed in Oklahoma also had an effect on the settlement of immigrant groups in the state. Few European-born settlers lived in what had previously been Indian Territory. The dispersal of land in Oklahoma Territory through runs and lotteries made the counties in the north central and northwestern parts of the state attractive to immigrants, but limited the opportunity for them to settle together in concentrated ethnic communities.

Although the immigrant population of Oklahoma was always small, it was never insignificant. In 1910, forty thousand Oklahomans, accounting for 2.4 percent of the state's population, were born in other countries. In certain areas of northwestern Oklahoma, such as Ellis, Garfield, Major, and Noble counties, the white foreign-born population exceeded 5 percent. The legacy of European settlement persists today. Numerous churches, cemeteries, fraternal lodges, and businesses exemplify a European background; most major cities in Oklahoma have societies dedicated to the renewal of one's ethnic heritage.

This survey of the ethnic experience in the ten northwestern counties of Alfalfa, Ellis, Garfield, Grant, Harper, Kay, Major, Noble, Woods, and Woodward is limited to European immigrants. The experience of native Americans, who lived in the region before the arrival of the first white settlers, was sufficiently

different to be treated separately. Immigrants from other parts of the world including Central America, the Middle East, and Asia were not numerous before the 1920s and 1930s. The six major European immigrant groups who settled in the ten counties of northwestern Oklahoma were the Germans, the Germans from Russia, the Czechs, the Poles, the Irish, and the British (who included the Scots, Welsh, and Scotch-Irish).

Emigration and Immigration:

The decision to emigrate was a difficult one; to move across town or to an adjoining state can be distressing even today. To leave one's homeland, familiar customs, friends, and relatives and to risk a sometimes perilous voyage across the Atlantic Ocean, one must be motivated by influential forces. The prospect of arriving in a strange country, with new customs and a new language, must have made the decision to emigrate even more difficult. Yet during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, hundreds of thousands of Europeans left their native lands annually for a new beginning.

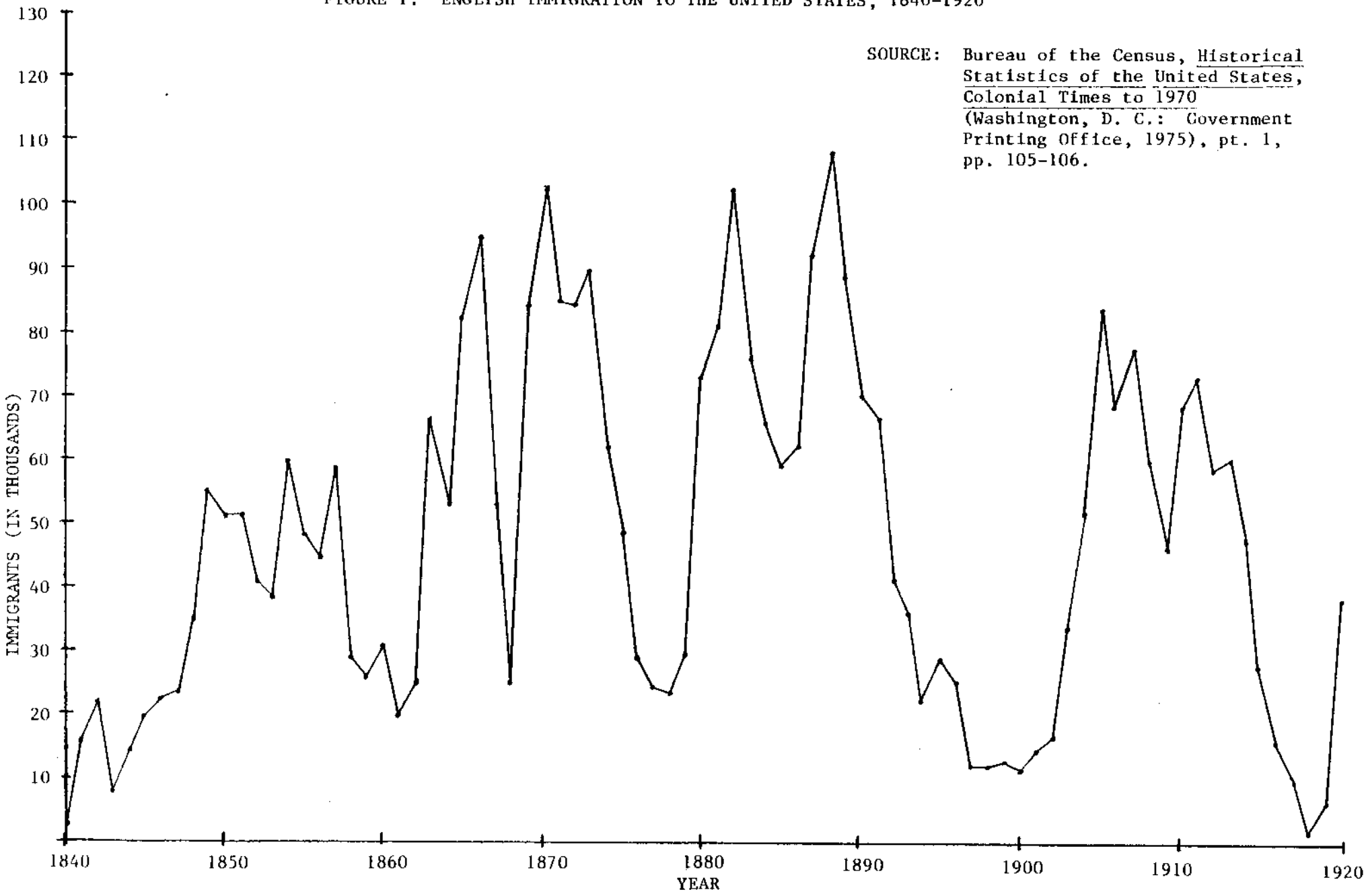
If only adverse conditions at home encouraged people to leave, one might expect that European emigrants would have settled in numerous different countries around the world. Such was not the case. Most emigrants from Europe immigrated to the United States. During the latter decades of the nineteenth century, for example, over 90 percent of the German emigrants came to the United States. An appreciation of the immigration process, therefore, must include consideration of both the conditions which encouraged Europeans to leave their homeland as well as the factors making immigration to the United States particularly appealing. Any discussion of immigration defies generalization. While there were thousands of Europeans who immigrated for identical reasons, there were an equal number of others who immigrated for very personal ones.

Five sub-groups comprised immigrants from the British Isles: the British, the Irish, the Welsh, the Scotch-Irish, and the Scottish. The Scotch-Irish were protestants from Scotland who centuries earlier immigrated to Ireland. For obvious reasons it is important to differentiate them from the Irish who were predominately Roman Catholic. Of these five sub-groups, the Irish and the English provided the most immigrants to the United States. The latter were the predominant immigrant group throughout the American colonial period and they continued to immigrate to the United States after the American Revolution although in smaller numbers. After the Civil War (see Figure 1) more and more British subjects again immigrated to establish new homes in the New World. Irish immigration (see Figure 2) increased greatly after a series of crop failures in Ireland during the 1840s and reached a peak a decade later. In subsequent decades immigration from Ireland tapered off and never regained the levels achieved during the antebellum period.

German immigration to the United States also varied over time (see Figure 3). Economic and social distress among the various German states during the late 1840s caused a large migration prior to the American Civil War. A series of wars in Europe, resulting in the unification of Germany, renewed German emigration after the Civil War. Many other Germans came to the United States to avoid the draft. The high point of German immigration was during the 1880s, as large numbers of them emigrated because of economic dislocation associated with Germany's period of industrialization. German immigration to the United States continued to decline after 1890 and virtually ceased during World War I.

Other factors motivated the Germans from Russia. Although they too were German, their experience both in Europe and the United States was sufficiently unique for them to be considered separately. These Germans migrated to Russia during the late eighteenth century. At that time the Russian government

FIGURE 1. ENGLISH IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES, 1840-1920



SOURCE: Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1975), pt. 1, pp. 105-106.

FIGURE 2. IRISH IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES, 1840-1920

SOURCE: Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1975), pt. 1, pp. 105-106.

