Introduction

There has been a continuous German presence in London over many centuries. In the middle ages the merchants of the Hanseatic League had extensive, and widely resented, privileges, while the political and religious turmoil of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries led to many Protestant refugees staying for a time in London. The union of the crowns of England and Hanover from 1714 to 1837 encouraged the growth of the German speaking community, as did the expansion of the London economy.

At the 1851 census 9,566 residents of London were recorded as having been born in Germany, but by 1891 this figure had reached 26,920. The community was very mixed, and included businessmen, scientists, and political refugees as well as tradesmen and labourers. The largest single occupational group were those involved in the east London sugar refining industry, work which was notoriously hard and unhealthy, and the greatest residential concentration was in an area of Stepney which became known as 'little Germany'. The German population as a cohesive community with its own institutions declined in the course of the twentieth century, although St. Boniface’s Catholic Church, Adler Street, Whitechapel, still ministers to a German speaking congregation.

Archival Sources

Amongst the archival sources held by London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) are the following:-

Dietrich Bonhoeffer Kirche (German Church Sydenham) LMA/4288

The German Evangelical church, later the Dietrich Bonhoeffer Kirche was built 1882-1883 in Dacres Road, Sydenham. The congregation itself preceded the building of the church, and the first service was conducted in 1875. The church suffered greatly during the two World Wars and damage from incendiary bombs in World War Two was such that the building was demolished in 1950. The church was rebuilt in 1958/59 and was renamed the Dietrich Bonhoeffer Kirche. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was pastor between 1933-1935, was a prominent member of the German Resistance Movement and involved in a plot to kill Hitler. In 1945 he was hanged by the Nazis in Flossenbürg concentration camp.

The records cover the period 1852-1998. They include registers of baptisms, confirmations, and
burials 1876-1977 and weddings 1905-1918.

**German Lutheran Church, Denmark Hill, Camberwell LMA/4288/G/01**

After this church closed in 1914 its records were stored at the German Church Sydenham.

The records include registers of baptisms 1854-1914, confirmation 1856-1913, marriages 1856-1914, and deaths 1852-1913.

**German Evangelical Lutheran Church, Islington ACC/2597**

(Hatton Road, Cross Street, then Fowler Street, Essex Road)

- Baptism register 1858-1902

There is an index to this register on the open shelves in the Information Area (60.57 GER).

- Marriage register 1860-1914

These registers have been digitised and are available on the Ancestry website: [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk).

**German Hamburg Lutheran Church ACC/2622 and Ms 08356**

(Trinity Lane, City of London 1669-1871, chapel of German Hospital 1871-1876, Alma Road, renamed Ritson Road, Dalston, Hackney from 1876)

- Memoranda of baptisms 1669-1849, marriages 1671-1754, 1831 and 1843-9, and deaths and burials 1695-1847 (Ms 08356, with an index in Ms 28929)
- Registers of baptisms 1850-1929 and marriages 1850-1871, 1876-1920 and chronicle of church events 1888-1913.

These registers have been digitised and are available on the Ancestry website: [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk). There is an index to these later baptisms and marriages on the open shelves in the Information Area (60.57 GER).

A register of baptisms 1694-1836, marriages 1695-1754, and burials 1695-1836 is held by the National Archives at Kew (RG4/4650).

**German Evangelical Reformed St Paul's Church ACC/1473 and ACC/1767**

The German Evangelical Reformed Church was established in London in 1697 by Protestant refugees fleeing religious oppression in the Palatinate. William III permitted services to be held in the chapel of the Savoy Palace. A new church built in Duchy Lane, Savoy, on the site of a French Church was consecrated in 1771. It was closed and demolished in 1816 to make way for the construction of Waterloo Bridge. A new church was consecrated in 1819 in Hooper Square, Leman Street, Whitechapel, which was in turn demolished as the site was required for railway purposes. The replacement church built in Goulston Street, Whitechapel, in 1886-1887 was destroyed by bombing in 1941.

- Resolutions of King Frederick I of Prussia, petitions and correspondence relating to finding a site for the church and appointing and paying a chaplain 1701-1791.
- Address of condolence on deaths of George III and Duke of Kent 1820.
• Histories of church, festival programme, photographs, and related papers 1936-[1982]

The registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials have been deposited at Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives, Bancroft Library, 277 Bancroft Road, London E1 4DQ. Alphabetical abstracts of the registers have been published on microfiche by the Anglo-German Family History Society. Copies of these can be consulted at LMA (P60.57 ST P).

