

SHOWING THE FLAG: WAR CRUISER *KARLSRUHE* AND GERMANDOM ABROAD

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In the early 1920s the Weimar Republic commissioned a series of new light cruisers of the *Königsberg* class and in July 1926, the keel of the later christened *Karlsruhe* was laid down. The 570 feet long and almost 50 feet wide ship was used as a training cruiser for future German naval officers. Between 1930 and 1936 the ship conducted in all five good-will tours around the world, two under the Weimar Republic and three under the Third Reich. These good-will tours or *gute Willen Fahrten* were an important first step in reconciling Germany to the rest of the world and were meant to improve international relations. The Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defense carefully orchestrated all stops of the vessels in conjunction with the respective embassies abroad. Final arrangements were made at least six-nine months before the scheduled visits and even small adjustments to the itinerary proved troublesome. Further, all visits were treated as “unofficial presentations.”

The mission of the *Karlsruhe* was twofold: first to extend or renew relations with other nations, and second to foster notions of *Heimat* and the Germandom (*Deutschtum*) abroad. The dissertation is divided in two large parts; the individual training cruises with all the arrangements, the selection of the individual nations and ports, and explores the level of decision making amongst the various agencies, departments, and organizations involved. For the Weimar Republic, the ship represented modernity and a break with the past, and embodied at one and the same time, traditional German culture and the idea of progress. Since the cruiser continued its training abroad after 1933, a comparison between the “two Germanies” makes sense.

The second part of the research will explore the notion of *Heimat* and the Germans living abroad and how the *Karlsruhe* acted as a symbolic link between the two. The concept of *Heimat* is important to the self-understanding, or identity construction of the Germans. It is the quintessence of *Germaness* (*Deuschtümelei*). This multi-layered and complex idea embodies not only language, but also traditions and customs, nature and politics. It evokes feelings of belonging, comfort, sanctuary, and safety. We can identify the term with family, birthplace, nation, dialect, race, even food. *Heimat* is a place where one doesn't have to explain oneself.

The German navy encouraged the sailors to write diaries during the voyages, cadets were required to do so. Several of the diaries and letters provide the foundation for this dissertation. Other primary sources include reports, logbooks, navy policies and procedures found at the Foreign Office in Berlin, the German Naval Archives in Flensburg, the Archives at the Museum for Maritime History in Bremerhaven, the University of Hamburg, the University of the Bundeswehr in Hamburg, the British National Archives in Kew, and the National Archives in Washington, D.C. particularly the records of the German Naval High Command, as well as cabinet meetings from the Weimar period. Various navy journals and the official *Merkblätter* (information sheets) from the *Karlsruhe* are also included. Printed onboard, these pamphlets contain general information about the local population, including the form of government, important industries, and the number of Germans living there. German newspapers, but also newspapers from each country or port visited were be incorporated.

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Along the way, the Political Archives of the Foreign Office in Berlin, the Bundesarchiv in Berlin, the Deutsche Schiffahrtsmuseum in Bremerhaven, and the staff at the Helmut Schmidt University of the Bundeswehr, and the National Archives in Kew, England deserve a special thank. The gracious and helpful staff at the Marineschule Flensburg-Mürwik und Archiv des Wehrgeschichtliches Ausbildungszentrum WGAZ Mürwik opened their doors to new material.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVERSIONS

Auslandsorganization der NSDAP (Foreign Organization NADAP)	AO
Auswärtiges Amt (German Foreign Office)	AA
Allgemeines Wehrmachtsamt (Armed Forces General Office)	AWA
Bundesarchiv (Federal German Archives)	BA
Deutsches Auslands Institut (German Foreign Institute)	DAI
British Foreign Office	BFO
Inter-Allied Commission of Control	IACC
Generalstab (General Staff)	GENST
Handelspolitische Abteilung (Trade Policy Department)	Ha-Pol
His Majesty's Ships	H.M.S.
International Military Tribunal	IMT
Kriegstagebuch (War Diary)	KTB
Marinepersonalamt (Navy Personnel Office)	MPA
Marine Rundschau	MR
Marinewaffenamt (Navy Ordnance Office)	MWa
Marinewehramt (Naval Defense Office)	MWehr
Oberkommando der Marine (Navy High Command)	OKM
Public Record Office, London	PRO
Principal Allied and Associated Power	PAAP
Reichsauswanderungsamt (Reich Patriation Office)	RAWA
Reichsgesetzblatt (Reich Law Gazette)	RGBI
Reichsmarineamt (German Naval Office)	RMA
Reichsmark	RM

Reichswehrministerium (Ministry of Defense)

RWeM

Völkischer Beobachter

VB

Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland (League of Germanism Abroad)

VdA

Conversions

1 meter = 1.094 yard

1 centimeter = 0.393 inch

1 nautical mile = 2.205 yards = 1.852 meter

1 knot (kn) = 1.852 km/hour = 1.151 mile/hour

RANKS

German Navy and their United States Equivalent

Kriegsmarine	U.S. Navy
Grossadmiral	Admiral of the Fleet
Generaladmiral	no equivalent
Admiral	Admiral
Vizeadmiral	Vice Admiral
Konteradmiral	Rear Admiral
Kommodore	Commodore
Kaptain zur See	Captain
Fregattenkapitän	Commander
Korvettenkapitän	Lieutenant Commander
Kapitanleutnant	Lieutenant
Oberleutnant zur See	Lieutenant Junior Grade
Leutnant zur See	Ensign
Oberfähnrich zur See	Midshipman
Fähnrich zur See	Midshipman
Oberfeldwebel	Chief Petty Officer
Stabsfeldwebel	no equivalent
Feldwebel	Petty Officer First Class
Obermaat	Petty Officer Second Class
Maat	Petty Officer Third Class
Matrosenobergefreiter	Seaman First Class
Matrosengefreiter	Seaman Second Class
Matrose	Apprentice Sailor

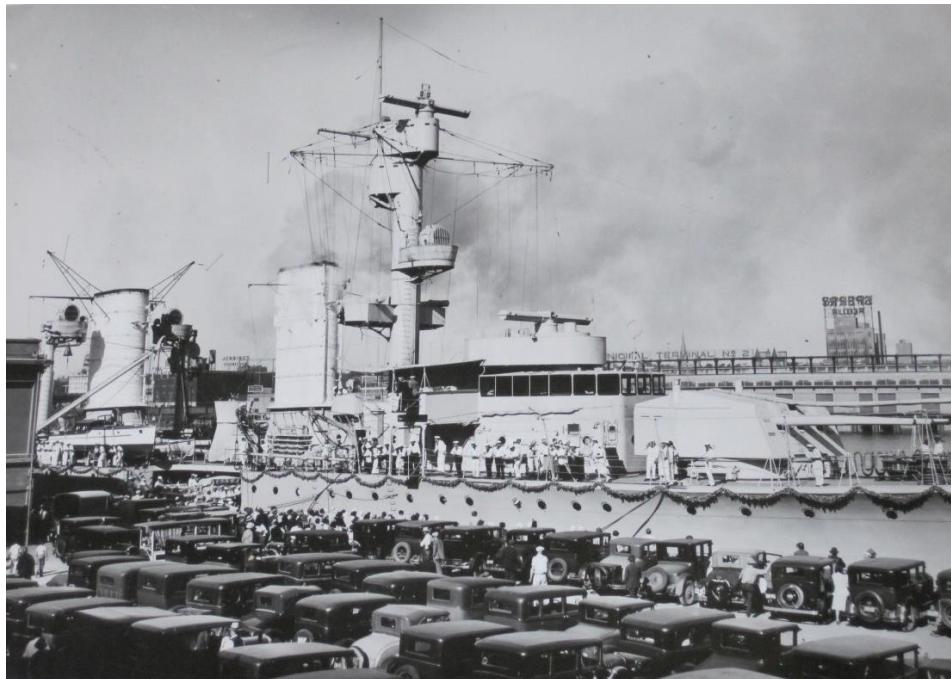
TECHNICAL DETAILS

Light Cruiser *Karlsruhe*

Königsberg Class

Commissioned November 6, 1929

	1927 to 1938	After 1938
Width	15.2 m/49.8 ft	16.6 m/54.4 ft
Length	174 m/571 ft	
Draft	6.28 m/20.6 ft max	
Displacement	7800 tons	
Engines	68,200 horsepower	
Speed	32 knots/59 kmh/37 mph	30 mph



Source: picture author

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: HISTORIOGRAPHY AND CRUISER *KARLSRUHE*

Scholarship on the last years of the Weimar Republic, the *Machtergreifung*, and the political and military leaders and their connections to the National Socialists is richly documented. Since the 1960s many of these texts concentrate on the relationship and continuity from Wilhelmine Germany, to Weimar, and ultimately to Hitler.¹ The twelve short years of the Third Reich form one of the most researched time periods in modern history. Publications are numerous, and more appear each year. By the end of World War II, the available sources offered a general approach based on economic, political, diplomatic, or military history. The research then slowly shifted, and by the 1960s more in-depth studies, indirect players and participants, social, and eventually local history was included in this scholarship. Each decade seemed to bring a new illumination to different aspects of the Nazi experience. This took place alongside the abundant publications on the Holocaust and the connection between the destruction of the Jews and Nazi economic, political, and military policies. Scholarly debates on the “how” and “when” followed in each field. Questions still remain why Germany after fourteen years of being a democracy, turned to a dictatorship. There are, however, still gaps in certain areas, and naval history is such a field.

This dissertation primarily focuses on the light cruiser *Karlsruhe* and the five training cruises it undertook between the world wars. No scholar had yet researched all of the vessel’s five training cruises, and this dissertation tries to add more knowledge to the existing scholarship of the German navy, particularly in the last years of Weimar and early years of Hitler’s reign. These training cruises supported German diplomacy after the First World War,

¹ Noteworthy here are Fritz Fischer’s text, *From Kaiserreich to Third Reich: Elements of Continuity in German History, 1871-1945*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1986; John Hiden. *Germany and Europe 1919 – 1930*. New York: Longman, 1977; John Röhl. *From Bismarck to Hitler*. London: Longman, 1984.

strengthened the bonds between Germany and Germans living abroad, and solidified economic ties with foreign nations.² This dissertation includes an introduction and seven chapters. The first section offers a brief discussion, provides an introduction to the topic, familiarizes the reader with the cadet cruiser *Karlsruhe*, and summarizes the history of the German navy. The next chapters details the selection process of the various ports, the political considerations and the economic significance of the regions visited, the reception and perception of the sailors onboard, as well as the concept of *Heimat* and how the *Karlsruhe* acted as a link between the Reich and the Germans living abroad. However, not every port nor every stop is discussed here. The naval command classified the different ports into “A-ports” or training ports (Ausbildungshafen), “B-ports” or fuel ports (Ölhafen), and “R-ports” or representation ports (Representationshafen), with the representation ports being the most important ones for the mission of good-will. If all ports were examined, some material would be repetitive, while some stops were too short to assess and discuss in great detail. A glossary of naval terms, abbreviations used in the dissertation, the different flags under which the ship sailed, as well as a timeline of each voyage discussed is included here. Because the cruiser continued her training cruises abroad after 1933, a comparison between Weimar Germany and Nazi Germany makes sense. How much continuity was there in the cadet training cruises after the change of regimes?

The first part of this research explores the level of decision making among the various agencies, departments, and organizations involved planning the training abroad. The mission of the *Karlsruhe* was twofold: the first part was to extend or renew trade relations with other nations, and the second part was to foster notions of *Heimat* and Germandom (*Deutschtum*) abroad. For the Weimar Republic, the ships also represented modernity and a break with the past,

² The cruisers also collaborated on scientific research conducted by German scientist onboard the ships.

and the *Karlsruhe* embodied, at one and the same time, traditional, conservative German culture and the idea of progress. Was there a break between the Weimar Republic and Nazi Germany in the selection process of the different ports and countries visited by the one of the light cruisers, the *Karlsruhe*? Who extended the invitations to *Karlsruhe* in the United States and elsewhere and why? Did cruises during the Nazi period reflect a new sense of racial ideology? And lastly, did they try to foment an aggressive new *Auslandsdeutsch*, or German consciousness abroad missing from the previous Weimar cruises?³ The other major part of this research explores the notion of *Heimat* and Germans living abroad and how the cruiser acted as a symbolic link between the two.