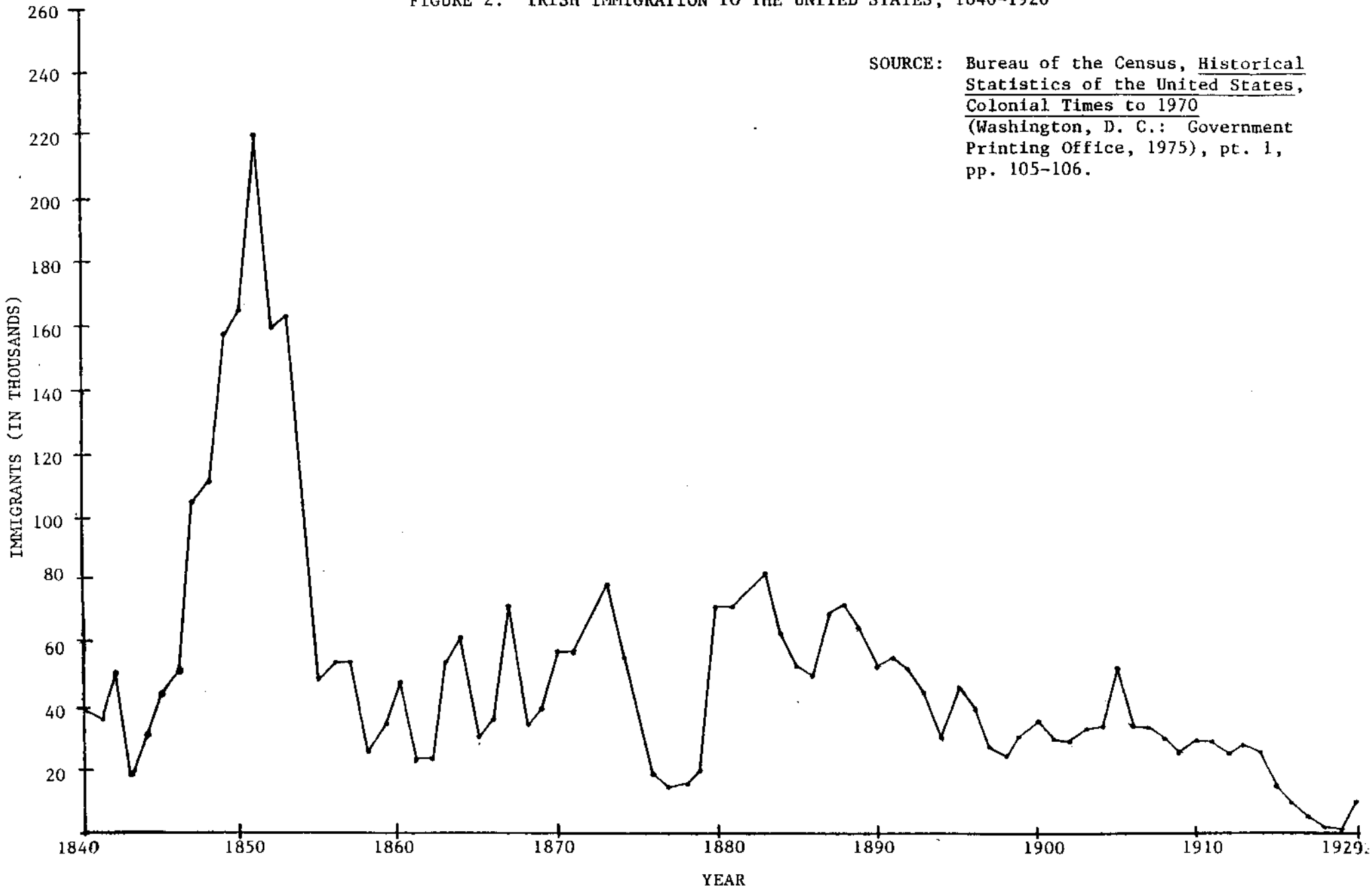
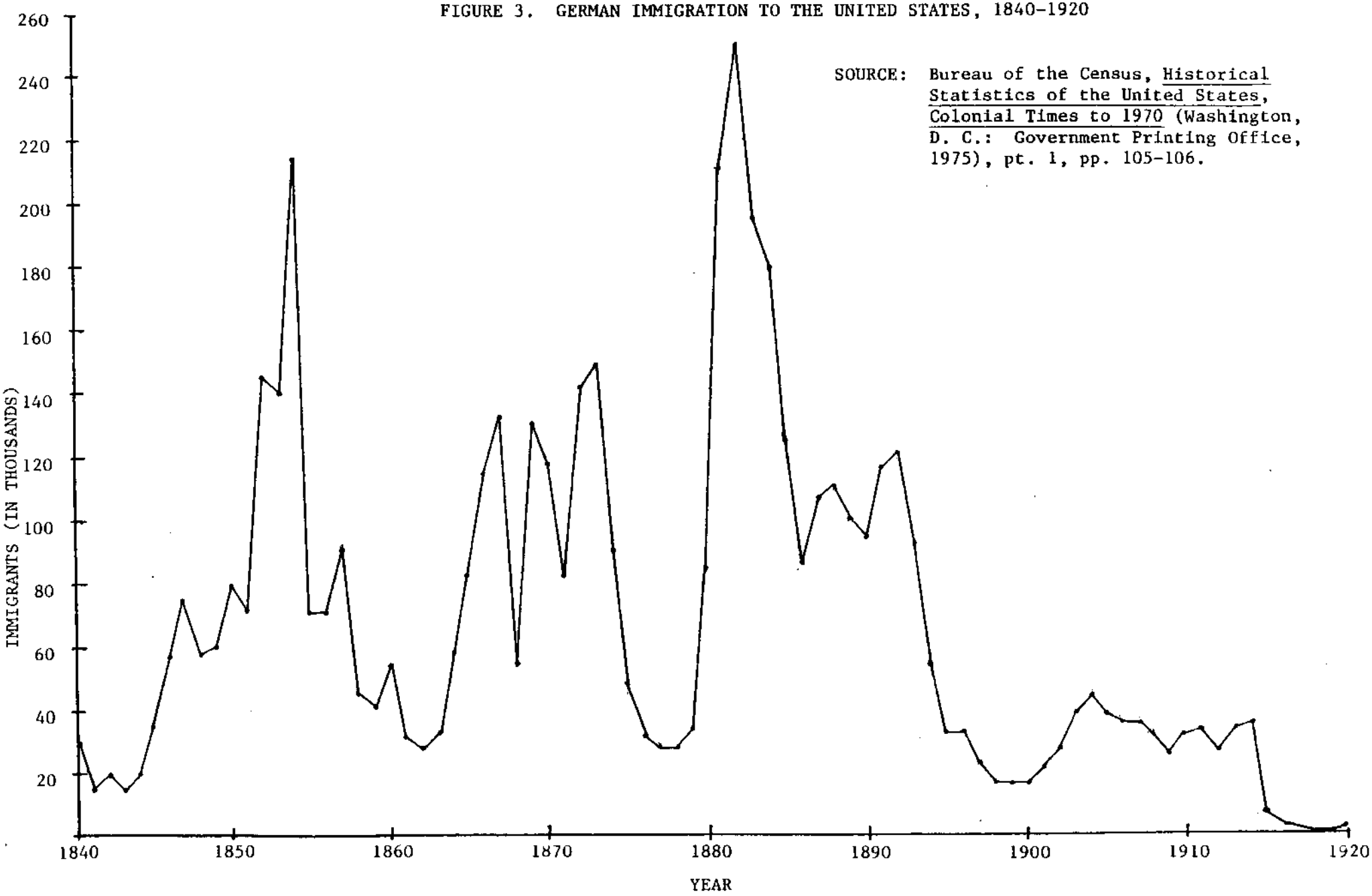


FIGURE 3. GERMAN IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES, 1840-1920



SOURCE: Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1975), pt. 1, pp. 105-106.

encouraged settlement of areas in western Russia by offering the Germans free land, exemption from military service, freedom of religion, and self-government. This arrangement worked satisfactorily for both groups for nearly a century. In the 1860s and 1870s, however, the Russians began to rescind their earlier promises because of increasing anti-German sentiment. The German settlers were no longer exempted from the draft and they lost the right of self-government. A land shortage further encouraged emigration. Consequently, three hundred thousand Germans left Russia and immigrated to the United States during and after the 1870s.

While the Irish, British, Germans, and Germans from Russia predominated in the nineteenth century, residents of southern and eastern Europe immigrated in increasing numbers during the latter decades of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth. Although the countries of Poland and Czechoslovakia did not exist, as we know them today, in the nineteenth century, various ethnic Poles and Czechs immigrated to the United States. Approximately three hundred thousand Czechs immigrated to the United States between 1848 and 1914. Most of them were peasant farmers and skilled artisans who fled adverse economic conditions in Europe. The high point of Polish immigration to the United States occurred during the 1890s and the first two decades of the twentieth century. Poverty and overpopulation at home and the prospect of better economic opportunities in the United States encouraged thousands of Poles to leave.

Besides the factors encouraging Europeans to leave, conditions in the United States also affected their decision and encouraged or discouraged potential emigrants at particular times. Periods of economic prosperity in the United States encouraged more and more Europeans to emigrate. Conversely, the frequent periods of economic distress during the nineteenth century and the

American Civil War slowed emigration perceptibly. The Irish, English, and German immigration patterns substantiate this conclusion (see Figures 1, 2, and 3). In all three instances there were declines during the early years of the American Civil War and dramatic decreases in the late 1870s. These latter instances indicated concern among many prospective immigrants about continued American economic prosperity after the Panic of 1873. By far the greatest attraction of the United States was the lure of economic prosperity. Virtually all immigrants envisioned immigration to the United States as providing an opportunity to improve their economic and social status. For many it was the appeal of free land; in most European countries landownership, a symbol of significant importance, was a dream few realized. For others, particularly the Mennonites among the Germans from Russia, the absence of a draft in the United States proved to be an enticement.