King's Fund reports and papers relating to the German Hospital, Ritson Road, Dalston A/KE

Papers relating to applications for grants by the German Hospital and reports by visitors from King Edward's Hospital Fund for London 1908-1966 (ref A/KE/248/13, A/KE/517/1, A/KE/539/14, A/KE/735/21/1, A/KE/738/25). Annual reports of the German Hospital for 1898-1944 except 1919 sent to King Edward's Hospital Fund for London have been transferred to our Library (ref SC/PPS/093/19).

The archives of the German Hospital are in the care of the Archives Department, St Bartholomew's Hospital, West Smithfield, London EC1A 7BE.

Christopher Müller, Commission Agent ACC/2066

Christopher Müller arrived in London in or before 1886 from Wertheim via Paris. He died in 1915. His papers include testimonials 1895-1898, tax returns 1898-1904, correspondence, and a ledger, cash book and stock book relating to his business as a commission agent dealing chiefly in furs and pelts and trading with France, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, and Russia 1912-1915.

Concert Society of German Internees at Alexandra Palace ACC/803

Programmes of concerts 1915-1916 and retrospect of Concert Club with names of musicians and lists and analysis of works performed.

German churches in London

• Collection of copies of leaflets re fundraising and building of German Protestant Church, Dacres Road, Sydenham, c.1880-82. (54.9 GER)
• Anglo-German Family History Society. St George's German Lutheran Church: alphabetical information of marriages 1825-1896. The Society, 1991. 3 microfiches (P60.57 ST G)
• Anglo-German Family History Society. St George's German Lutheran Church: alphabetical index of baptisms 1763-1895. The Society, 1993. 2 microfiches (P60.57 ST G)
• Anglo-German Family History Society. St George's German Lutheran Church: alphabetical information of parents of baptised 1763-1895. The Society, 1993. 3 microfiches (P60.57 ST G)
• Anglo-German Family History Society. St George's German Lutheran Church: index by entry number of parents of baptised 1763-1895. The Society, 1993. 3 microfiches (P60.57 ST G)
• Anglo-German Family History Society. St Paul's German Reformed Church: alphabetical abstraction of baptism registers 1824-1940. The Society, 1993. 2 microfiches (P60.57 ST P)
Genealogical sources

The following may be of particular interest to those trying to trace German ancestors:

- Bevan, Amanda ed. Tracing your ancestors in the Public Record Office. 6th ed, Public Record Office, 2002. (R61.2 PRO) (See especially chapter 12, 'Immigrants to Britain')
- Pearl, Susan. Basic German sources in Family Tree Magazine vol. 5 no.5, Mar 1989 pp.26-27 and vol.5 no.6, Apr 1989 p.27. (61.2 FAM) (Brief guide to German record offices and other sources)

For further information on genealogical sources for the Anglo-German community contact the Anglo-German Family History Society, website: www.agfhs.org

Library Sources

p>Below is a short list of relevant works in the library.

This bibliography is not intended to be exhaustive: many general surveys of life in London published in the Victorian period, for example, include chapters on the alien or the immigrant which touch upon the German community. It should also be noted that the German-Jewish community is not covered: for relevant works see the main library subject catalogue at 55.1 and 20.177.

- Farrell, Jerome. The German community in nineteenth century East London in East London Record no 13, 1990 pp.2-8 (78.0 EAS)
- Greenwood, James. The wilds of London. Chatto & Windus, 1874 (40.2 GRE) (Includes chapter 'at a sugar baking', pp.264-270)
- Harris, Janet. When the Germans invaded London in Family Tree Magazine vol.14 no.5, March 1998 (61.2 FAM)
• Panayi, Panikos. *Germans in Britain during the First World War* in Historical Research vol.64 no.153, Feb 1991, pp.63-76 (60.9 INS)
• Panayi, Panikos. *Immigration, ethnicity and racism in Britain 1815-1945*. Manchester University Press, 1994 (20.16 PAN)
• Royal Commission on Alien Immigration. *Report, with minutes of evidence*. HMSO, 1903 (20.16 ALI)
  (Concentrates on Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe, but includes some evidence on the German community)
• Specht, Maureen. *The German Hospital in London and the community it served 1845-1948*. Anglo-German Family History Society, 1989 (26.15 GER)
• Waugh, Maureen. *Family bakeries in Camden: recollections from Soho* in Camden History Review 16. p.17-19 (72.0 CAM) (History of bakeries established by German immigrants at the end of the last century)