The concept of *Heimat* is important to the self-understanding, or identity construction, of the German people; it is the quintessence of Germaness (*Deuschtümelei*). The term itself is not present in any other language and cannot be easily understood by non-Germans. It is a multi-layered and complex idea that embodies not only language, but also traditions and customs, nature and politics. It evokes feelings of belonging, comfort, sanctuary, and safety and can be identified with family, birthplace, nation, dialect, race, and even food. The German cruisers brought a piece of *Heimat* to the various overseas ports and German settlements visited. While the concept of *Heimat* is almost untranslatable, it nevertheless played a large role for the crew and cadets during their one year-long absence from Germany. When and wherever they could, the sailors and cadets mentioned *Heimat* and the often “homey feelings” they got by visiting Germans abroad.⁴

³ *Auslandsdeutsche* are defined as Germans citizens who reside outside of Germany.

⁴ heimatischen Gefühle, Kurt Gross, *Die Reise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe, 1932 Bad Schussenried: Gerhard Hess Verlag*, 2013, 56.

The German good-will tours, or *gute Willen Fahrten*, of the early 1930s were an important first step in reconciling Germany to the rest of the world. They were meant to improve international relations, and the German government could not have picked better representatives.⁵ These visits were also used to increase respect and esteem for the German Reich and the German navy abroad, but also to show that the fatherland was once more on equal footing with the other nations of the world. The German navy hoped that these visits would inspire the nations visited to appreciate the Weimar Republic.⁶ The German cruisers showed that they were capable of long voyages, that their engines were reliable, and that the crews were well trained. Sailor and cadets visited military installations and academies during these stops, like Malabar, Bermuda, the Escuela Naval Arturo Prat in Valparaiso, and Annapolis, the Citadel, and West Point in the United States.

The voyages also provided opportunities to show German self-sufficiency. The Weimar Republic and the Third Reich were short of foreign currency and tried to avoid the purchase of fuel in foreign ports or from foreign companies. A chartered tanker accompanied the *Karlsruhe* on its tours after 1933. This was useful for learning the technique of refueling at sea, a necessary skill for a world power possessing no naval bases outside of Germany.⁷ The vessel was equipped with freshwater supply machines. The crew was able to produce their own drinking water from seawater, from which samples were checked daily by the attending board physician.⁸ Supply contracts were given to German companies and ranged from freeze-dried vegetables to Christmas trees potted in German soil. Roughly 8,000 kg of meat and 5,000 kg of cheese were

⁵ *Freie Presse für Texas*, February 19, 1932, no 67.

⁶ *Deutsche Marine Zeitung*, 14, July 15, 1931.

⁷ Gerhard Koop and Klaus Peter Schmolke. *German Light Cruisers of World War II*. London: Greenhill Books, 2002, 109. The battle cruiser *Deutschland*, launched in 1931 was capable to sail halfway around the world on the oil reserve loaded in Germany. *Deutsche Marine Zeitung*, 11, June 1, 1931.

⁸ *New York Staatszeitung*, Nov 1932, *Das Herz der Karlsruhe*. However after drinking water in the Caribbean several cadets fell very ill and the board physician issued a 'do not drink water' policy. Gross, *Die Reise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe*, 80.

tidily packed in the hull of the ship before her first voyages. Because all of this was not enough to feed a crew of about 500 for one year, twice during that time a supply ship from Germany was sent to replenish the pantries. Furthermore the ships carried over 30,000 bottles of beer and almost 20,000 liters of beer in barrels for refreshment of the crew and visitors.⁹ However, when the opportunities arose Germany took advantage of the inexpensive products available abroad and stacked up on supplies.¹⁰

Note on Sources

The sources for this dissertation come from a variety of origins. In May 2008 I received the opportunity to look at an unpublished diary and accompanied scrapbook that was written by a German sailor, Kurt Gross, who served on the war cruiser *Karlsruhe* in 1932. The German navy encouraged its sailors to write diaries during the voyages and even provided the paper for it. Cadets were required to do so. Several of the diaries provide the foundation for this dissertation.¹¹ The logbooks of the cadets were then every few weeks checked by the cadet officers. Every so often their initials appear in the margins. A few travel accounts were published by officers shortly after the voyages took place and they form another base of information in addition to the few surviving logbooks. Other primary sources include intimate personal letters, navy policies, and procedures. Various navy journals and the official *Merkblätter* (information sheets) from the *Karlsruhe*, handed out before each port to inform the

⁹ Kreuz Zeitung, November 8, 1932, *Ein Kreuzer rüstet zur Weltreise*. The German navy also switched from bulky, heavy canned goods to mostly dried foods to save space and weight.

¹⁰ Schönberg, *Amerika-Reise*, 28. Oil in Texas was five times cheaper than in Germany, even cheaper than coal in Germany.

¹¹ Kurt Gross' diary was used in its original unedited form. Little is known about the diarists. Herbert Opitz (Crew 34) was born in 1915 but perished in November 1941 in the North Sea commanding the U-206. Rudolf Troll (Crew 30) served as the artillery officer under Admiral Lütjens on the *Bismarck* when both perished. Robert Buttmi edited and published his diaries in book form in 1989. This fact becomes especially clear when Buttmi wrote about the *Zwickelerlass* which was not passed until August 1932, exactly the time he was gone.

crew about land and people, were utilized as well.¹² These pamphlets were printed onboard and contain general information about the local population, including the form of government, important industries, military, and the number of Germans living there. German newspapers, but also newspapers from almost all countries or ports visited, are incorporated. Sources from the Auslandsinstitut (German Foreign Institute) and chamber of commerce records from North America round off the collection of primary sources used. Archives consulted for this project include the Political Archive of the Foreign Office (*Auswärtiges Amt*) in Berlin, the German Naval Archives at the Cadet School in Flensburg-Mürwik, the Archives at the Museum for Maritime History in Bremerhaven, material from the University of Hamburg, the University of the Bundeswehr in Hamburg, the British National Archives in Kew, and the National Archives in Washington, D.C., particularly the records of the German Naval High Command, as well as cabinet meetings from the Weimar period.

The history of the German navy is relatively short and can be divided into two large parts: the Wilhelmine period with the buildup of a modern German fleet, the debates in the Reichstag on the necessity of a navy, Kaiser Wilhelm's race for sea superiority that ended in a disastrous World War, and the Treaty of Versailles and its aftermath. The rise of Hitler, rearmament of Germany, the Third Reich, and World War II followed. Noteworthy scholarship on the topic of the navy before 1918 includes Holger Herwig and his research on the imperial officers corps and Wilhelm Deist's general approach on the imperial fleet in *Flottenpolitik und Flottenpropaganda*.¹³ Volker Berghahn, in one of his earlier publications, focused on the Tirpitz-

¹² The Merkblätter were put together by the German embassies and then delivered to the cruiser before they arrived in the ports.

¹³ Holger H. Herwig, *The German Naval Officer Corps: a Social and Political History, 1890-1918*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973. Wilhelm Deist, *Flottenpolitik und Flottenpropaganda: das Nachrichtenbureau des Reichsmarineamtes 1897-1914*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1976.

Plan; so did Paul Kennedy in 1970.¹⁴ Herbert Schottelius and Wilhelm Deist followed with their publication *Marine und Marinepolitik* in 1972. Since there was a direct involvement of the Imperial navy in the early days of the revolution and revolts, Gustav Noske published a general history on the revolution of 1918 *Von Kiel bis Kapp, zur Geschichte der deutschen Revolution* in which he discussed the role of the navy. Gerhard Ritter *Die deutsche Revolution 1918-1919* and Eberhard Kolb's *Vom Kaiserreich zur Weimarer Republik* from 1972 give a general overview on the topic as well. Most documents regarding the German navy did not survive the war. They were either destroyed in bombing raids on Berlin or deliberately burned by the Germans in the last weeks of the war.¹⁵ Material that did survive was divided between the Russians, Americans, and British allies. The bulk of the material, about 110 tons, went to the British Admiralty with initial restricted access.¹⁶ Therefore, the first publications on the German navy under the swastika were either personal recollections or memoirs by those who had served during the World War II. On the German side Erich Raeder's 1956 memoirs were followed by Admiral Dönitz' *Zehn Jahre und Zwanzig Tage*.¹⁷ Admiral Friedrich Ruge published *Der Seekrieg: The German Navy Story, 1939-1945* in 1957.

¹⁴ Volker Berghahn, *Der Tirpitz-Plan; Genesis und Verfall einer innenpolitischen Krisenstrategie unter Wilhelm II.* Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1971. Paul M. Kennedy. *Tirpitz, England and the Second Navy Law of 1900: A strategical critique.* Freiburg: Rombach, 1970.

¹⁵ Erich Gröner, *Die deutschen Kriegsschiffe 1815-1936.* London: Bernard & Graefe, 1982, vii. The following material was destroyed in Berlin: The 9th Storey of the OKM in the Shellhouse, including the plan chamber (in particular the stocks of old documents of the Imperial and Reichs navies), The Naval Wehramt, the office of the technical information services, all departments of the naval artillery office, the naval torpedo office, and the research, invention, and patent office. See also Paul Heinsius. *Der Verbleib des Aktenmaterials der deutschen Kriegsmarine*, 75-82.

¹⁶ Erich Gröner. *Die deutschen Kriegsschiffe*, 1982.

¹⁷ Raeder at the time denied a politicization of the navy by the National Socialists while he served as chief of admiralty.

A general overview on the German admiralty from 1848-1945 was discussed by Walther Hubatsch in 1958.¹⁸ In 1965 a major work on the naval invasion of Norway and Denmark was added by Carl Axel Gemzell, although his focus was for the most part on strategic planning during that operation. After the return of most of the primary sources by the Allies more publications on the German navy appeared in the 1970s, revising some of the whitewashing done previously.¹⁹ Michael Salewski in 1970 came to the conclusion that it was not Hitler's *Machtergreifung* in January 1933 that changed the German navy but the 1935 Naval Treaty between Great Britain and Germany.²⁰ Jost Dülffer and his *Weimar, Hitler und die Marine, Reichspolitik und Flottenbau 1920-1939* speculated along Salewski's research that the German naval politic can only be interpreted in association with England. Charles Thomas in 1990 looked at the German navy in the Nazi Era, and Edwyn Gray researched Hitler's battleships while Robert Jackson published the *German Navy in World War II*.²¹

The history of the rather small navy during the twelve years of the Weimar Republic is still a neglected research area. An attempt to compile a "Historical Work" on the German navy covering the time period 1919 to 1939 was planned by Major General Walter Scherff already during the war. His original plans include interviews and research on prominent naval officers like Adolf von Trotha, Hans Zenker, and Erich Raeder, but the text never made it further than an index and a few rough chapters.²² Although Harold Gordon in 1957 looked at the Reichswehr (Reich Defense) in the early years of the Weimar Republic, many important aspects of the navy

¹⁸ Walther Hubatsch. *Der Admiralstab und die obersten Marinebehörden in Deutschland 1848-1945: unter Benutzung der amtlichen Akten dargestellt*. Frankfurt: Verlag für Wehrwesen, 1958.

¹⁹ For instance Raeder's claim of a political non-involvement of navy in German politics.

²⁰ Michael Salewski. *Die Deutsche Seekriegsleitung, 1935-1945*. Frankfurt: Bernhard Graefe, 1970.

²¹ Edwyn Gray. *Hitler's Battleships*. Anapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1999; Robert Jackson. *The German Navy in World War II*. London: Brown, 1999.