Emigration was in itself an arduous and sometimes dangerous experience. Even before the trans-Atlantic voyage, emigrants had to travel to ports of embarkation. The crowded emigrant ships, plagued by disease and violent Atlantic storms, undoubtedly led some to question the wisdom of their decision. After arrival in one of the major northeastern ports in the United States, many of the immigrants who eventually settled in Oklahoma migrated to the Midwest. The South, particularly the southeastern states, never attracted large numbers of immigrants. Prior to the Civil War, the existence of slavery and the cultivation of cotton limited job opportunities and made land prices prohibitively high. The midwestern and plains states were more appealing. The availability of cheap or free land and similar climatic conditions to Europe attracted the recently arrived immigrants. One exception was the German settlements in Texas. Some Germans arrived in southern ports such as Galveston and New Orleans and then settled in Texas. Once these migration patterns were established, subsequent arrivals, who preferred to settle in the proximity of friends or relatives, reinforced them.

These ethnic settlements, which dotted the northern tier of states from New York to the Dakotas, served a contradictory role of facilitating and inhibiting assimilation - the process of rejecting one's previous ethnic heritage and adopting the customs of a new country. While these enclaves encouraged assimilation by easing the dislocation associated with emigration, they also impeded assimilation by enabling newly arrived immigrants to maintain their ethnic identity.

Settlement in Oklahoma:

Prior to World War I few European immigrants came directly to Oklahoma. Most had lived in the United States a considerable length of time before arriving in the Sooner State. Research on German settlers in three counties in Oklahoma Territory, for example, indicates that Germans lived an average of sixteen years in the United States before migrating to Oklahoma. The various groups immigrating from the British Isles lived an even longer period of time in other states prior to their arrival in Oklahoma.

Just as there had been a variety of factors affecting emigration to the United States, there were many reasons motivating immigrants to settle in Oklahoma. Free or inexpensive land available through the land runs or lotteries undoubtedly attracted most. Ironically others left their previous residences because adverse weather conditions affected their health or damaged their crops. For those people, Oklahoma would offer little solace. Others followed family members or friends who had already staked a claim in the state. Still others settled in Oklahoma in search of adventure or by chance.

Region 2 corresponds closely to the Cherokee Outlet which was opened to white settlement through a land run in September 1893. Although more than one hundred thousand people participated in this run, some land in the western counties remained unclaimed for several years. While most of the area in this ten

county region was included in the 1893 run, portions of Ellis, Kay, and Noble counties were dispersed by other means. Parts of Ellis County were included in the Cheyenne-Arapaho land run of 1892 and portions of Kay and Noble counties were allotted to the Oto-Missouri and Ponca Indian tribes.

The European immigrants settled primarily in the north central and northwestern counties of Oklahoma Territory. Except for the Polish and Italian settlements in Indian Territory associated with mining operations in and around McAlester, few immigrants settled in what is now eastern Oklahoma before statehood. Other than a few Mennonite missionaries living among the Indians, few foreign-born European immigrants lived in the ten counties which comprise Region 2 before the opening of Oklahoma Territory to white settlement. By 1900, however, the six counties organized at that time - Garfield, Grant, Kay, Noble, Woods, and Woodward - had sizable populations of Czechs, Germans, and Germans from Russia (see Tables 1, 2, 3, and 4 as compiled from the 1900 and 1910 census). The year 1910 witnessed the high point of foreign-born settlement in Oklahoma. Subsequent inmigrations never replaced the numbers of those earlier

TABLE 1

GERMAN-BORN RESIDENTS OF NORTHWESTERN OKLAHOMA, 1900-1910

County	1900	1910
Alfalfa	--	175
Ellis	--	117
Garfield	482	726
Grant	299	227
Harper	--	66
Kay	203	333
Major	--	171
Noble	235	343
Woods	507	261
Woodward	78	152
TOTALS	1804	2571

TABLE 2

GERMAN FROM RUSSIA RESIDENTS OF NORTHWESTERN OKLAHOMA, 1900-1910

County	1900	1910
Alfalfa	--	126
Ellis	--	526
Garfield	171	234
Grant	92	83
Harper	--	52
Kay	7	9
Major	--	466
Noble	33	118
Woods	765	97
Woodward	00	120
TOTALS	1068	1957

TABLE 3

IRISH-BORN RESIDENTS OF NORTHWESTERN OKLAHOMA, 1900-1910

County	1900	1910
Alfalfa	--	27
Ellis	--	5
Garfield	73	65
Grant	53	40
Harper	--	5
Kay	71	62
Major	--	13
Noble	42	42
Woods	57	21
Woodward	16	24
TOTALS	312	304

TABLE 4

ENGLISH-BORN RESIDENTS OF NORTHWESTERN OKLAHOMA, 1900-1910

County	1900	1910
Alfalfa	--	58
Ellis	--	47
Garfield	74	106
Grant	88	86
Harper	--	15
Kay	127	125
Major	--	47
Noble	45	52
Woods	144	73
Woodward	35	62
TOTALS	513	671

arrivals who died or moved on. By that year, although these ten counties accounted for only 11 percent of the state's total population, 25 percent of the German-born population and over 30 percent of the Germans from Russia living in the state resided there. This region also was the home for almost 15 percent of the British immigrants and nearly 17 percent of the Irish-born population of Oklahoma.

Despite these percentages, these ethnic groups were not highly concentrated within the region. The particular method of land dispersal made settlement together in ethnic communities difficult. Consequently, even the Germans and Germans from Russia were, in comparison to other states, widely dispersed. The number of Germans never exceeded 3 percent of the population of any one county and the total white foreign-born never surpassed 7 percent. The most concentrated settlements were among the Germans from Russia in extreme western Oklahoma. These immigrants settled primarily along the North and South Canadian rivers in Ellis, Garfield, Major, and Woodward counties. Here, Germans from Russia were able to establish communities because the land did not appeal to

most other settlers who preferred the less arid climatic conditions farther to the east. Despite these adverse conditions many Germans from Russia became successful farmers.

The settlement pattern of the Germans and the Germans from Russia in this ten county region varied dramatically. The population of Germans from Russia (see Table 2) in 1910 ranged from as few as 9 in Kay County to a high of 526 in Ellis County. While more numerous, the Germans (see Table 1) also varied in number from a low of 66 in Harper County in the west to a high of 726 in Garfield County in the eastern portion of the region. Interestingly, despite their common language the two groups seldom overlapped their settlement patterns. The Germans from Russia tended to be more concentrated in the western counties of the region, while the Germans from the German Empire tended to be more numerous in the eastern counties. This divergent pattern reflected the type of migration experience of the two groups. Most Germans settled individually or in families; the Germans from Russia were much more communal in their migration and settlement. Many of them left Russia and immigrated to the United States and settled in Kansas or Nebraska together in large groups. This practice continued with their migration to Oklahoma, where they sought large tracts of adjoining lands to accommodate their numbers and continue their communal existence. These areas were frequently farther west where there was less competition for land and much remained unclaimed even after the opening of the Cherokee Outlet.

Perhaps the highest concentration of Germans from Russia in the state was in Shattuck in Ellis County. In 1910, for example, the Russian-born population of that county exceeded five hundred and accounted for over 3 percent of the county's total population. If one includes the American-born children of these settlers, the German-from-Russia portion of the population of the county

exceeded one thousand. In Shattuck, churches and stores were quickly established to accommodate the German-speaking population.

Within northwestern Oklahoma, Garfield County had the largest German-born population. In 1910, the German-born population of that county exceeded seven hundred and accounted for over 2 percent of the county's total population. German immigrants established churches and parochial schools at Garber and Fairmont to attend to the spiritual and educational needs of their families. Enid, the county seat, was also the home of Die Enid Post - one of Oklahoma's more enduring German-language newspapers. By 1915, there were still German secular clubs in existence in northwestern Oklahoma including Enid, Fairview in Major County, and Perry in Noble County.

The zenith of Czech settlement in Oklahoma was also in 1910. In that year, over sixteen hundred foreign-born Czechs and over fifty-six hundred first and second generation Czechs lived in Oklahoma. Like most other European immigrants these Czech settlers had lived in the United States a long time. Many migrated to Oklahoma from Nebraska with fewer numbers arriving from Texas, Iowa, and Kansas. Many of the Czechs from Nebraska had been attracted to the Sooner State by earlier, successful Czech settlements. All anticipated improved economic opportunities or sought a new start in a new land. Where sufficient numbers permitted, the Czechs remained clannish and assimilated slowly. Bison, in Garfield County, was one of the most concentrated Czech communities in the northwestern portion of the state. This small town, located directly south of Enid, had a sufficiently sizable Czech population to maintain a Czech Catholic Church, St. Joseph's, and a Catholic Workman's Lodge which catered to the Czech residents.

The Immigrant Experience in Oklahoma:

Regardless of their ethnic background, all settlers experienced difficulties during their first several years in Oklahoma. Immigrants and Americans alike shared the frustrations and problems associated with violent weather, poverty, and isolation until the virgin prairie began to produce food and surplus crops. Once that initial period of hardship was endured, many immigrants began to establish ethnic institutions. These included newspapers, churches, parochial schools, and fraternal lodges all of which facilitated the adaptation to life in Oklahoma and coincidentally enabled these new settlers to maintain their ethnic heritage on the American frontier.