²² Document 017-C, Trial of Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal, IMT, vol xxxiv, Nuremberg, 1949, 164-176.

were largely ignored. Otto Gessler's *Reichswehr, Politik in der Weimar Zeit* published in 1958 looks at his eight years as Minister of Defense, Reichswehrminister, under fourteen different cabinets and eight different chancellors, a period Gessler called *Notbau* or makeshift constructions.²³ He recalled that the navy had a difficult start after the Great War and lacked credibility. No one in the government wanted to be associated with the navy. Many still saw her as a "bearer of mutinies, first in 1917, then in 1918 and after the war with the involvement in the Kapp Putsch in 1920."²⁴ It was not until Keith Bird and his text *Weimar, the German Naval Officer Corps and the Rise of National Socialism* appeared on the bookshelves that the scholarship extended. His focus on naval personnel made sense since the imperial navy in the wake of the revolution disintegrated, and Bird argued that the navy because of the revolutionary involvement needed to clean up its image and find a sense of mission. Dirk Richhardt's dissertation *Auswahl und Ausbildung junger Offiziere 1930-1945* also includes a section on naval officers.²⁵ He looked at tradition and recruitment of officers, their motivation as well as the growth of the corps. Nevertheless, military naval historians shifted their focus quickly back on to World War II particularly on the submarine and submarine warfare, on the battles of the River Plate or the Polar Sea, and ships like the *Bismarck*, *Scharnhorst*, or *Graf Spee*.²⁶ First published in 1936 under the title *Die deutschen Kriegsschiffe 1815-1936*, Erich Grönert's *German Warships*, expanded by Dieter Jung in 1982 gives the first brief glimpse of light cruiser. Gerhard Koop and Klaus Peter Schmolke's book from 2002 looks at the technical side of the light cruisers of World War II.

²³ Otto Gessler, *Reichswehr Politik in der Weimar Zeit*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1958, 74.

²⁴ Ibid., 146.

²⁵ Dirk Richhardt. *Auswahl und Ausbildung junger Offiziere, 1930-1945*. Dissertation, Universität Marburg, 2002.

²⁶ Eric Grove. *The Price of Disobedience: The Battle of the River Plate Reconsidered*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2000.

The use of ships for training cruises is a German tradition that goes back to mid-1850s with the Prussian corvette *Amazon*, which visited ports along the North Sea.²⁷ After the unification of Germany in 1871, the German navy (Hochseeflotte) continued this practice. By the late nineteenth century, Germany possessed a small colonial empire scattered around the globe, and “showing the flag” was essential. These cruises not only strengthened the ties between the emigrants and the homeland, but also helped improve relationships with the visited countries. During World War I the training cruises ceased, and it took several years for the new German government, the Weimar Republic, to restart them. Construction of the first light cruiser after the war, “A,” later named *Emden*, began in April 1922. By the mid-1920s the Weimar Republic felt politically confident enough to show the rest of the world that Germany had moved forward as a new nation and recommenced the extended training cruises. These visits were restricted at first to only a few ships and to Swedish ports in the Baltic and to the Netherlands, but in 1929 the entire fleet spent several weeks from the end of August to the end of September in the Baltic.²⁸ Training exercises of the German fleet along the Iberian Peninsula and the Mediterranean followed. By July 1929 the German Embassy in Washington, D.C., and the Foreign Office in Berlin had received numerous requests from prospective host cities, and chambers of commerce from around the world extended invitations to a German war cruiser.²⁹

After the approval by the Reichstag of replacing the obsolete *Medusa* in 1925, the Deutsche Werke AG in Kiel started with the building plan yard number 207, drawn up by naval architect Albrecht Ehrenberg, on July 27, 1926, and to lay down the keel for a new light cruiser.

²⁷ The *Amazon* sunk in a storm in 1861; over 100 men lost their lives. The *Amazon* was then replaced with the *Niobe* which also sunk in 1932 and replaced with the *Gorch Fock* which is still in service.

²⁸ Memo from AA Berlin to Embassies in Rom, Belgrade, Athens, Andorra, June 11, 1929. Naval Command to FO Berlin, June 28, 1929. Politisches Archive des Auswärtigen Amts, R 33431

²⁹ Letter Prittwitz to FO Berlin July 3, 1929 with enclosures from Chamber of Commerce in Port Arthur and St. Thomas, VI. Politisches Archive des Auswärtigen Amts, R 33431.

The German light cruisers were divided into three classes, the *Emden*, the *Leipzig*, and *Königsberg* class. Three vessels were built under the later class, the *Königsberg* itself (launched in March 1927), the *Karlsruhe* (launched August 1927), and the *Köln* (launched May 1928). Unlike older German ships, these new cruisers no longer depended on coal. Six oil-fired Schulz-Thornycroft double-ended watertube boilers with natural circulation supplied the turbines with steam. This also saved on personnel; a war cruiser using coal needed a crew of 300 more men than the *Königsberg* cruisers.³⁰ Two propeller shafts were turned by two high-pressure propellers, and the two cruising-gearing turbine sets were manufactured by Krupp Germania.³¹ This was a rather revolutionary design because electric push buttons now steered the cruiser.³² The two diesel engines of the *Karlsruhe* had 1,800 horsepower (ps) and were later nicknamed by the crew “Max and Moritz”, after the main characters in Wilhelm Busch’s boyish prank stories. The ship was 570 feet (169 meter) long and almost 50 feet (15.2 meter) wide, with nine 8-inch (15 centimeter) guns in three turrets, two anti-aircraft guns, and twelve torpedo tubes.³³ The war cruiser had a displacement of 6,000 tons and could hold 1,200 tons oil and 300 tons of bunker fuel.

The vessel was light weighted in design. Instead of the standard rivets used on most ships, the *Karlsruhe* was 85 percent welded in order to save weight. However, the ship was structurally weak and in heavy seas could get damaged, as happened in 1933 and 1935. Because of these stability problems, the navy confined the *Königsberg* class after 1936 mostly to the Baltic and North Seas. This was also the reason why they were not used as commercial raiders

³⁰ For a debate on whether to use oil or coal as fuel see “Kohle oder Öl als Brennstoff für Kriegsschiffe”, Reichsmarine, #1, 1932, 24.

³¹ Gerhard Koop and Klaus-Peter Schmolke. *German Light Cruisers of World War II*. London: Greenhill Books, 2002, 25.

³² Springfield Republican, Push Buttons Steer new German Cruiser, Nov 30, 1930.

³³ The artillery equipment was supplied by the Rhenische Metalwaren & Maschinenfabrik, Düsseldorf.

during the war. Other problems existed as well. The ship often ran short of fresh water, and high humidity led to ventilation problems in the engine rooms.³⁴

The ship was launched on August 20, 1927, and the mayor of the German town of Karlsruhe gave the christening speech. This was not the first time a German navy ship was named after the city of Karlsruhe. The *SMS Karlsruhe*, built in 1912, and part of Admiral Spee's group, had escaped at the Falkland Islands during World War I, but the cruiser sank after an unexplained explosion on November 14, 1914, in the Caribbean.³⁵ Mrs. Köhler, the widow of the sunken cruiser *SMS Karlsruhe* commander Erich Köhler who lost his life in 1914, was given the honor of christening the new ship.³⁶ During the first two years of service, the *Karlsruhe* operated exclusively in the Baltic Sea, but on May 24, 1930, she left for her maiden training under Captain Eugen Lindau, sailing through the Mediterranean, the Suez Canal, along the eastern coast of Africa, and around the Cape of Good Hope before returning to Kiel in December 1930.³⁷

This first trip provoked a major international incident when the crew was accused by British authorities in East Africa of displaying "Prussian militarism." In all, the war cruiser *Karlsruhe* conducted five cadet training cruises abroad, and this dissertation examines all five voyages. The first two trips took place under the government of the Weimar Republic under the command of Eugen Lindau (1930) followed by Erwin Wassner (1932) while the other three took

³⁴ Koop, *Light Cruisers*, 108. See also diary of Kurt Gross entry early October 1932 about problems in the ammunition rooms of the ship.

³⁵ Dallas Morning News, *Battle of the Falkland Islands*, Dec 8, 1914; *Cruiser Karlsruhe is reported sunk*, Jan 12, 1915; *Cruiser Karlsruhe sighted off Moro*, Jan 22, 1915.

³⁶ 259 men died on Nov 4, 1914 at 11° 7" north and 55° 20" west. In 1916 a second vessel named *Karlsruhe* was put into service but was part of the Imperial fleet eventually sunk as part of the Treaty of Versailles at Scapa Flow in June 1919.

³⁷ The cruisers *Emden*, *Köln*, *Karlsruhe* were on a rotating schedule. When the *Karlsruhe* was in the Biscay leaving Europe, the *Emden* came back from her year absence. When the *Karlsruhe* arrived back in Kiel in Dec 1932 the *Köln* left on her year cruise with part of the surviving *Niobe* cadets. Coburger Zeitung, Dec 9, 1932 "*Kreuzer Köln tritt seine Weltreise an.*"

place under the Third Reich and National Socialism.³⁸ For these later cruises, the *Karlsruhe* was commanded by Wilhelm Freiherr Harsdorf von Enderndorf (1934), Günter Lütjens (1935), and finally Leopold Siemens (1936). During the Spanish Civil War the vessel patrolled the Spanish coast in January and February 1937 and again in June. The *Karlsruhe* was eventually decommissioned after her fifth overseas voyage in May 1938 to be re-fitted with increased armor thickness. This not only increased the vessel's width from 15.2 to 16.6 meter (54.4 feet) but because of the increased weight the speed decreased from 32.2 knots to 30 knots. While in the Wilhelmshaven navy yard at the beginning of World War II the ship was ordered with a new and inexperienced crew to the North Sea.³⁹ In April 1940 the cruiser sailed towards Kristiansand, Norway, as part of Operation Weserübung. Because of a series of errors by the German command, the vessel was torpedoed on the night of April 9, 1940, by the British submarine *Truant*. Two torpedoes damaged the *Karlsruhe* badly enough that the commander of the nearby German ship *Greif* decided to sink her for good.

³⁸ With the exception of Lütjens little has been written about these men. Wassner for instance was the first military attaché after the war in Great Britain from 1933 until his death in 1937 and he is credited with improving the German- British naval relations in the 1930s.

³⁹ In late 1936 to mid-1937 she controlled the familiar waters in the Biscay Bay during the Spanish Civil War. See also Jak Malmann Showell, *Führer Conferences on Naval Affairs*, on the strength of the German navy at the outbreak of the war. The plan was to add the *Karlsruhe* back into regular service and used the older *Emden* for training purposes only.

CHAPTER 2

OVERVIEW OF THE GERMAN NAVY

The history of the German navy is only two decades older than that of Imperial Germany itself. In comparison to other European powers, the navy of the northern German-speaking countries started relatively late; the first navy was not founded until 1848 under the auspices of Prussia during the first war against Denmark. The benefit of having a fleet was known before that conflict, however, and although some German rulers tried to establish a navy, they eventually all failed. For centuries Denmark controlled the entrances into the Baltic with tariffs, the so-called *Sundzoll*, which hampered economic development along the German Baltic coast. The first Bundesmarine or Federal Navy was short lived and already dismantled by 1852. The Royal Prussian Navy, also founded in 1848, received the few ships of the Federal Navy. In 1862 Albrecht von Roon, Prussian's Minister of War, proposed the first navy fleet plan (*Flottengründungsplan*), which included the establishment of two ports and a ship strength of seventy. The total cost would be 43 million thaler (about 986 million RM after 1871), but the plan met defeat in the Prussian Landtag (diet). A second war with the Danes would follow in 1864, this time showing the necessity of a well-trained and staffed navy. After Prussia forced Austria out of the German Confederation (Deutscher Bund) in 1866, Prussia founded the North German Confederation (Norddeutscher Bund), a conglomeration of more than twenty independent states in the north of Germany, a year later. The North German Confederation eventually formed the basis of the German Empire in 1871. Prussia also renamed the navy the Norddeutsche Bundesmarine, or North German Federal Navy.

Admiral Eduard von Jachmann, who was Praeses of the Ministry of the Navy, envisioned a German fleet stationed in the summer in the North and Baltic Seas, while in the winter the

ships would move to the Mediterranean and ports in the West Indies. Jachmann, however, was against the permanent stationing of German ships abroad. A few ships could on occasion sail abroad and spend time in small German-operated ports. Opportunities developed when English and German businessmen offered to sell some 400 square miles around Ecuador's Pailon Bay and the Portuguese offered to sell the island of Timor to the North German Federation, but nothing came of either effort. After German victory in the Franco-Prussian War, the German public demanded as war loot most of France's exotic overseas holdings, including Saigon and Martinique, which would give Germany overseas ports. In order to maintain a first-class fleet in that era, coaling stations around the world were necessary.

After that war, the navy changed its name once again to *Kaiserliche Marine* or Imperial German Navy. With the newly passed *Reichs Militärgesetz*, or military laws, in 1871, the military administration requested a permanent budget, one that could not be changed by the parliament. The navy, however, was excluded from these provisions.⁴⁰ For the first twenty years the imperial navy was mainly in charge of the defense of the Baltic and North Seas, a policy much in accord with Chancellor Otto von Bismarck's interest in European affairs, rather than overseas possessions.

The navy would attract powerful benefactors soon enough. Kaiser Wilhelm II, who assumed power in 1888, was highly interested in naval matters, and so were large parts of the German public. They all were influenced by the American historian and naval officer Alfred Thayer Mahan and his text *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783*, published in

⁴⁰ After Bismarck threatened with dissolving the parliament, a compromise was found. The Reichstag kept in theory its veto in army budget matters but the request of army was approved for seven years.

1890.⁴¹ Mahan believed that national greatness and power was directly associated with sea power and a large navy.⁴² It was no surprise that just one year after Wilhelm II took the throne he created a Naval Cabinet in 1889. One of its responsibilities was the staffing of the officers corps. The following year the Secretary of State for the Navy, Admiral Karl Eduard von Heusner, was replaced by Alfred Tirpitz. Just as the Kaiser was influenced by Mahan, so was Tirpitz's, who believed that a strong navy was needed in order to compete with Great Britain. Tirpitz's naval policies fitted the prevailing Social Darwinism of the time. This theory applied the biological concepts of the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest to sociological and political policies: a fitter nation, for example would be one with a superior navy.

The Kaiser also pushed for developments beyond ships. The first canal connecting the Baltic at Kiel-Holtenau and the North Sea at Brunsbüttel was opened in 1895 and named Kaiser-Wilhelm Kanal in honor of his grandfather Wilhelm I.⁴³ More important, however was a change in the command structure of the navy.⁴⁴ Its functions were transferred and divided between the Imperial Naval High Command (Kaiserliche Oberkommando der Marine), the German Naval Cabinet and the Imperial Naval Office.⁴⁵ The admiralty was replaced by the Naval High Command and the Imperial Navy Office under the Secretary of State for the Navy.⁴⁶

⁴¹ Wilhelm also claimed in his autobiography that he had a "peculiar passion for the navy which sprang to no small extent from his English blood".

⁴² Alfred Thayer Mahan. *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783*. Boston: Little, Brown, Co, 1890.

⁴³ Chancellor Bismarck saw already the need for a connection between the two waters during the war with the Danes in 1864. The main opponent of the project was the German army under Moltke and von Roon. In order to finance the canal and his other naval projects, Wilhelm II implemented a "Champaign tax" in 1902. Hitler later used the tax to finance U-boat development. The canal was re-named Nord-Ostsee Kanal in 1946 and the international code name is now Kiel Canal.

⁴⁴ The German Imperial Admiralty was abolished in April 1889 and renamed *Reichsmarineamt*, RMA, or Imperial Naval Office.

⁴⁵ After 1914 the RMA was housed in the Bendlerblock at the Königin Augusta Strasse, now Reichspietsufer in Berlin.

⁴⁶ Hans Jürgen Hansen. *The Ships of the German Fleets 1848-1945*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 86.

The surface fleet was mostly confined to home ports during World War I, and only saw less than a handful of large battles during the war. One of them was the Battle of Jutland, better known in Germany as the *Skagerrak Schlacht*, which was fought in 1916 in Danish waters. After the mutiny of the imperial fleet in the summer of 1917 discipline in the navy was restored. Before the Great War was concluded however, imperial officers of the Wilhelmine fleet wanted to go out in a last heroic, desperate mission against England. On October 27, 1918, the crew of the *Strassburg* refused to follow these orders, and open mutiny set in.⁴⁷ None of the officers was killed but when the organizers were arrested, strikes broke out in northern German cities and so-called *Marine Räte*, or navy councils, were organized. These were autonomous, illegal councils that did not reported to any government. The revolts ultimately triggered the November Revolution in Germany. The order-and- command structure within the navy had completely disintegrated in the last days of the war and the revolution.⁴⁸ Although order was partially restored after Admiral Franz von Hipper had 1000 men arrested, no sailor in the imperial surface fleet ever fought again during World War I.⁴⁹ The fighting officially concluded with the armistice on November 11, 1918, and the peace negotiations, held in Paris, were completed seven months later on June 28, 1919. Germany, represented by Herrmann Müller and Dr. Johannes Bell, was forced under threats of renewed hostilities to sign the Treaty of Versailles. It would take another six months, until January 10, 1920, for the treaty to come into effect.

⁴⁷ For more information on the 1917 mutiny see Wilhelm Deist. *Militär, Staat, und Gesellschaft, Studien zur preussisch-deutschen Militärgeschichte*. Munich: Oldenbourg, 1991, 165-185.

⁴⁸ The navy will be shook to its core three times during the Weimar Republic through mutiny and scandals in 1918 and in 1920 and with the Lohmann Affair in 1927. See also Wilhelm Deist, *Die Politik der Seekriegsleitung und die Rebellion der Flotte Ende Oktober 1918*. Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte, 14 (1966), 341-368 and David Woodward. *Mutiny in Kiel*, History Today, 18 (1968), 829-835. For a short summary see Rolf Güth "Stirb und Werde" October 30, 1918 in *Die Organization der deutschen Marine in Krieg und Frieden, 1913-1933* in Handbuch zur deutschen Militärgeschichte 1648-1939, Band 4. München: Bernard & Graefe, 1979 and although written shortly after the events the memoirs of Admiral Scheer in his *Deutschlands Hochseeflotte im Weltkrieg*. Berlin: Scherl GmbH, 1919.

⁴⁹ Von Hipper was promoted in August 1918 to commander of the High Seas Fleet, a position Admiral Reinhard Scheer previously held.

The treaty, its impact on German politics and society, and its implications on the German navy have received much attention in historical scholarship.⁵⁰ One effect of the treaty was the creation of the Polish Corridor and the Free City of Danzig, which had contained a major German shipyard before 1918. Founded in 1844, the facility employed close to 4,000 people by the beginning of the Great War and was the largest of the German shipyards.⁵¹ Now cut off from the rest of Germany the yard could no longer be utilized. Even more damaging to the navy were the restrictions of Article 181. The naval forces in commission were not to exceed six battleships of the *Deutschland* or *Braunschweig* type, pre-dreadnought ships that were completely obsolete by 1920. Six light cruisers, twelve destroyers, and twelve torpedo boats were now the only navy ships permitted for Germany. Submarines were completely excluded from the German navy and so were aircraft carriers.⁵² Under Article 185, vessels that had not been seized by the Allies during the war had to be surrendered the Principal Allied and Associated Powers (PAAP) with all their guns on board. Left for Germany were eight outdated battleships and eight older cruisers, as well as thirty-two old and useless torpedo boats.⁵³ Germany was left with obsolete ships, which in case of new hostilities would have been nearly useless. Article 190 of the treaty forbade the construction or acquisition of vessels other than those to replace the units in commission under Article 181. In other words, only if one of the battleships, cruisers, or

⁵⁰ Keith Bird, *Weimar, the German Naval Officer Corps and the Rise of National Socialism*. Amsterdam: Grüner, 1977. Donald Cribbs, *The Influence of maritime Theorists on the Developments of German Naval Strategy from 1930-1936*. Richard Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich*. NY: Penguin Press, 2004 or Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months that changed the World*. NY: Random House, 2002.

⁵¹ Coburger Zeitung, "Kehraus auf der Danziger Marinestation". Aug 16, 1919.

⁵² *Treaty of Peace between the Allied and Associated Powers and Germany signed at Versailles, June 28, 1919*. London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1919, Article 183 and Article 191, 173. From this point forward referred to as Versailles Treaty. Furthermore there was no air force allowed for Germany. The vessels *Lothringen*, *Braunschweig*, *Elsass*, *Amazon*, *Nympe*, and *Hamburg* were retired and taken off the ships register in February 1931. Marineverordnungsblatt, #9, April 1, 1931.

⁵³ By 1933, the *Hessen*, *Hannover*, *Schleswig-Holstein*, all built in 1905/6 as well as several torpedo boats were still on the list of warships showing the age of the fleet. The *Hessen* ended up after the war with the Soviet Union who used her until the 1960s while the *Schleswig-Holstein* was used until the end of 1944 as a training ship but scuttled in March 1945.

destroyers broke down and had to be replaced was Germany allowed to add a ship. In addition, Article 190 specified the tonnage of the replacement ships. Torpedo boats were limited to 200 metric tons, destroyers to 800 metric tons, light cruisers could not exceed 6,000 tons, and armored ships 10,000 metric tons. The shell size of armament on all vessels was not to exceed 15 centimeters. All battleships and cruisers could only be replaced with new ships after twenty years of service.⁵⁴ The island of Heligoland and stations at the entrance to the North and Baltic Seas were to be demilitarized. The treaty further stipulated in Article 179 that no military, naval, or air mission was to be sanctioned or allowed to leave Germany.⁵⁵ Yet early on, in February 1920 the cabinet of Chancellor Gustav Bauer discussed how to circumvent this proviso since the wording of the treaty did not exclude naval attachés. Although not all cabinet members agreed on the necessity of military missions, they decided that it was “absolutely essential to send military and naval attachés abroad to keep up with the military development of other nations.”⁵⁶

Germans debated in the months after the armistice the necessity of a navy. Germany had lost all of her colonies (although some Germans demanded their return, to no avail), and the argument was made to scrap the navy completely and place the few remaining ships under the command of the army.⁵⁷ Historian Keith Bird makes the argument that, in some respects, the Treaty of Versailles may have in fact saved the German navy from extinction since the stock of the navy had fallen greatly since 1918.⁵⁸ Even President (Reichspräsident) Friedrich Ebert was at first against an independent navy but eventually decided that it would be better for Germany to

⁵⁴ Versailles Treaty, 179.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 166-167.

⁵⁶ Akten der Reichskanzlei, Weimar Republik, Kabinett Bauer, 1, #162, February 6, 1920, 588-589. It was however decided that it was too costly to establish such attaché positions at that point. The Kabinet Gustav Bauer was the second such cabinet in the Weimar Republic and governed from June 1919 to March 1920 but was forced to step down in light of the Kapp Putsch.

⁵⁷ See recommendation Erzberger, Akten der Reichskanzlei, Weimar Republik, Kabinet Scheidemann, 1, #15, März 17, 1919. Bildung einer vorläufigen Reichsmarine.

⁵⁸ Keith Bird, *Weimar*, 65.

have a fleet. East Prussia, which was cut off and isolated from the rest of the republic, was more easily supplied by water. Second, a navy would help promote a good image for Germany in general.⁵⁹ Despite the navy's image problems and the direct involvement in revolution, Otto Gessler, Weimar's second Reichsminister, or minister of defense, argued that it would be wise to keep the navy as well. Although the ships were obsolete, he believed it would be unwise to give up more resources than necessary. What also factored into this thinking were the economic interests of the cities of Hamburg, Wilhelmshaven, and Kiel and that of the workers and shipyard employees.⁶⁰

Versailles restricted the number of naval officers to 1,500 (10 percent of all personnel), and all officers had to be professional sailors for a minimum of twenty five years.⁶¹ These numbers included the military administrators (Marinebeamte) as well. To circumvent the treaty restrictions many former navy officers became now civilian administrators (Zivilbeamte) in the naval command. Officers not demobilized were required to serve until the age of forty-five. After the allowed number of sailors was established, the first, and for several months only order of business was to secure the remaining 1,700 km coastline at both the North Sea and the Baltic without violating the Treaty of Versailles.⁶²

According to historian Rolf Güth, the Reichs Marineamt (RMA) or German Imperial Naval Office, stayed operational during the revolutionary period in 1918-19, and on March 20, 1919, President Ebert transferred the functions of the RMA to the admiralty, which was then

⁵⁹ Akten der Reichskanzlei, Weimar Republic, Kabinet Fehrenbach, 1, #56, August 24, 1920, 136-137.