Perhaps the most important of these were churches. The prospect of worshipping in anything other than their native language was unthinkable for many immigrants and their families. Establishment of churches was not too difficult for the Germans and the Germans from Russia, who were numerous enough in most of the ten counties in northwestern Oklahoma to initiate foreign-language church services. The Germans, who were predominately Roman Catholic and Lutheran, thus established numerous churches across the region. The Mennonites, Lutherans, Seventh-Day Adventists, and Roman Catholics among the Germans from Russia experienced even less difficulty because they were more concentrated. Frequently, concerned parishoners also established parochial schools in conjunction with their churches thus enabling their children to attend school in German rather than English. The opportunities for establishment of foreign-language churches and schools were more limited for other European groups who were too few or too scattered to support them. The situation was further complicated for the Czechs. As Karel Bicha in his book on the Czech experience in Oklahoma has explained, many Czechs whose families had been converted to Catholicism against their will in previous centuries were indifferent about

establishing and maintaining strong religious affiliations after their arrival in the United States.

Instead of establishing churches, many Czechs joined fraternal lodges. These organizations facilitated social gatherings as well as serving in lieu of churches for marriages and funerals. The most prominent Czech fraternal organization in Oklahoma was the Zapadni Cesko-Bratrska Jednota (Western Bohemian Fraternal Association). Even as recently as 1972 there were twelve active chapters of the Z.C.B.J. in Oklahoma. Of these, four were located in northwestern Oklahoma in the towns of Garber, Medford, Perry, and Waukomis. Another institution common in Czech communities was the Sokol. The Sokol was more than an athletic club as it also promoted education and Czech ethnic pride.

The foreign-language press was also an important element of the immigrants' experience in Oklahoma. After 1889, at least sixteen German-language newspapers and five Czech newspapers were published in the state. They provided local as well as international news to the German and Czech populations. The typical German-language newspaper included local advertisements for businesses catering to a German-speaking clientele, news articles from Oklahoma, the United States, and Germany, agricultural prices, information about other German settlements in Oklahoma and other states, and serialized literary works. One newspaper, Die Enid Post, first published in Garfield County in 1902, attained a circulation of fifteen hundred by 1905 and continued to be published under various titles until 1935.

Despite the fact that they were few in number, European immigrants in Oklahoma endured some nativistic prejudice soon after their arrival. Nativism, or the hostile reaction of native inhabitants to more recent immigrants, appeared periodically throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the United States. During these periods of discord, long-time American residents tried to

minimize the influence of the more recently arrived immigrant groups. This prejudice also assumed religious connotations directed primarily toward Roman Catholics.

There were some manifestations of nativism in Oklahoma even before statehood. Although the drive to prohibit the consumption of alcohol in the new state constitution was not specifically directed toward immigrants, many ethnic organizations in the state vehemently opposed it. The propensity of Europeans, most notably the Germans, Czechs, and Irish, to consume alcoholic beverages conflicted with the more conservative mores of certain religious denominations in Oklahoma.

The prohibition issue was a minor concern when compared to the treatment of German residents of Oklahoma during World War I. Although many German settlers had lived and worked peacefully with their neighbors for decades, the outbreak of World War I suddenly made a German surname, the German language, and the desire to worship in German suspect. Although the United States did not enter the war on the side of the Allies until its latter stages, most Americans were sympathetic to the Allied cause throughout the war.

The treatment of Germans in Oklahoma never deteriorated to the level of other states where angry mobs occasionally killed German residents, but their previously friendly neighbors treated them poorly in the Sooner State. The attitude of some Oklahomans was typified in an article appearing in Major County's Fairview Leader. The editor warned German-Americans to " 'take serious thought of their position,' because a person critical of American policy 'will find his easy going American neighbor a very different sort of animal, a different being to deal with.' "

Manifestations of anti-German attitudes in Oklahoma varied from silly to serious. Throughout the state there were instances of arson, threats, intimidation,

and assault. The residents of Kiel in Blaine County changed the name of their town to Loyal and the residents of Bismark [sic] in McCurtain County changed the name of their town to Wright in the honor of the first man from there to die in World War I. In Oklahoma City, the Board of Education stopped using the word kindergarten because of its Teutonic origins.

Of more serious and enduring consequence were efforts in many localities to prohibit the use of the German language in public, on the telephone, during church services, and in school. In Grant County, the local County Council for Defense prohibited the use of German over the telephone. In other areas of the state, Oklahoma residents forbade the use of the German language in public because they were afraid that German-speaking residents were passing military secrets. In Major County local authorities ordered the cessation of the use of German in church services. One Sunday morning parishoners found the following notice posted on the door of their church: "GOD ALMIGHTY UNDERSTANDS THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE. Address HIM only in that Tongue. DO NOT REMOVE THIS CARD." The restriction on the use of German in church services was a particularly onerous one for most Germans. For many worshipping in their native tongue was imperative.

Although most of these restrictions were rescinded after the war ended, there were long term consequences on the German-American community in Oklahoma. Only two German-language newspapers survived the war. Many German-language parochial schools closed never to reopen. German as a foreign language was dropped in many public schools and was only added again to the curriculum several decades later. Most Germans could forgive their American neighbors, but few, even today, have forgotten.

The Germans from Russia were additionally affected because many of them were Mennonites and, thus, conscientious objectors. The revocation of their

exemption from military service had been one important factor encouraging them to leave Russia and to come to the United States. During World War I some Mennonites left Oklahoma and went to Canada to avoid being forced to foresake their opposition to conscription. Others went to jail in support of their beliefs.

The end of World War I did not mark the end of nativism or problems for immigrant groups in Oklahoma. During the decade of the 1920s, at least in part as a reaction to American involvement in World War I, nativism reappeared. At this time the Irish Catholics were the primary targets of prejudice.

The hysteria associated with World War I never reoccurred to the same degree in subsequent decades. During World War II, persons of German heritage in Oklahoma aggressively displayed their loyalty and the causes of American entry into the Second World War were far less complex and controversial. Despite the efforts of the German-American community in Oklahoma, there were still isolated instances of violence and vandalism. The building housing a German-American organization in Oklahoma City was repeatedly vandalized during World War II until the membership decided to disband rather than continue to endure the expense of rebuilding.

Since World War I the influx of new immigrants into Oklahoma has declined perceptibly. As the original immigrant settlers in the Twin Territories died there was no new sizable inmigration to replace or increase their numbers. After reaching a high in 1910, the number of immigrants and their percentage of the total population in Oklahoma declined in subsequent decades. Restrictions placed on immigration into the United States during the 1920s quickened this decline. The unrestricted flood of Europeans into the United States which had witnessed the influx of hundreds of thousands of immigrants annually in the previous century was limited dramatically. The number of European immigrants increased only briefly after World War II to accommodate East Germans and other eastern

Europeans who fled their countries behind the Iron Curtain for freedom in the United States. The number of German immigrants has been further supplemented in recent years by German wives of American armed service personnel stationed in Europe. More of these later immigrants came directly to Oklahoma than their predecessors.

As their numbers decreased after World War I so did the influence of European immigrants in Oklahoma; assimilation accelerated in subsequent decades. As foreign-language newspapers ceased to publish and as foreign-language church services and parochial schools disappeared the maintenance of one's ethnic identity became more difficult. Exogamy, the practice of marrying outside one's own ethnic group, also became more prevalent. As the pool of available foreign-born spouses decreased, more and more European immigrants married Oklahomans whose parents had been born in this country. This also hindered the transferral of their ethnic heritage from one generation to the next. The one possible exception were those Germans from Russia who were Mennonites. Their settlement pattern and strong religious affiliation slowed their rate of assimilation in comparison to other immigrant groups in Oklahoma.

Conclusion:

Although their influence has waned in recent decades the impact of Oklahoma's European immigrant population remains. One has only to drive through the counties of north central and northwestern Oklahoma or peruse telephone books from cities and towns in these areas to discover their legacy. In more recent years there has been renewed interest in recognizing this part in Oklahoma's past. The annual Czech festival in Prague, the Italian festival in Muskogee, and the Oktober Fest in Tulsa are only a few examples of these efforts. The Newcomers to a New Land series, published by the University of

Oklahoma, recorded and, thus, preserved the history of ten ethnic groups in Oklahoma. What remains to be done is the preservation of the physical legacy of their presence in the Sooner State. These churches, cemeteries, schools, lodges, businesses, and private homes in Oklahoma are further evidence of the pluralistic nature of the state and the contribution of European immigrants to its development.

Resources:

There are numerous sources of information about the experience of European immigrants in northwestern Oklahoma. Perhaps the most helpful is the manuscript census. Every ten years the federal government initiates a census of the American population. This enumeration, from which the more familiar published census is derived, is available for the counties comprising northwestern Oklahoma in 1900 and 1910. These manuscript censuses list each resident, their address, place of birth, place of birth of both parents, sex, age, color, occupation, date of arrival in the United States, and numerous other demographic characteristics.

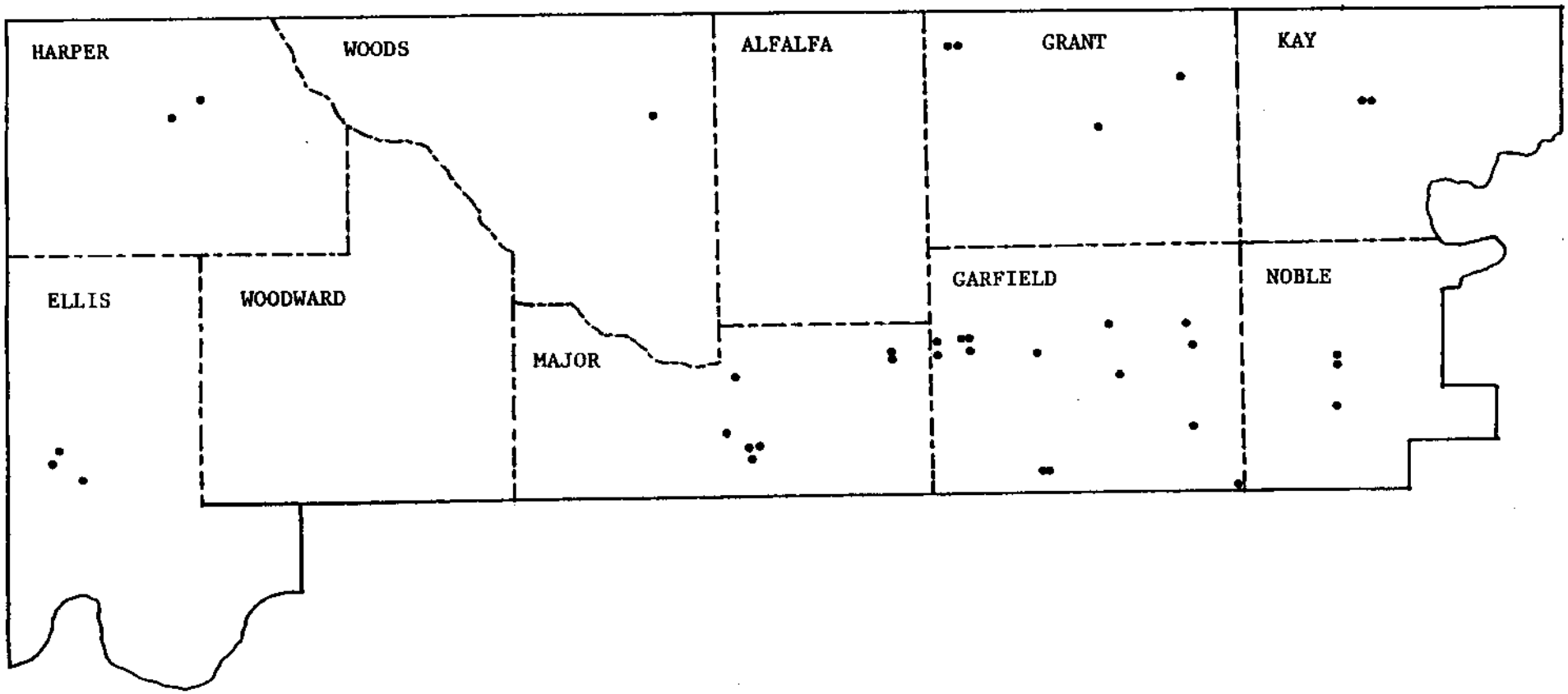
Church records are also extremely valuable sources of information. From them, one can determine religious affiliation and the dates of baptism, marriage, and death. Many church records are extant and in possession of Mennonite, Lutheran, and Catholic parishes in northwestern Oklahoma. Identifying which church records still exist can be determined from the Church Inventory Survey Forms located at the Oklahoma State Archives in Oklahoma City.

Other sources, including plat maps and city directories, can provide information on landownership. The plat maps, available in the Oklahoma State University Library's Special Collections for the 1920s and 1930s, record ownership of all rural land holdings. The city directories, available for the northwestern

Oklahoma cities of Alva, Enid, and Ponca City at the Oklahoma Historical Society in Oklahoma City, identify addresses and occasionally occupations of town dwellers. Additional information about the immigrant experience in Oklahoma can be obtained from German-language newspapers. In northwestern Oklahoma, Zion's Bote was published in Medford, Oklahoma Neuigkeiten and Oklahoma Kirchenblatt were published in Perry, and Die Enid Post and Der Beobachter were published in Enid. Some of these are available on microfilm at the Oklahoma Historical Society.

NORTHWESTERN OKLAHOMA COUNTIES

DISTRIBUTION OF ETHNIC SITES AND STRUCTURES



INVENTORY OF SITES AND STRUCTURES

LUTHERAN CEMETERIES

1. Zion Lutheran Cemetery
   Location: Seven miles east, three miles north, .5 mile east of Buffalo.
   Legal Description: Section 17, Range 21 West, Township 28 North
   Date: Approximately 1902

2. Immanuel Lutheran Cemetery
   Location: Two miles north and one mile west of Breckinridge
   Legal Description: Section 17, Range 3 West, Township 23 North
   Date: 1903

3. Zion Lutheran Cemetery
   Location: Two and one half miles north of Lahoma.
   Legal Description: Section 31, Range 8 West, Township 23 North.
   Date: Approximately 1903.

4. Garber Lutheran Cemetery
   Location: .5 mile north and .5 mile west of the intersection of highways 74 and 64.
   Legal Description: Section 2, Range 4 West, Township 22 North.
   Date: Approximately 1901.

5. Trinity Lutheran Cemetery
   Location: Two miles north and one mile west of the intersection of highways 60 and 132.
   Legal Description: Section 3, Range 8 West, Township 22 North
   Date: Approximately 1905.
   Comments: Many of the tombstones include photographs of the deceased.

6. Zion Lutheran Cemetery
   Location: One mile north and one mile west and .1 mile south of Fairmont
   Legal Description: Section 21, Range 5 West, Township 22 North
   Date: Approximately 1897.

7. St. John's Lutheran Cemetery
   Location: One and one half miles north and two miles east and one half mile north of Covington.
   Legal Description: Section 31, Range 3 West, Township 22 North
   Date: Approximately 1900

8. St. John's Lutheran Cemetery
   Location: Five miles east and one mile north of Blackwell.
   Legal Description: Section 15, Range 1 East, Township 27 North.
   Date: 1902.

9. Lutheran Cemetery
   Location: Two miles south, two miles west, and .1 mile south of Shattuck.
   Legal Description: Section 7, Range 25 West, Township 20 North
   Date: Approximately 1903.

10. Zion Lutheran Cemetery
    Location: Two miles south and .5 mile east of Alva.
    Legal Description: Section 6, Range 13 West, Township 26 North.
    Date: 1902-1905

CATHOLIC CEMETERIES

1. Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Cemetery
    Location: Seven miles north of the intersection of highways 132 and 64 on highway 132.
    Legal Description: Section 10, Range 8 West, Township 28 North.
    Date: Approximately 1900.
    Comments: Unique in the sense that it includes inscriptions in both German and Czech.

MENNONITE CEMETERIES

1. New Hopedale Mennonite Cemetery (General Conference Mennonite Church)
    Location: North Meno Street in Meno.
    Legal Description: Section 9, Range 9 West, Township 22 North
    Date: 1905.

2. Sud Hoffungsfeld Cemetery (Mennonite Brethren)
    Location: Three miles south and 2.6 miles east of the intersection of highways 8, 58, and 60 in Fairview.
    Legal Description: Section 12, Range 12 West, Township 20 North
    Date: Between 1897 to 1906.

3. Nord Hoffungsfeld Cemetery (Mennonite Brethren)
    Location: Two miles north, one mile west, and .6 mile north of the intersection of highways 8, 58, and 60.
    Legal Description: Section 9, Range 12 West, Township 21 North
    Date: Between 1896 and 1906.

4. Cedar Cemetery (Church of God in Christ Mennonite Church)
    Location: Two miles south and 1.5 miles east of the intersection of highways 8, 58, and 60 in Fairview.
    Legal Description: Section 2, Range 12 West, Township 20 North.
    Date: 1896.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CEMETERIES

1. Seventh-Day Adventist Cemetery
    Location: Four miles south and one mile east of Shattuck.
    Legal Description: Section 15, Range 25 West, Township 20 North.
    Date: Approximately 1903.

SECULAR CEMETERIES

1. (Unnamed) Cemetery
    Location: Seven miles south and .5 mile west of Lucien.
    Legal Description: Section 25, Range 3 West, Township 20 North.
    Date: Approximately 1897.

2. Bohemian Cemetery

Location: Seven miles north and .2 miles west of Perry.
Legal Description: Section 10, Range 1 West, Township 22 North.
Date: 1899.

3. Czecho-Slovak Cemetery
Location: .6 mile east, four miles south, and .7 miles east of Renfrow.
Legal Description: Section 28, Range 4 West, Township 28 North.
Date: 1909-1910.

CHURCHES

CATHOLIC CHURCHES

1. Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church
Location: Seven miles north of the intersection of highways 132 and 64 on highway 132. In the vicinity of Manchester.
Legal Description: Section 12, Range 8 West, Township 28 North
Date: 1898

LUTHERAN CHURCHES

1. Zion Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod)
Location: Oklahoma Street, Lahoma
Legal Description: Section 18, Range 8 West, Township 22 North
Date: 1908
Comments: The upper half of the walls and ceiling of the sanctuary are covered with embossed tin.