⁶⁰ Otto Gessler, *Reichswehr Politik in der Weimar Zeit*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1958, 147. For the relationship between navy and local population in Emden and Wilhelmshaven see also Keith Bird, *Weimar*, 126 ff. The relationship was strained because of the pro-monarchical reputation of the navy personnel and the left wing leaning of many yard workers.

⁶¹ This ratio was higher than that of the army which was only allowed to keep 4000 officers. The Imperial navy had lost close to ten thousand officers and over twenty five thousand sailors during the war. For exact numbers on crew and ships lost see Rolf Güth, *Organization*, Band 4, Handbuch, 306ff.

⁶² Akten der Reichskanzlei, Weimar Republik, Kabinet Fehrenbach, 1, #175, February 15, 1921, 466-467.

divided into three departments and six central sections.⁶³ By July 1919 the RMA was replaced by the Marineleitung or Naval Command, and on August 11, 1919, the Provisional Navy led by Admiral Adolf von Trotha was born.⁶⁴ This was seen by many as a step in the right direction for the *new* Germany, although Trotha had no voting rights and only a seat in the cabinet. But the navy of the Weimar Republic was plagued with confusion and uncertainties at the start. What was the responsibility of the new navy? Was it an independent entity or was her ultimate mission to help and support the army? These and other questions were brought up again shortly after the Great War concluded and probably one of the reasons why the left wing of the Social Democratic Party, the USPD (Independent Social Democratic Party), voted against the Provisional Military and the naval law.

The new provisional Weimar navy operated under the decree from April 16, 1919, which was extended in March 1920. The Reichsgesetzblatt (Reich Law Gazette, RGBI) from June 18, 1921, outlined the final version of the Wehrgesetz (Armed Forces Law) and the responsibilities of the navy within that framework. The navy was to protect Germany, to fight her enemies at sea and deter them from the coasts, to protect trade, fishery, and the connections to East Prussia. The navy was instructed to maintain Germany's neutrality and to foster the glorious tradition and memories of the navy during the Great War. Further assignments included the surveying of the oceans, exploration of the sea, and the upholding and maintenance of the connections between

⁶³ Othmar Hackl and Manfred Messerschmidt, ed. *Deutsche Marinegeschichte der Neuzeit*, 314. Acting Staatssekretär of the navy during that time was Admiral Rogge.

⁶⁴ Akten der Reichskanzlei, Weimar Republic, Kabinet Scheidemann, 1, #15, March 17, 1919. *Bildung einer vorläufigen Reichsmarine*. But Trotha's appointment was also controversial since he was closely associated with the former Imperial fleet. Furthermore in the Reichstag it was discussed besides the financial difficulties it was important to resurrect the merchant marine. *Coburger Zeitung*, *Eine grosse Steuerrede*, Aug 15, 1919. A discussion was also held in the Reichstag that besides the existing financial difficulties that it was important to resurrect the merchant marine at that time. *Coburger Zeitung*, Aug, 15, 1919 "*Eine grosse Steuerrede*". von Trotha's previous positions included since January 1916 chief of staff of the Hochseeflotte and he was since December 1918 chief of the Personalamt in the Reichsmarineamt, RMA.

German brothers in the *Heimat* (*Stammesbrüder in der Heimat*) living overseas, by the means of visits to foreign ports.⁶⁵

Although the navy lay under jurisdiction of the Ministry of Defense (RWeM), and the chief of Admiralty had no voting right in the cabinet, he could form a new navy under the jurisdiction of the Weimar government. Trotha stayed on as chief until his involvement in the Kapp-Putsch and his replacement by Admiral William Michaelis.⁶⁶ The Kapp-Putsch was a pivotal point in the early history of the Weimar Republic when right-wing extremists and leading politicians, including Erich Ludendorff, attempted a coup in March 1920 to overthrow the Weimar government. Defense Minister Gustav Noske tried to call out the military to suppress the uprising. General Hans von Seeckt, one of the military commander, refused to follow orders since "troops do not fire on troops."

Because of the association of high ranking navy officers with the coup, the work to rebuild the fleet faced a major setback. After the Kapp-Putsch the navy not only lost several experienced and trained officers, but general trust in the navy was lost for many years to come, and the sailors had more than once to prove that they were politically neutral and loyal to the new government.⁶⁷ One of the points later made by the diarists of the *Karlsruhe* was the argument that they were politically neutral, although one can detect political undertones and tendencies in these writings, particularly after 1933. The political neutrality was part of the Wehrgesetz of 1921, but according to Keith Bird, the officers of Weimar differentiated between

⁶⁵ Reichsgesetzblatt, 1921, June 18, 1921, 329.

⁶⁶ Akten der Reichskanzlei Weimar Republik, Kabinet Scheidemann, #22, March 25, 1919, 96. The RWeM received notification of an eminent march of the Second *Marinebrigade* towards Berlin to assist Kapp. Several former imperial officers had offered their services to Kapp and after the failed attempt to overthrow the Weimar Republic they were dismissed. Akten der Reichskanzlei, Weimar Republik, Bauer, # 186, March 12, 1920, 667-668 and Akten der Reichskanzlei, Weimar Republik, Kabinet Bauer, March 13, 1920, 672-676.

⁶⁷ This fear of disloyalty existed until the mid-1920s. The Reichswehrminister reported in a *Bericht* the end of November 1926 that the military was "durch und durch unpolitisch." Akten der Reichskanzlei, Weimar Republik, Kabinet Marx, #130, November 29, 1926.

two types of politics, the *staatspolitisch* and *parteipolitische*, (state and party), because the military in general considered themselves as “the guardian of the state’s true interest and navy officers felt much closer to politics than army officers.”⁶⁸

After von Trotha’s dismissal, Admiral William Otto Michaelis took charge of the Naval Command in March 1920. One of the first things Admiral Michaelis did was to publish a memorandum (Denkschrift) on July 28, 1920, exactly one year after the Treaty of Versailles was signed, outlining the necessity and organization of the navy.⁶⁹ This memorandum became the basis for the training cruises abroad. In paragraph seven, the admiral pointed out that these visits were a treasured medium and connected and cultivated relations with other nations. “Showing the flag” meant a great deal not only to the countries visited but also to those Germans living abroad. It had nothing to do with an iron fist but rather intended to show Germans abroad that they still had a homeland and that there was still a functioning German nation, even after the recent devastating defeat.⁷⁰ No matter how old or antiquated these vessels, they would be staffed with sophisticated, educated officers.

Since Article 194 of the Treaty of Versailles, limited the buildup of a reserve, the navy faced at times the overwhelming task of getting suitable, robust, and trained personnel. Nevertheless, because of the high unemployment rate during the 1920s, Weimar and the navy could choose among high qualified applicants.⁷¹ In order to become an officer a matriculation certificate of a high school was required and the young men had to pass a psychological exam. Future officers as members of an age-group, or *Jahrgang*, Crew, started their training with a four

⁶⁸ Keith Bird, *Weimar*, 140. See also Jost Dülffer, *Die Reichs-und Kriegsmarine 1918-1939* in Handbuch, Band 4, 372-373.

⁶⁹ BA Lichterfelde, Akten betr. Reichsmarine, R43I/601.

⁷⁰ “gepanzerte Faust”

⁷¹ Although by 1934 a less qualified personnel pool existed. Jost Dülffer, *Die Reichs-und Kriegsmarine*, 374.

month infantry course in either Stralsund or Wilhelmshaven, followed by five months training on a sailing vessel.⁷² After being promoted to cadets, they served on a training cruise abroad. This emphasized and stressed the importance of the training cruises in the German navy. About half-way into the voyage, the cadets took their *Tentamen*, an interim exam onboard. This was then followed by a three-day final examination in their last foreign port, in the case of the *Karlsruhe* cadets, a port in Spain. An oral exam followed once back home and if they passed all parts, the cadets were promoted to midshipmen or Fähnrich. The young men then stayed a year at the Naval Academy in Flensburg-Mürwik, followed by more seminars in their respected fields. One more year onboard a vessel as midshipman followed. After four and a half years of training and education they were then promoted to second lieutenants.⁷³

Half of the cadets came from the German middle class, having civil servants, pastors, or teachers as fathers. A quarter of future officers had fathers who were professional soldiers, while the rest was employed as physicians, merchants, industrialists, farmers, or came from a working background.⁷⁴ The cadets or their families were expected to pay for books, uniforms, and equipment. This of course limited the pool to those that had the necessary means to purchase these articles.⁷⁵ For all cadets, the entry age limit was set at twenty-four years of age.⁷⁶ The numbers of the aspirants was relative low in the beginning of the Weimar Republic; the year 1919 totaled twenty-eight men and 1920 even less with only twenty-two. However by 1922, forty-seven hopefuls were selected and the numbers increased steadily until the mid-1920s to seventy in 1925. The years 1929 and 1930 show a drop to only forty-five each, while in the last

⁷² See article "Blau in Grau- Infantry training in Stralsund", *Reichsmarine* #3, 1932 on the training in Stralsund.

⁷³ English plus one more foreign language was a must, so were instructions in mathematics, navigation, mechanics and engineering, artillery, and history.

⁷⁴ Handbuch zur deutschen Militärgeschichte, 371.

⁷⁵ Letter Hoffmann, October 24, 1933 on his outstanding fees. Hoffmann also reported that many of his fellow cadets begged for money in letters home.

⁷⁶ Exceptions for medical personnel existed who had received their medical degree first.

year of the Weimar Republic fifty-two young men were admitted.⁷⁷ Training in general changed for cadets. The leadership of the Weimar navy concentrated their training of cadets and recruits on *Menschenführung*, (human management) rather than on old obsolete technology as it was common in the imperial navy.

On August 31, 1920, fifty-four year old Admiral Paul Behncke, who had extensive naval experience, became chief of the Naval Command. Like Michaelis, Behncke was also a big advocate for sending the German fleet overseas and “showing the flag.”⁷⁸ Nineteen twenty-two was also the year when the first German ships went across the Baltic to Scandinavian ports for informal visits, and in December the operations division (Flottenabteilung) received a new chief Admiral Walter Gladisch, who believed that the main focus of the Weimar navy should be on the Baltic.⁷⁹

By 1921 the first plans for a new cruiser were approved in the Reichstag. The former Kaiserliche Werft in Kiel, founded in 1867, where many of the imperial ships had been designed and built, was now owned by the government of the Weimar Republic and by May 1925 consolidated into the Deutsche Werke AG.⁸⁰ This shipyard in Kiel had a combined areal of over ten million square feet, including the shipyard and machine factory and vessels up to 210 meter could be built there.⁸¹ But the construction for the new cruiser was put off until 1925 because of the three year hyperinflation Weimar experienced between the years 1921 to 1924 a period in which the German currency became nearly worthless and the economy teetered on the brink of

⁷⁷ Dirk Richhardt, *Auswahl und Ausbildung junger Offiziere 1930-1945*. Marburg: Dissertation, 2002, 273-74.

⁷⁸ Jost Dülffer, *Weimar*, 61-62.

⁷⁹ The Flottenabteilung was part of the Navy Command (after September 15, 1920) which was divided into sections “A” – Operations division, organization, training, section “B”- ship building and development, and “C”- administration.

⁸⁰ The Treaty of Versailles also forbade the building of war ships in private shipyards.