2. St. Paul's Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod)
Location: 1626 East Broadway, Enid
Legal Description: Section 9, Range 6 West, Township 22 North
Date: 1927

3. Trinity Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod)
Location: Two miles north and one mile west of the intersection of highways 132 and 60. In the vicinity of Enid.
Legal Description: Section 3, Range 8 West, Township 22 North
Date: 1901
Comments: While this church was under construction, the congregation held services in the Glenella School located one mile to the south.

4. St. John's Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod)
Location: Five miles east and one mile north of Blackwell.
Legal Description: Section 15, Range 1 East, Township 27 North
Date: 1912.
Comments: The interior walls and ceiling of the sanctuary are covered with embossed tin.

5. Robert E. Barron House
Location: 107 E. Best Street in Buffalo
Legal Description: Portions of Lots 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 of Block 247.
Date: 1913
Comments: This private residence had previously been a rural Lutheran church.

MENNONITE CHURCHES

1. Saron Mennonite Church (General Conference Mennonite Church)
   Location: One mile south and .1 mile west of Orienta.
   Legal Description: Section 28, Range 12 West, Township 22 North.
   Date: Approximately 1932

2. Church of God in Christ Mennonite Church
   Location: Two miles south and three miles east of the intersection of highways 8, 58, and 60 in Fairview.
   Legal Description: Section 1, Range 12 West, Township 20 North
   Date: Approximately 1920.

LODGES

1. Western Fraternal Life Association Lodge #110 - "Equality"
   Location: Four miles north, one mile west, and .5 mile north of Garber.
   Legal Description: Section 2, Range 4 West, Township 23 North.
   Date: c. 1900
   Comments: This building had been the Immanuel Lutheran Church previously located southwest of Garber.

2. Western Fraternal Life Association Lodge #55 - "Harmony"
   Location: Six miles north of Perry.
   Legal Description: Section 22, Range 1 West, Township 22 North
   Date: 1906-1910

3. Catholic Workman's Hall
   Location: Schaubroeck and Second Street in Bison
   Legal Description: Section 24, Range 7 West, Township 20 North. Block 11, Lots 1 through 24.
   Date: 1928

4. Catholic Workman's Hall
   Location: Main and Third Street in Bison
   Legal Description: Section 24, Range 7 West, Township 20 North. Block 9, Lots 1, 2, 3, 4.
   Date: Approximately 1900.

MISCELLANEOUS

BUSINESSES

1. John Soucek's Blacksmith Shop
   Location: One block south of the intersection of E. Cherokee and First Street in Medford.
   Legal Description: Lot 22, Block 18.
   Date: unknown
   Comments: There is an anvil located on the roof at the eastern end of the building.

2. Schultz General Store
   Location: 139 South Main in Shattuck.
   Legal Description: Lots 8, 9, 10 of Block 1 of the McCrate Addition.
   Date: 1911

3. First National Bank and Trust Company Building
   Location: 300 West Sixth Street in Perry.
   Legal Description: Lot 27, Block 24
   Date: 1902
   Comments: The Oklahoma Neuigkeiten, a German-language newspaper, was published in the basement of this building. This site was previously nominated for the National Register of Historic Places.

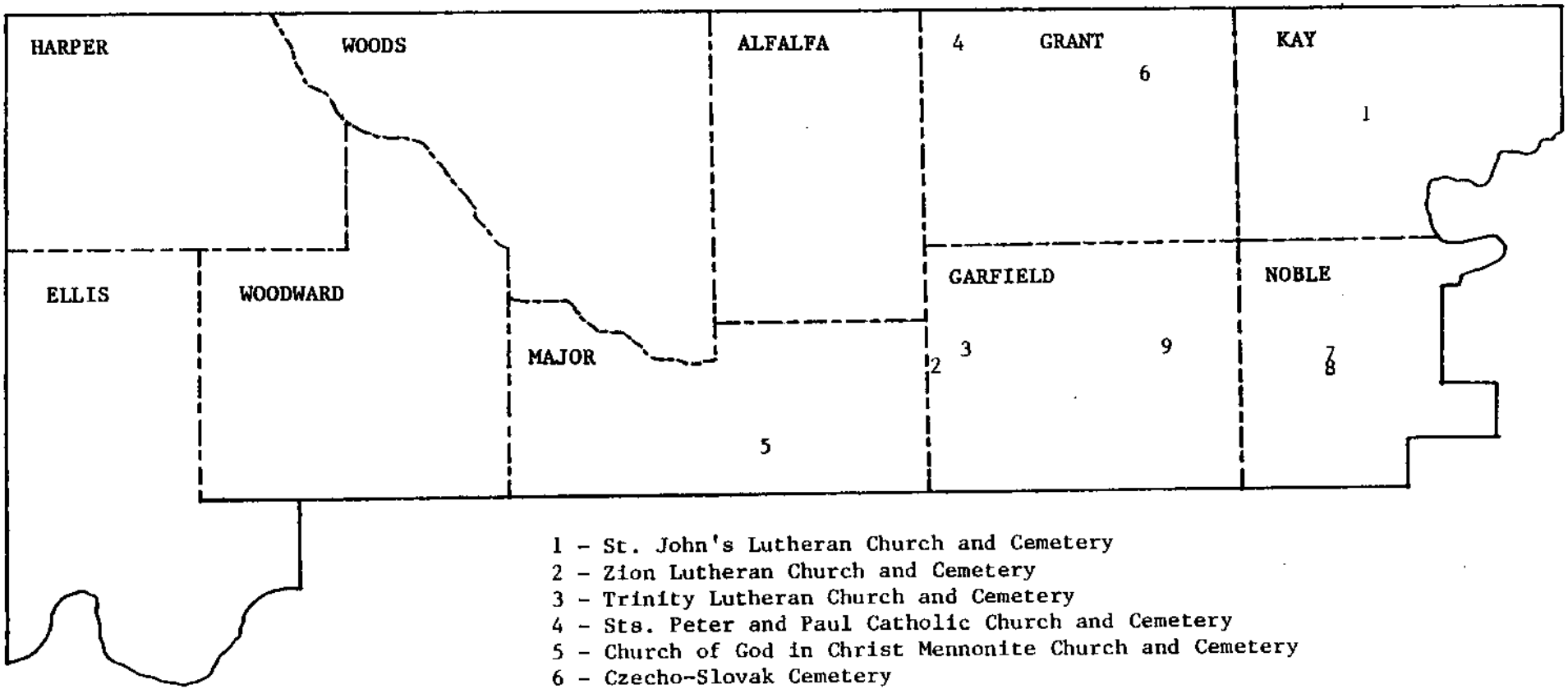
SCHOOLS

1. Glenella School
   Location: One mile north and one mile west of the intersection of highways 132 and 60.
   Legal Description: Section 11, Range 8 West, Township 22 North
   Date: pre-1901.
   Comments: In 1901 while Trinity Lutheran Church was being constructed the congregation worshipped in this school.

2. Oklahoma Bible Academy
   Location: South Meno Street in Meno.
   Legal Description: Section 17, Range 9 West, Township 22 North
   Date: Approximately 1925
   Comments: This building was at one time a parochial school operated by the New Hopedale Mennonite Church in Meno.

NORTHWESTERN OKLAHOMA COUNTIES

NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION SITES



1 - St. John's Lutheran Church and Cemetery
2 - Zion Lutheran Church and Cemetery
3 - Trinity Lutheran Church and Cemetery
4 - Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church and Cemetery
5 - Church of God in Christ Mennonite Church and Cemetery
6 - Czecho-Slovak Cemetery
7 - Bohemian Cemetery
8 - Western Fraternal Life Association Lodge #110
9 - Western Fraternal Life Association Lodge #55

SITES AND STRUCTURES NOMINATED TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

1. St. John's Lutheran Church and Cemetery

Location: Five miles east of Blackwell and one mile north of Highway 11, vicinity of Blackwell, Oklahoma, Kay County; Section 15, Township 27 North, Range 1 East

Owner: St. John's Lutheran Church, RR 1, Kildare, Oklahoma, 74642

Description: Condition: excellent, altered, original site

The original St. John's Lutheran Church was constructed on this site in 1901. Eleven years later, in May 1912, a tornado hit the structure and toppled it. That same year a new church was constructed and the altar and raised pulpit from the original church were included in the new building. Both are very ornate. In 1936 a basement was excavated under the church.

The church building is approximately eighty-nine feet long (east/west) and sixty-nine feet wide. The back portion of the church (the west end) was originally a parochial school. The church sanctuary is wider than it is deep and the interior, both the walls and ceiling, are covered with embossed tin. A manual pipe organ (Hinner, 1922) is still in the church as is a church bell (1924) which was purchased from the Henry Stuckstede Bell Foundry of St. Louis. The wooden pews in the church are curved so that they nearly form a semi-circle around the altar. A cemetery associated with the church lies approximately .15 mile to the east of the intersection.

The exterior and portions of the interior of the church have been renovated in recent years. The exterior of the church, for example, has been covered with white vinyl siding. The church sanctuary appears to be untouched except for the addition of two ceiling fans, air conditioning, and wood coverings over the arched windows on the north and south. The portion of the building which previously housed the school has been totally remodeled inside. The church has a seating capacity of approximately two hundred.

Significance: 1912; builder/architect: unknown

St. John's Lutheran Church was founded by a group of predominantly German farmers who settled in Kay County between Blackwell and Newkirk during the last decade of the nineteenth century. As a rural congregation, comprised primarily of farmers in the vicinity of the church, it served the spiritual, educational, and social needs of the parishioners. One parishioner sold the five acres of land and a church was built in 1901. A parochial school and cemetery were dedicated a year later. The church services and school were conducted in German with the pastors of the church serving as teachers until the 1920s. In 1934 the school was discontinued because of a declining number of students. Later, German was also dropped entirely from the church services.

While many rural churches in Oklahoma disappeared, St. John's has survived. Unlike many others, this church has not been abandoned nor has its congregation transfered to other existing Lutheran parishes in Blackwell and

Newkirk. This is a reflection of the loyalty of the parishioners and the fact that many families of the original German settlers still own the land in the vicinity of the church and attend the church servicers today. Some traditional practices, such as segregation of men and women, still continue today among the long-time members of the congregation. St. John's belongs to the Missouri Synod.

Major Bibliographical References:

Hidy, Fred. Telephone Interview, June 1984.
Newkirk and Kay County: Diamond Jubilee. n.p.: n.p.,n.d.
Fiftieth Anniversary. St. John's Lutheran Church, Blackwell, Oklahoma, 1901-1951. n.p.: n.p., n.d.
Quillen, Pastor Ernest. Interview, June 1984.

2. Zion Lutheran Church and Cemetery

Location: Oklahoma Street, (specific address information unavailable), Lahoma, Oklahoma, Garfield County; cemetery: 2-1/2 miles north of Lahoma, Section 31, Township 23 North, Range 8 West

Owner: Zion Lutheran Church, Box 128, Lahoma, Oklahoma, 73754

Description: Condition: excellent, altered, original site

This Missouri Synod Lutheran Church was constructed in 1908. The upper half of the interior walls and the ceiling of the church are covered with embossed tin and are painted white. There are stained glass windows on the south wall and behind the altar. Much of the remainder of the interior has been renovated. Although the altar and pulpit are original, the narthex, at the east end of the building, was widened in the 1950s. During that same decade, the parish house, which is attached to the west end of the original church, was added. The painting on the original altar has been removed and replaced. The original painting is currently in the parish house.

The ten-acre plot of land upon which the church is built was purchased in 1902 from A. S. Martin. The church is situated on the northwest portion of the northeast quarter of Section 18, Township 22 North, Range 8 West.

The cemetery, a discontiguous site, has an area of one acre and is located on the northeastern part of the southeast quarter of Section 31, Township 23 North, Range 8 West. This land was sold to the Zion Lutheran Church in Lahoma in 1903 by Charley Holz. This cemetery includes many tombstones with German inscriptions dating back to at least 1903.

Significance: 1908; builder/architect: unknown

This church is significant because it exemplifies both the successes and difficulties endured by German settlers in Oklahoma. A predominately German congregation, the Zion Lutheran Church in Lahoma held German-language church services and established a German-language parochial school. German was taught in the school until World War I when residents of Lahoma threatened to burn down the school unless only English was taught. German-language church services continued until the interwar period. There are still some German-language

speakers in the congregation and the church possesses records from the 1930s in German. The school, located immediately west of the parish hall, was closed permanently in 1949. Sometime thereafter it was sold and moved to a farm north of town.

The cemetery is significant because it demonstrates the influence of the German residents of Lahoma and their desire to maintain their ethnic identification. The continued use of German inscriptions into the decade of the 1930s also indicates the enduring desire of many of these early settlers to maintain their ethnic identification.

Major Bibliographical References:

Christianson, Pastor. Lahoma, Oklahoma. Interview, July 1984.
75 Years of God's Blessing to Zion Lutheran Church

3. Trinity Lutheran Church and Cemetery

Location: Two miles north and 1 mile west of intersection of Highways 60 and 132, vicinity of Enid, Oklahoma, Garfield County; Section 3, Township 22 North, Range 8 West

Owner: Trinity Lutheran Church, RR 1, Box 357, Enid, Oklahoma, 73701

Description: Condition: good, altered, original site

This small rural church is located in an area between Enid and Lahoma in the western section of Garfield County. The 1901 building seems to be structurally sound and has been renovated on several occasions. The pulpit and altar of the church seem to be new and are different in their appearance from those of most of the other Lutheran churches in northwestern Oklahoma. The pulpit and altar of this church are made of stained rather than painted wood. There is a bell tower at the north end of the building. The structure is built of clapboard.

The cemetery, located immediately to the west of the church, dates back to at least 1905. Many of the tombstones have German inscriptions and photographs of the deceased. This church land, which is the northeast corner of this section, was sold to the church in 1902 by Henry Thomas.

Significance: 1901; builder/architect: unknown

The significance of this building lies in that it is a legacy of the German settlement in this portion of Garfield County. At the turn of the century, the German residents decided to establish a Lutheran Church, a parochial day school, and a cemetery. Before construction of the church was completed, the congregation held services in the Glenella School one mile to the south. Although the parochial school is no longer in existence (it closed in 1929) the church still thrives today. Of the numerous German Lutheran churches constructed in Garfield County before statehood, this is one of the few that is still in existence. Instead of moving into town, this church has endured because of the continuity of its parishioners. Many children and grandchildren of those original settlers still attend services at Trinity Lutheran Church today.

Major Bibliographical References:

Enid Morning News, 22 April 1971.
Enid Morning News, 24 April 1976
Kaltwasser, Pastor. Enid, Oklahoma. Interview, July 1984.

4. Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church and Cemetery

Location: Seven miles north of the intersection of Highways 132 and 64 on Highway 132, vicinity of Manchester, Oklahoma, Grant County; Section 10, Township 28 North, Range 8 West

Owner: Mr. J. C. Feist, RR 2, Box 59A, Manchester, Oklahoma, 73759

Description: Condition: deteriorated, altered, original site

This Catholic church is located on the southeast corner of a section of land south of Manchester in Grant county. The church, dedicated in 1898, is constructed of wood. The bell tower remains on the east end of the structure and the bell, dated 1903, is in the possession of the Feist family.

The altar and stations of the cross are still in the church, but all of the pews have been removed. The church appears to be structurally sound, but the exterior needs immediate attention.

A cemetery is located approximately one-quarter of a mile west of the church and includes some tombstones with inscriptions in German and others in Czech. The earliest tombstones date back to 1900. There is a large cross located in the center of the cemetery.

In 1898 Frank C. Feist, Sr. gave ten acres to the Catholic Church of Oklahoma. In the 1960s some of the land, including the location of the church was purchased from the Church by members of the Feist family.

Significance: 1898; builder/architect: unknown

This church and cemetery are significant because they are the remaining symbols of a predominately German Catholic community in the northwestern section of Grant County. By the turn of the century, a sufficient number of German Catholics lived in the area to support the construction of a Catholic church, a school (1907), a "Sister House" (quarters for nuns), and a cemetery. The school and the Sister House were located immediately west of the church. At times, nuns representing the Benedictine and the Sisters, Adorers of the Most Precious Blood, orders taught at the school. The school closed permanently in 1948. The school and Sister House have been torn down or moved.

Initially portions of the church services and instruction in the parochial school were conducted in German. The cemetery is unique in that it includes inscriptions on the tombstones in German and Czech. Usually settlers established separate cemeteries for these two ethnic groups.

The inability of the congregation to survive reflects demographic patterns and internal disputes. There was insufficient land in the area to support several

generations of these original settlers and their families. Consequently many moved and those remaining purchased the additional land. As the congregation decreased in size, the school closed and many parishioners began to attend the Catholic church in Wakita. Church services at Sts. Peter and Paul ceased in 1963.

Major Bibliographical References:

Feist, Frank C., Jr. Manchester, Oklahoma. Interview, July 1984.
Southwest Courier, 1955.

5. Church of God in Christ Mennonite Church and Cemetery

Location: Church: Two miles south and three miles east of the intersections of Highways 8, 58, and 60 in Fairview, vicinity of Fairview, Oklahoma, Major County; Cemetery: two miles south and 1.5 miles east of the intersections of Highways 8, 58, and 60 in Fairview, vicinity of Fairview, Oklahoma, Major County; Section 1, Township 20 North, Range 12 West

Owner: Church of God in Christ Mennonite Church, SE of City, Fairview, Oklahoma, 73737

Description: Condition: excellent, altered, original site

The oldest portion of this Mennonite church was built in 1920. The northern, eastern, and southern sections of the church were added at various times during the decades of the 1960s and 1970s. The white clapboard structure is located southeast of Fairview on land sold to the church by Jacob H. Boehs. Additional portions of land were sold to the church in the 1970s and 1980s.

The cemetery is one and one-half miles west of the Church of God in Christ Mennonite Church. Although the congregation was predominately composed of German-speaking settlers earlier in the nineteenth century, there are only a few tombstones in the cemetery with German inscriptions—far fewer than most Lutheran, Catholic, and secular cemeteries in northwestern Oklahoma. One of the earliest tombstones is dated 1896. The land for the cemetery was sold to the church in 1915 by Jacob H. Boehs. The cemetery is located on a 12 rod by 14 rod parcel of land in the northwest portion of the northeast quarter of this section.