⁸¹ Deutsche Marine Zeitung, #15, August 1, 1931.

collapse.⁸² Furthermore, the provisions of the Inter Allied Commission of Control (IACC) had to be observed as well. All new plans and designs of warships had to be approved by this entity. The IACC served as a control agent, its primary function was to act as an overseer of the Treaty of Versailles and reported back to the PAAP in “all matters concerning the execution of the naval clauses”.⁸³ It was not until December of 1924 that the Economics Ministry approved the first payment for a light cruiser, B, later christened *Königsberg*.⁸⁴

On January 7, 1925 the light cruiser *Emden*, the first significant warship built after the war, was launched at Wilhelmshaven and refitted as a training ship. When the *Emden* left for her first trip abroad, President Hindenburg instructed the commander on the mobilization ordinance (*Mobilmachungsbestimmung*). In case of unexpected hostilities, the *Emden* should try to get back to a German port. An involvement in any war should only be waged if approved by the naval command, or as the commander saw fit. This ordinance therefore not only gave a great deal of latitude to the commander, but also implied that Germany in the mid-1920s was much concerned with an unexpected outbreak of a war.⁸⁵

Although Hitler was later credited with circumventing the Treaty of Versailles, or as he phrased it the “shackles of Versailles,” in reality that process had started already in the Weimar Republic in the early 1920s. The navy, with the help of the Krupp Germania and the Vulkan Company, had set up a fake Dutch organization, the Ingenieurskantoor voor Scheepsbouw, or I.v.S., which used German submarine designs, and by 1927 had delivered its first two U-boats to Spain.⁸⁶ It was also in the mid-1920s that it became clear that the old ships that made up the fleet

⁸² Germany was unable after World War I to secure loans and therefore printed notes for the balance. The allies, particularly France, accused Germany to evade reparation payments. The inflation was stopped with the introduction of the Rentenmark, a new currency.

⁸³ Versailles Treaty, Article 209, 191.

⁸⁴ Akten der Reichskanzlei, Kabinet Marx, 2, #365, December 3, 1924, 1204-4.

⁸⁵ “nach eigenem bemessen handeln”.

⁸⁶ Doc 156 and Canaris’ involvement in the U-boat project in Spain, IMT, vol xxxiv, 566-567.

needed more and more repairs. The ships' technology was obsolete or outdated, and general maintenance of the fleet went into the millions. From 1925 onwards the speed of replacing ships was faster than repairing them. The budget for just the up-keep of the fleet in 1924 was around 18 million Reichsmark (RM), the following year it jumped to 28 million RM and in 1926, 36 million RM were allocated for maintenance.⁸⁷ Besides several torpedo boats in 1925 and 1926 the Reichstag approved in 1926 the building of a new cruiser of the *Königsberg* class, C, later named *Karlsruhe*.

Not everyone however in the government was on board with the buildup of the fleet. The Social Democrats (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, SPD), had always viewed the navy as a model and parade navy (*Modell and Exerziermarine*), a navy without substance. As expected they voted against the new cruiser. In their eyes the money could be saved and eight years after the war, they still questioned the legitimacy and necessity of a German navy. Several delegates, including the SPD representative Bernhard Kuhnt, were also against the proposed travels abroad by war cruisers. He proclaimed them as pure propaganda.⁸⁸ But the government and naval command went ahead with the planning not only of new cruisers but also the voyages abroad.

In October 1924 Admiral Paul Behncke left as commander in chief of the navy and was replaced by Hans Zenker who had joined the imperial Navy in 1889 and commanded the cruiser *Köln* and *Lübeck* during the war. Zenker, as chief of the naval command approved in November 1925 the newly implemented provisions which divided the German coasts into the naval stations Baltic and North Seas. Each station was headed with its own commander. The Baltic station was

⁸⁷ In comparison the budget in 1930 was 30 million RM. These figures also include inflation rate.

⁸⁸ Kuhnt, a former Imperial sailor was one of the leaders of the November Revolution in Wilhelmshaven.

headquartered in the Reichs military port (Reichskriegshafen) Kiel, while the North Sea station was located in Wilhelmshaven.⁸⁹

By 1927 a new scandal shook the German navy. This time it involving a navy officer by the name of Captain Walter Lohmann, who controlled a secret fund of about 30 million RM and it came to light that weapons, not allowed under the Treaty of Versailles, were being secretly tested by the German navy in Spain.⁹⁰ In the end it also meant a change in the highest circles, when Minister of Defense Otto Gessler had to step down in January 1928. General Wilhelm Groener became his successor. Gessler later acknowledged that the testing in Spain was not the only violation of the treaty. Since at least 1921 a secret armament relationship between Weimar Germany and the Soviet Union existed, and that millions of RM had disappeared with Captain Lohmann.⁹¹ Violation of the treaty had started already in 1919. A secret memorandum, published in 1937, and introduced during the Nuremberg Trials, showed how the naval command, first in small steps, violated the rules set by the Allies. For example, coastal defense along the Baltic and North Sea was increased between the publication of the treaty on August 8, 1919, in the law gazette and January 20, 1920, the day the treaty was ratified.⁹² Empty ammunition packages made from zinc were claimed by France in 1920 as part of the reparation payments, but the navy destroyed the packages, melted the zinc and sold the 800 tons on the international market. The profit was converted into government bonds and the rest exchanged

⁸⁹ Organizational Bestimmungen für die Kommandobehörde der Reichsmarine an Lande, M.Dv. Nr. 15. Berlin: Reichsdruckerei, 1925.

⁹⁰ "Project Echevarrieta" and the building of U-Boats in Spain. Akten der Reichskanzlei, Kabinet Luther, 2, #325, March 29, 1926. What ended officially Lohmann's career was his involvement in the Phoebus Film scandal. Akten der Reichskanzlei, Kabinet Marx, 2, #336, November 11, 1927.

⁹¹ Otto Gessler. *Reichswehr Politik in der Weimar Zeit*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1958, 443 ff. Captain Walter Lohmann built up a secret fund from selling ships who should have been scrapped under the Treaty. The money was used for a variety of submarine and naval plane research, also not allowed under the Treaty. Furthermore money was without the knowledge of the government allotted to a Ruhrfond and again used for circumventing the Treaty.

⁹² Doc 156-C. edited by Captain Schüssler, *Der Kampf der Marine gegen Versailles 1919-1935*; IMT, 530-607.

into foreign currencies. Although Germany was not permitted an air force and therefore did not needed any military airports, the airports at Holtenau and on the island Norderney were officially converted to international air centers and would thereby save from demolition and destruction.⁹³

Article 194 of the treaty limited the buildup of a military reserve for the Weimar Republic. Because of the high unemployment rate during the 1920s, Weimar and the navy could choose among highly qualified applicants and in the most physically fit applicants. The navy faced, however, at times the overwhelming task of getting suitable, robust, and trained personnel. Future officer were trained and educated since 1910 in Flensburg-Mürwik, the German Naval Academy. The local sport associations did not focus on training young men for physical fitness, since their main goal was to win competitions. The Ministry of Defense therefore recommended in 1926 to give clear guidelines and take the initiative in that regard.⁹⁴ Track and field, boxing and even fencing was added to a cadet's curriculum. The so-called *Leibesübungen* (physical education) were seen as a crucial part of the schooling of all naval personnel. It was considered an effective way to archive highest soldierly performance. The German navy, in comparison to their army counterpart, preferred team sports, such as soccer, rugby, or handball over single competition. By mid-summer 1933 about 3,000 sailors of the Navy Station Baltic had their sports badges and 1,700 more had passed the examination of the DLRG, the German Lifeguard and Rescue Organization, as certified life guards.⁹⁵ Rowing and sailing, an integral part of the education, was since 1928 regulated in the Navy Regatta Association (*Marine Regatta Verein*, MRV). It was reported that by June 1933 all applicants to the navy could swim, 80 percent

⁹³ Doc 156-C. edited by Captain Schüssler, *Der Kampf der Marine gegen Versailles 1919-1935*; IMT, 578.

⁹⁴ Akten der Reichskanzlei, Kabinet Marx, 3/4, #130, November 29, 1926, 376-378

⁹⁵ W. Thiessen, *Bedeutung der Leibesübungen in der Reichsmarine*. *Reichsmarine*, #6, June 1933. DLRG, Deutsche Lebensrettungsgesellschaft, the German Lifeguard and Rescue Organization, was founded in October 1913 during which time only 3% of all Germans were able to swim and over 5000 drowned annually.

possessed the sports badge, and 50 percent the DLRG certificate.⁹⁶ Applicants for the non-commissioned career were selected by officers from the Kiel and Wilhelmshaven stations who travelled through Germany to find the best applicants. Robert Buttmi, one of the diarists of the *Karlsruhe*, was recruited in 1926 after his apprenticeship as machinist with the German railroad. He started basic training in March 1927 and had aspirations to compete as a gymnast in the 1936 Olympic Games.⁹⁷

The leadership of the naval command was once more changed in 1928 with the appointment of Admiral Erich Raeder. Raeder began his career in 1894 as a cadet in the Wilhelmine navy but never commanded a war vessel in combat during the war. However, he had close ties to the imperial family since his time as commander of the imperial yacht *Hohenzollern*. He experienced the end of the empire and the first years of Weimar behind a desk in the Reichsmarineamt. After the Kapp-Putsch he was transferred to the navy archives because his political leanings were suspect, but regardless, in 1922 he was promoted to rear admiral and inspector of education.⁹⁸ Raeder, like so many others, had been brought up under the spell of Tirpitz, who had argued that a balanced fleet against Great Britain was necessary for Germany's survival. This navy had to be powerful enough to win a decisive battle against England in the North Sea. Under Raeder's command, the fleet combined the North Sea and Baltic commandos while at the same time the ships came under the jurisdiction of Section "A" of the naval command, dealing with war ships and intelligence. In the spring of 1930 the fleet commando made some internal organizational changes when the headquarters were moved to the port city of Kiel on the Baltic. With this move the Baltic gained importance again, shifting focus on where

⁹⁶ By 1933 sailors could compete in civilian competition without being member of these organizations.

⁹⁷ Personal correspondence with Gerlinde Karl, nee Buttmi, 2009.

⁹⁸ Inspekteur des Bildungswesen der Marine

future wars might be conducted.⁹⁹ Erich Raeder stayed in his position after 1933 and linked the old with the new.

There was after 1933 no immediate change in the selection process as one might suspect. In general the selection process and training stayed the same after January 1933. All sailors had immediately after they reported to their duty station to start a general military basic training.¹⁰⁰ A technical training based on their specific military occupation would follow immediately after basic training. The education for musicians lasted six months.¹⁰¹ Sailors also had to possess a basic knowledge of English, be able to translate an English weather report, and follow a conversation with a pilot. The education and training for the cadets stayed in principle intact until 1937, the only difference was a reduction of training time by 60 percent. While in 1931 the training period was four years, it was shortened by 1937 to two years and four months.¹⁰²

When the diet of the German Confederation in Frankfurt decided in 1848 that a navy was necessary, they did not realize that the fleet would be dismantled just four years later in 1852 and the vessels sold off. After the wars with the Danes and Austria a new North German Federal navy was founded in 1867. Once the patchwork of German states came together under Prussian dominance in 1871 the Imperial navy was founded and greatly expanded. This was largely due to Kaiser Wilhelm II's enthusiasm about naval affairs. Because of the direct involvement of the Imperial navy in the November Revolution in 1918, the image of the navy was damaged for years to come. The Treaty of Versailles restricted the number of ships and personnel considerably, yet by the early 1920s the Weimar navy was reorganized several times, however,

⁹⁹ Raeder also presided over the Reinhard Heydrich dismissal from the navy in April 1931 for disreputable behavior.

¹⁰⁰ *Ausbildungs Bestimmung Reichsmarine 1934*, Berlin: Druck & Verlag der Reichsmarine, 1934.

¹⁰¹ Half of that time included practice alone, the other half with an orchestra. Songs they needed to know were old *Präsentiermarches* (old Prussian Grenadiermarch and March #2), the Torgauer Parademarch, the Swedish Parademarch, and the Prussian Glory.