Significance: 1920; builder/architect: unknown

This church and the cemetery affiliated with it are significant because they document the past and present of the Mennonite settlement in this portion of Major County. Comprised primarily of Germans from Russia, this congregation held German language church services until about 1932. This particular group of Mennonites is extremely conservative and resists change. In keeping with their beliefs, they recently opened a school immediately to the south of the church to educate their children. Unlike the other two Mennonite congregations in the area which moved into Fairview, this congregation has persisted in its rural setting. Eager to maintain their traditional ways, these Mennonite farmers decided to renovate their church building in its original location instead of constructing a new structure in town. Ironically, the cemetery affiliated with the church has only a very few tombstones with German inscriptions.

Major Bibliographical References:

Nightingale, Karl. Fairview, Oklahoma. Interview, September 1984.
Unruh, Wayne. Fairview, Oklahoma. Interview, August 1984

6. Czecho-Slovak Cemetery

Location: From Highway 81 northeast of Renfrow proceed east .6 mile, south 4 miles, and east .7 mile, vicinity of Renfrow, Oklahoma, Grant County; Section 28, Township 28 North, Range 4 West

Owner: Czecho-Slovak National Cemetery Association, c/o Mr. Frank J. Truhlar, RR 3, Box 94, Medford, Oklahoma, 73759

Description: Condition: good, unaltered, original site

This well-kept cemetery is located among wheat fields southeast of the farm community of Renfrow. A sign identifies the site as a Czecho-Slovak Cemetery. All names on the tombstones are Czech and several of the head stones have inscriptions in Czech. One of the earliest stones is dated 1909. The land for the cemetery was ceded to the Bohemian National Cemetery Association in 1910 and 1913. In 1928, the Bohemian National Cemetery Association was incorporated and changed its name to the Czecho-Slovak National Cemetery Association.

Significance: 1909-1910; builder/architect: N/A

The significance of this cemetery lies in that it demonstrates the desire of many Czech-Americans to maintain their ethnic identification in Oklahoma. The cemetery manifests this intent through the use of Czech inscriptions on some tombstones.

Major Bibliographical References:

Smrcka, Stanley. Telephone Interview, July 1984.
Webb, Grant County.

7. Bohemian Cemetery

Location: Seven miles north of the intersection of Highways 77 and 64, on Highway 77 and .2 mile west, vicinity of Perry, Oklahoma, Noble County; Section 10, Township 22 North, Range 1 West

Owner: Bohemian National Association, c/o Arnold Prucha, RR 1, Red Rock, Oklahoma, 74651

Description: Condition: good, unaltered, original site

This cemetery lies north of Perry, Oklahoma in an area which is still thought of today as a Czech community. The well-kept, two acre cemetery is 295 feet square and includes several tombstones with Czech inscriptions. Above the entrance there is a sign which reads: Bohemian Cemetery. The two-acre lot was transferred to the Bohemian National Association in 1899 by Frank Prokop.

Significance: 1899; builder/architect: N/A

The significance of this cemetery and the nearby Czech lodge is that they are manifestations of the Czech community that existed north of Perry. The Czech inscriptions indicate that these Czechs tried to maintain some sense of their ethnic identity even in death. Because of their experience with the Roman Catholic church in Czechoslovakia, many Czech immigrants to the United States did not maintain a strong affiliation with the Church in the United States. Consequently, secular cemeteries, like this one, were more common in areas of Czech settlement than in German communities.

Major Bibliographical References:

Stratton, Celia. Telephone Interview, June 1984.

8. Western Fraternal Life Association Lodge #55 - Harmony Community Center

Location: Six miles north of the intersection of Highways 77 and 64, on Highway 77, vicinity of Perry, Oklahoma, Noble County; Section 22, Township 22 North, Range 1 West

Owner: Cternarsky Zabavni Spolek, c/o Cyril Hayne, 639 Elm, Perry, Oklahoma, 73077

Description: Condition: fair, altered, original site

The building is not in particularly good condition. It is of wood construction and has a metal roof. The southern portion of the building was added during the last decade. Inside there is a wood stage and a balcony. Portions of the original building have been renovated. Although the date of construction cannot be determined exactly, it was probably constructed between 1906 and 1910.

The building lies just over a mile from a Czech cemetery. The lodge is located on an acre of land which was transferred to the Czech lodge in 1906 by Vaclav Prucha, a local farmer.

Significance: c. 1906; builder/architect: unknown

The significance of this structure lies in its importance to the lives of Czech residents of this portion of Noble County. This area, north of Perry, is still considered a Czech community. Besides this Czech lodge, there is a Bohemian Cemetery located one mile to the north (see Item 7 above). Many Czechs, after arriving in the United States, maintained minimal ties to the Catholic Church. Thus, fraternal lodges like this one provided a social and religious function for the Czech residents. The hall is still being used today as a community center.

Major Bibliographical References:

Bicha, Karel. The Czechs in Oklahoma.
Crowell, Dennis. Telephone Interview, June 1984.
Scholz, Joe. Perry, Oklahoma, interview, June 1984.

9. Western Fraternal Life Association Lodge #110

Location: Four miles north of Garber on Highway 74, 1 mile west and .5 mile north, vicinity of Garber, Oklahoma, Garfield County; Section 2, Township 23 North, Range 4 West

Owner: Western Fraternal Life Association Lodge Rovnost #110, c/o Lovina Duncan, Box 114, Garber, Oklahoma, 73738

Description: Condition: good, unaltered; moved, approximately 1954

This small wood frame building lies on a plot of land northwest of the farm community of Garber. The roof of the structure is made of metal, except for that on the far east end of the building which is constructed of shingles. The building is in good condition and is not identified by any sign or other means of identification. It has the classic shape of a Lutheran Church. The land was sold to the Western Bohemian Association in 1904 by Joseph Sebranek. It is located on the southwest portion of the northwest quarter of the section.

Significance: c. 1900; builder/architect: unknown

This structure, built about 1900, was at one time the Immanuel Lutheran Church which used to be located on a plot of land southwest of Garber. In the 1910s, the Lutheran congregation decided to move their church building into the town of Garber for their convenience. For several years, the congregation worshipped in this building. In 1954, a new church was constructed in town and later the former church building was sold to the Czechs and was moved by them to its present location northwest of Garber. The previous Czech hall had been destroyed by fire in 1952. Many Czechs, after arriving in the United States, maintained minimal or no ties with any church. Thus, fraternal lodges like this one provided an integral part of the social and quasi-religious functions, such as marriages and burials, among the Czech residents.

Major Bibliographical References:

Duley, Pastor. Telephone Interview, November 1984.
Garfield County History, vol. II, pp. 841-842.
Grother, Walter. Telephone Interview, November 1984.
Sebranek, Frank. Telephone Interview, July 1984.

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Bilger, Edeltraut Luise. "The German-Americans in Oklahoma During World War I, As Seen Through Three German-Language Newspapers." Unpublished M. A. Thesis, Oklahoma State University, 1976.

Bicha, Karel D. The Czechs in Oklahoma. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980.

Blessing, Patrick J. The British and Irish in Oklahoma. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980.

Brown, Kenny L. The Italians in Oklahoma. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980.

Cherokee Strip Volunteer League (comp.). Woods County Oklahoma Rural Cemeteries. Alva, Oklahoma: Cherokee Strip Volunteer League, n. d.

Cunningham, Robert E. Perry: Pride of the Prairie. Stillwater, Oklahoma: Frontier Printers, Inc., n. d.

Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. The Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1910. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1913.

Glass Mountain Country: A History of Major County. n. p.: n. p., 1977.

Hale, Douglas. The Germans from Russia in Oklahoma. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980.

History of Grant County Families, 1893-1980. 2 vols. n. p.: Grant County Historical Society, n. d.

Jayne, Velma Troxel and Rockwell, Stella Campbell. O County Faces and Places. A Collection of Cherokee Strip Photographs and Stories. Enid, Oklahoma: Harold Allen, 1968.

The Last Run: Kay County, Oklahoma, 1893. Ponca City, Oklahoma: Courier Printing Company, 1939; reprint edition, Ponca City, Oklahoma: Skinner & Son Printing Company, 1970.

Morris, John W., et al. Historical Atlas of Oklahoma. 2nd Edition. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976.

Newkirk and Kay County: Diamond Jubilee. n. p.: n. p., n. d.

Pioneer Footsteps Across Woods County. n. p.: n. p., n. d.

Roark, Michael Owen. "Oklahoma Territory: Frontier Development, Migration, and Cultural Areas." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Syracuse University, 1979.

Rockwell, Stella Campbell (ed.). Garfield County Oklahoma 1893-1982. 2 vols. Topeka, Kansas: Josten's Publications, 1982.

Rohrs, Richard C. The Germans in Oklahoma. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980.

Sage and Sod: Harper County Oklahoma, 1885-1974. 2 vols. n. p.: Harper County Historical Society, n. d.

Smith, Michael M. The Mexicans in Oklahoma. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980.

Tobias, Henry J. The Jews in Oklahoma. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980.

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Webb, Guy P. History of Grant County, Oklahoma, 1811 to 1970. North Newton, Kansas: Mennonite Press, 1971.

Articles:

Hale, Douglas. "European Immigrants in Oklahoma: A Survey." The Chronicles of Oklahoma. LIII (Summer 1975), pp. 179-203.