¹⁰² Dirk Richhardt, *Auswahl*, 291. See also Rolf Güth, *100 Jahre Akademieausbildung für Führungsaufgaben der Marine*, Bad Godesberg, 1972.

with and by officers from the old imperial navy. The Reichsmarine existed in this form until 1935 when it was renamed Kriegsmarine by the Nazis.

CHAPTER 3

DEUTSCHTUM ABROAD

By the time the *Karlsruhe* went on her first voyage, millions of Germans and their descendants lived aboard. Emigration in general is closely connected and associated with economic, military, or political developments in a country, and one can identify three large waves of emigration from German-speaking countries. While those who left in the late eighteenth century were mostly driven by economic considerations, many emigrants in the nineteenth century left for political reasons, particularly those associated with the failed revolution in 1848-49.¹⁰³ Whereas the search for riches and happiness brought Germans across the Atlantic in the beginning, it was the prospect of political freedom and economic independence that drove the later groups. It might have been a false notion but particularly in the nineteenth century, Germany was thought of by many as a place of religious, economic, and political persecution, full of problems and hardship. The expression “finding fortune and happiness” was often cited as the main explanation for leaving the homeland. This view of Germany was coupled with the mistaken belief in a pleasant and comfortable life abroad. Not everyone found the promised land, and to deter people from leaving, reports of immigrant fates were published in local newspapers. Prussia even banned, starting in the mid-1850s and continuing for fifty years, South American countries from courting and recruiting German citizens. The third and last wave to the New World were those Germans who left mainly for economic reasons immediately after World War I.¹⁰⁴

A large number of the early sixteenth and seventeenth century immigrants, entered into indentured servitude or redemption contracts, but by the 1850s a new practice emerged, when

¹⁰³ Economic “push” factors include land scarcity in the home country, but also unemployment, increase in population and therefore declining opportunities, and war ravaged economies in Europe.

¹⁰⁴ A fourth group, not discussed here were Germans and German Jews who left the Reich after 1933.

German cities collected their poor and sent them without any means or contacts to the North American coast.¹⁰⁵ Because of improved technology in transportation and new opportunities after independence from colonial powers, nations in South America and later Australia and Asia became attractive destinations as well. Once the short-lived German colonial empire was established, Africa and the Pacific Islands were added to that list. This was also the time when German associations formed outside of the homeland. At first these societies grew out of the necessity to aid the newcomers. The individual German states did not do so; there was no counseling or assistance for those who left. Many of the German immigrants felt simply abandoned. Out of these aid organizations emerged in response to the longing of recreating a piece of *Heimat* the first sport, shooting, singing and choir clubs, modeled after the one left behind.

The definition of *Heimat* in a general sense means home or homeland, but according to historian Celia Applegate there is more to that word. It can be the place where someone is born, received an education, came to consciousness of selfhood, or constructed a social entity.¹⁰⁶ The notion of *Heimat* as a concept is important to the self-understanding and identity construction of Germans. What does it mean to be German? *Heimat* is the quintessence of Germaness. The term itself is not present in any other language and cannot be easily understood by non-Germans. It is a multi-layered complex idea that embodies not just language but also traditions and customs, nature, and politics. It evokes feelings of belonging, comfort, sanctuary, and safety. The term can be associated with birthplace and family, nation, dialect, race, and even food. At most gatherings and events that the German sailors later attended, the hosts served food not authentic

¹⁰⁵ Indentured servitude as a form of immigration was outlawed by 1819 in the United States.

¹⁰⁶ Celia Applegate. *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat*. University of California Press, 1990, 5. For more publications on *Heimat* see: E. Moosmann, *Heimat, Sehnsucht nach Identität*. Berlin, 1980; M. Neumeyer, *Heimat, Zu Geschichte und Begriff eines Phänomens*. Kiel, 1992.

to the country but German food. Food served in many cases as a symbol of true Germaness.

Language might be lost but cooking and serving German food made a connection.

Heimat is a place where one does not have to explain oneself. *Heimat* can also involve an emotional and spiritual affiliation as well.¹⁰⁷ Historian Wolf Heino Struck believes that the concept of *Heimat* entails religious and social factors. For historian Elizabeth Boa the study of *Heimat* is not only a study of cultural reflections, but also political aspirations. *Heimat* is a physical place as well as a social space.¹⁰⁸ *Heimat*, or the creation of an artificial one, also signified stability for many, something important to immigrants. Too often they moved into a much faster pace of life and environment than what they were accustomed to and *Heimat*, even if it was just the landscape in front of their house, connected the ones that left with much needed stability. But the concept of *Heimat* changed over the centuries. Applegate believes that in the second half of the nineteenth century *Heimat* identified the diverse and mostly local efforts to appreciate provincial cultures, and it simultaneously served to celebrate German nationhood.¹⁰⁹ Nothing could be more devastating to a German than not having a *Heimat* and fatherland.¹¹⁰ Carl von Clausewitz affirmed that a “man without a fatherland is a terrifying thought. His life is like a dissolving thread of fabric which can no longer be used.”¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ John Alexander Williams, The Chords of the German Soul are tuned to Nature. *Central European History*, vol 29, 3,343.

¹⁰⁸ Elizabeth Boa, *Heimat, A German Dream. Regional Loyalties and National Identities in German Culture, 1890-1990*. Oxford: University Press, 2000, 1-23. The 1877 Grimm’s Wörterbuch defined *Heimat* as “das land oder auch nur der landstrich in dem man geboren ist oder belibended aufenthalt hat; der geburtsort oder ständige wohnort, selbst das elterliche haus und besitzthum so in Baiern.”, Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, Band 4, 2. Leipzig: Hirzel Verlag, 1972: 864-867.

¹⁰⁹ Buttmi, *Werben*, 4; Applegate. *Nation*, 4.

¹¹⁰ Der Mann ohne Vaterland, *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*, no 51, 1935.

¹¹¹ Applegate. *Nation*, 13.

Ein Mann ohne Vaterland, entsetzlicher Gedanke! Sein Leben ist der Faden eines aufgelösten Gewebes zu nichts mehr tauglich. Kladderadatsch 1944, 28. <http://didgi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/digglit/kla1944/0028>, accessed February 2012.

Renate Bridenthal, who came to the United States as a refugee from Nazi Germany, believed that Germans scattered around the globe have long held that they could re-create their *Heimat* or homeland wherever they moved, and that their enclaves could remain truly German. Many of these closed societies maintained cultural, familial, and economic links with the homeland.¹¹² Together immigrant men and women strove to maintain symbolic and material ties to Germany, sometimes over several generations.¹¹³ Through improvements in communication and travel in the later part of the nineteenth century the distance between the old and new homeland shrunk; it was not uncommon for men to return to Germany for the sole purpose of finding a wife. According to Elizabeth Boa women represented and were seen as synonymous with *Heimat* by men.¹¹⁴

After the 1871 unification of the German states, emigration declined. Those who left, brought with them a sense of pride in their homeland, even though leaving after 1871 was seen as unpatriotic and disloyal to the Kaiser and the German nation by those who stayed behind. It was considered a drain on the empire, and the new nation was not willing to lose either manpower or resources. As expected there was little to no movement of people during the Great War, but in the early 1920s about 350,000 Reichs Germans and more than 120,000 ethnic Germans, living outside of the boundary of the Reich, moved across the Atlantic to escape, adding to the picture of the crippled and duped Germany abroad.¹¹⁵ German-Americans who visited their former homeland after the war were disappointed about the situation and their reports added to the negative image. They believed that the government was powerless and the

¹¹² Renate Bridenthal, Krista O'Donnell, and Nancy Reagin. *The Heimat abroad: the Boundaries of Germanness*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2005, 1.

¹¹³ Bridenthal, *The Heimat abroad*, 2.

¹¹⁴ Elizabeth Boa, *Heimat*, 26.

¹¹⁵ *angeschlagene und betrogene*; Klaus Kipphahn. *Deutsche Propaganda in den Vereinigten Staaten, 1933-1941*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter Verlag, 1971, 22.

Weimar Republic worthless. Millions were unemployed, children lacked discipline, the economy was abysmal, and complaining useless. The situation they observed seemed bleak.¹¹⁶

Organizations for Germans Abroad

Although by the first decade of the twentieth century millions had left, it was not until this time that Germany „discovered“ the lost flock. Up to this point, the Reich showed little interest in those that left the homeland, but three main organizations were eventually concerned with Germans abroad. These were the Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland (League of Germanism Abroad, VdA), the department Germanism and Culture within the German Foreign Office, the Deutsche Auslands Institut (German Foreign Office, DAI), and finally in 1931 the Auslandsabteilung, AO, of the National Socialist German Workers Party, NSDAP, which started as an initiative by Bruno Fricke.¹¹⁷ The League of Germanism Abroad grew out of the Deutscher Schulverein (German School Association), created in 1880 in response of an increase of ethnic schools within the Austro-Hungarian empire. Within one year of its existence the German School Association claimed a membership of 22,000 which increased by 1887 to 120,000 members.¹¹⁸ By 1881 groups had formed within the German Reich as well. The broadest change came in 1908 when the association was renamed Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland.¹¹⁹ While the VdA initially focused on ethnic German minorities who lived in diverse section of the two empires, the VdA turned its focus on the millions of ethnic Germans who had emigrated to North and South America, and the wording “zur Erhaltung des Deutschtums im Auslande” (for the preservation of Germanism), was added to the formal title. They published

¹¹⁶ Coburger Zeitung, November 20, 1930.

¹¹⁷ Fricke was Gauleiter in Gdanzk and had spent several years in South America. See also Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, *die Gründung der Auslandsabteilung der NSDAP* in Ernst Schulz, ed: *Gedenkschrift Martin Göhring*, 1968. Most of the VdA records were destroyed in the 1943 bombing raid on Berlin.

¹¹⁸ Allen Thomson Croneberg, *The Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland*, 1969, 11.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 31-32.

periodicals and magazines and grew eventually into the largest association concerned with the cultural, economic, and political status of ethnic Germans outside the Reich.¹²⁰ By the early 1930s the VdA was involved in business all over the world including South America, and after the takeover by the Nazis was renamed in 1937 the Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland.¹²¹ The military was encouraged to support the VdA and to work whenever possible with the local VdA groups the came in contact with.¹²² After the war the VdA was prohibited by the Allies but reinstated in Munich in April 1955, not without controversy.¹²³

The Deutsche Auslands Institut, was founded in February 1917 by Theodor Wanner as the Museum and Institute of Germans Abroad in Stuttgart. This organization acted as an advisor and mentor in the early years for Germans who wanted to leave their homelands. Under the Gleichschaltung, the board of directors was replaced with party executives and the cooperation with Germans abroad increased immediately.¹²⁴ The philosophy of the DAI fit perfectly into the Nazi idea of Volksgemeinschaft. According to the propaganda material, the German Volksgemeinschaft proved itself (*hat sich bewährt*) because a German, once abroad, had many choices and could go different paths, but his eyes were filled with pride when he talked about Germany.¹²⁵ One goal of the DAI was to reach as many Germans as possible at home and overseas by conducting lecture series and information events. As part of the marketing, military personnel could rent free of charge movies, pictures, and other material. The main purpose after 1933 of the DAI was to distribute propaganda material in the United States to foster German

¹²⁰ Allen Croneberg, *The Volksbund*, iv.

¹²¹ Although they still carried the subtitle :Deustcher Schulverein, e.V. in 1933.

¹²² Marineverordnungsblatt, Heft 31, Dec 1, 1933, #300.

¹²³ Many Germans in the 1950s believed that the VdA was an obsolete institutions and no longer necessary.

¹²⁴ The Institute was in 1951 renamed Institute für Auslandsbeziehung. For more information about the institute during the war see Katja Gesche. *Kulture als Instrument der Aussenpolitik totalitärer Staaten. Das Deutsche Ausland-Institut 1933-1945*. Wien: Boehlau Verlag, 2006.

¹²⁵ Reichsmarine, #9, 1932.

language classes, and to enable ethnic Germans living outside the Reich to study in Germany. The DAI operated for this purpose their own guesthouse in Stuttgart.¹²⁶ Although both the VdA and DAI were private cultural organizations, closely affiliated with the Reichsauswanderungsamt (Reich Expatriation Office, RAWA), and later the Reichsstelle für Auswanderungswesen (Reich Office for Emigration).¹²⁷ The RAWA was originally established by Weimar in May 1919 particularly for those Germans who returned home from former German Eastern Europe and overseas colonies lost after 1918. The RAWA operated twenty offices throughout Germany but found itself soon in a position where it advised Germans who left for overseas destinations. The Foreign Office in Berlin also maintained contact with those who left through a variety of means: propaganda material, lecture series and visits like those of the war cruisers. A separate department named Auslandsdeutschtum und Kulturangelegenheiten (Department of Germandom and Culture) within the Foreign Office was founded after World War I to keep in contact with Germans around the globe.

On May 1, 1931, Hans Nieland became the head of the AO section of the National Socialist Party, headquartered in Hamburg. The organization was renamed shortly after Nieland's appointment into Deutsche im Ausland (Germans Abroad) and had by 1935 one hundred forty full time employees. The more than four hundred chapters or Ortsgruppen, were divided among eight countries and continents, the section was in charge of all party members abroad: Europe and the Levant, Africa, India, East Asia, and Australia. The Americas were separated into North America and Mexico, Central America, and lastly South America. The responsibility of the organization was manifold and included the collection of reports and newspaper clippings from overseas, keeping track of members and those who applied for

¹²⁶ Philipp Gassert, *Amerika im Dritten Reich*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1997, 129.

¹²⁷ The Reichsauswanderungsamt, RAWA was founded in 1924.

membership, collecting dues and releasing information to Germans abroad.¹²⁸ But the main goal, so historian Jürgen Müller argues, was to win over the millions of Germans abroad for the National Socialist cause and eventually to avoid a similar situation to that in World War I for those abroad. The party believed that if all German-Americans had been united in purpose the United States would have never entered the Great War.¹²⁹ However, only citizens of the Reich, those that still carried German citizenship, could become a member of the NSDAP.¹³⁰ If they resided overseas, they could become a member of the AO.¹³¹ Membership in the AO cost three Reichsmark a month, but many were unable to send in these funds regularly due to foreign currency restrictions particularly after 1939.¹³² The NSDAP saw the AO as a link within the movement in Germany and the Germans overseas. The AO believed that it was time for the Germans overseas to leave the past finally behind, to embrace the new Germany, and to strip themselves of the old symbols that once represented Germany and Germandom. Celebrating the Kaiser's birthday did not equate to solidarity with the old *Heimat* and new national ethos.¹³³ In 1935 the association Deutscher Vereine im Ausland, e.V., a subgroup of the NSDAP's AO started to publish a yearly text titled *Wir Deutsche in der Welt* (We Germans in the World). These books were specifically geared towards the Germandom overseas, not the ones living in Eastern Europe, the south of Europe, or Tyrol. The editor aimed it at those whose forefathers left because of the tyranny of princes in the nineteenth century, those who had wanderlust or were

¹²⁸ Dr. Nieland was a member of the Reichstag and he also headed from June 1932 to July 1933 the *Bund der Freunde der Hitlerbewegung* in Hamburg. As with so many other Nazi organizations, the AO and *Bund der Freunde* were plagued by confusion and inner party struggles.

¹²⁹ Jürgen Müller. *Nationalsozialismus in Lateinamerika*, 26.

¹³⁰ The decision was made in October 1933. See also telegram Dieckhoff to Embassy DC, February 16, 1934, #259, Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945, Series C, vol II, 492.

¹³¹ Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945, Series C, vol II, supplement October 19, 33, #5.

¹³² Jürgen Müller. *Nationalsozialismus in Lateinamerika*, 26.

¹³³ E.W. Bohle, *Wir Deutsche im Ausland*, 1935; *Die Auslandsdeutschen sind Nationalsozialisten*, 20.

competent businessmen.¹³⁴ It seemed that by the end of 1934 the AO leadership had given up already on German Americans in the United States. Ernst Wilhelm Bohle, the leader of the Foreign Organization of the Nazi Party, believed that the opposing elements were too powerful in the United States, something Dr. Hans Luther disagreed with. He believed that the *Friends of New Germany* was the only organization in favor of Germany.¹³⁵

Germans in North America

The English colonies on the North American continent, and later the United States were by far the country of choice for German immigrants.¹³⁶ By 1732 the first German newspaper was founded in Philadelphia, and by the early nineteenth century most German states, principalities and free cities operated consulates in the New World.¹³⁷ While it still took six to eight weeks to cross the Atlantic on a schooner during that time, by the 1850s a steam ship was able to bring the newcomers in less than three weeks to the promised land. Conditions for German Americans drastically changed after 1917 in the United States when the nation entered World War I on the side of the Allies. The fear of an uprising against the United States by German immigrants sent

¹³⁴ *Wir Deutsche in der Welt*, Introduction to 1935 yearbook. These yearbooks featured prominent writers and contributors like Rudolf Hess, Hermann Goering, or E. Bohle.

¹³⁵ Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945, Series C, The Third Reich, vol III, #571 and 573.

¹³⁶ Germans were already among the settlers in Jamestown. It is estimated that more than eight million Germans immigrated into North America alone. For more info on German immigration to North America see: Klaus Wust and Heinz Moos. *Three hundred years of German immigrants in North America, 1683-1983: their contributions to the evolution of the New World: a Pictorial History with 510 Illustrations*. München: "300 Jahre Deutsche in Amerika" Verlags-GmbH, 1983; Dieter Cunz, *They came from Germany*, NY: Dodd-Mead, 1966; Joachim Radkau, *Die deutsche Emigration in den USA*. Düsseldorf: Bertelsmann Universitätsverlag, 1971; Howard B Furer. *The Germans in America, 1607-1970; a chronology & fact book*. Dobbs Ferry, NY: Oceana Publications, 1973; Günther Moltmann, ed. *Aufbruch nach Amerika: Die Auswanderwelle von 1816-17*, Stuttgart: Metzler, 1989; Kai Detlev Sievers. *Die Deutsche und Skandinavische Amerikaauswanderung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert: Forschungsstand, Methoden, Quellen, mit Fallstudien aus Schleswig-Holstein und Hamburg*. Neumünster: Wachholtz, 1981. Jacquelyn Landis. *The Germans*. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2006. Bernd Brunner. *Nach Amerika: die Geschichte der deutschen Auswanderung*. München: C.H. Beck, 2009. For specific immigrant fates see: Maria Wagner. *Was die Deutschen aus Amerika berichteten, 1828-1865*. Stuttgart: H.D. Heinz Verlag, 1985; Walter D Kamphoefner, Wolfgang Johannes Helbich and Ulrike Sommer. *News from the Land of Freedom: German Immigrants write Home*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991.

¹³⁷ Although several of the newspapers stayed in German print until the entry of the US into World War I, the numbers went down from about 500 published in 1910 to about 150 by 1920.

chills through Washington and the U.S. government implemented measures at the highest level. Historian Dean Banks reported that German-American “dignity and pride in the Fatherland had been suppressed during the anti-German frenzy of WWI.”¹³⁸ Immigrants were oftentimes forced to transform their loyalties. The German language suffered and significantly shattered the intense *Deutschtum* still existing in the United States. During the war frenzy even works sung in German were suspended in the New York Metropolitan Opera.¹³⁹ Church services in German were banned and in some areas not reinstated until November 1930.¹⁴⁰ German newspapers both religious and cultural once flourished, but by 1930, the *New York Herald* was the only German language paper left in New York City. Teaching of German in schools was banned immediately in 1917 in most places in the United States. In Texas it took nineteen years for it to return to the curriculum. A survey conducted in 1930 in New York Independent School District showed that the German language and therefore German culture suffered. Only ten thousand students studied German while eighty thousand were enrolled in French classes.¹⁴¹ South American Germans on the other side did not go through the same experiences during World War I and were therefore able to preserve their language and culture much longer. To make matters worse, in 1921 the immigration requirements in the United States were modified into a quota system based on the 1910 census. Only 3 percent of a group already present was permitted entry. This affected immigration from Germany immediately. Throughout the 1920s this ratio was lowered several times, which resulted in as few as twenty thousand German immigrants per year.

¹³⁸ Dean Banks. *Creating an American Dilemma*. Dissertation: UT Austin, 1975. 229. Teddy Roosevelt, in 1916 spoke against the “hyphenated” Americans, he believed that there should be no “if or but” on who showed loyalty to enemy nation.

¹³⁹ *Omaha World Herald*, Feb 16, 1930.

¹⁴⁰ Aberdeen Daily News, *Eggert Announces Services at Rural Church near City*, Nov 21, 1930.

¹⁴¹ Dallas Morning News, *German School*, May 11, 1930; Republic, *French Preferred*, June 10, 1930.

However, Deutschtum was far from dead among the older generations, and the anti-German hysteria of 1917 had dwindled by the early 1930s. It was estimated that about six million people in the United States still spoke German. The Nazi regime quickly re-discovered the ethnic Germans across the Atlantic and the *völkische idea*. Systematic scientific research on America in the Third Reich was geared towards immigration and Germandom policies.¹⁴² The Friends of New Germany, a support group of the Nazi party in the United States was founded in July 1933 by Heinz Spanknöbel who was on an assignment for the party in the United States. They grew out of the 1923 founded Teutonia Society and several other similar, smaller groups. Spanknöbel's assignment, however, was revoked by the party, and he had to hand over the leadership of the *Friends* to a German American with U.S. citizenship. The Friends were forced to refrain from any political activities by October 1933.¹⁴³ To add another level of control over German organizations the Reichs Chancellery implemented an order that members of the NSDAP could not become members, or be active in overseas organizations and clubs.¹⁴⁴

These restrictions did not stop the activities of the Friends and its members. After being investigated by New York prosecutors, the group changed its name to Amerikadeutscher Volksbund, or Bund for short. The Bund operated by 1936 in all major cities, particularly in New York and Los Angeles, and counted a membership of close to 200,000 members at its heights.¹⁴⁵ However, Gauleiter Bohle, leader of the AO in Germany, vehemently denied that either the Friends or the Bund were ever administered, supported, or connected to the AO. Bohle opposed

¹⁴² Philipp Gassert, *Amerika*, 130.

¹⁴³ Letter Fuehr to dept. III, October 16, 1933; #5, 5-6, Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945, series C, vol II.

¹⁴⁴ Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945, Series C, The Third Reich, vol III, #570, 1116.

¹⁴⁵ Time, *National Affairs: Bund Banned*, March 14, 1938.

successfully the *Friends* desire to become an official party organization.¹⁴⁶ Yet, by the time Hitler seized power, Deutschtum seemed fatally stricken, the twenty million or so Americans of German origin were much too socially and economically diversified to offer a united positive response to Hitler in Europe.¹⁴⁷

The 1911 Canadian census revealed that a little more than four hundred thousand ethnic and German nationals lived in Canada.¹⁴⁸ According to historian Grant Grams, Deutschtum, including the German language was “almost dead in Ontario while on the other hand the German culture in western Canada was vibrant and strong.”¹⁴⁹ Starting in late 1928, German-Canadians proudly re-claimed their heritage by openly celebrating again. In the summer of 1930 German communities observed their first “German Day of the Saskatchewan Germandom.”¹⁵⁰ Over four thousand ethnic Germans celebrated in Regina, the capital city, and the festivities opened with the de facto national anthem “O Canada” while at the same time the Germans displayed proudly and openly their heritage. Weimar also had set eyes on a region that later became part of Canada: Labrador. In 1931 the government tried to negotiate for a 99-year lease to establish a German colony there, but in the end nothing came out of it.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁶ Letter Bohle to Bormann and Lammers, November 16, 1934, Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945, series C, vol III.

¹⁴⁷ Banks divided German-Americans into four groups: the first included German-Americans who by 1933 still regarded themselves as members of a German cultural community. This was also the least assimilated group and counted some five million people. This group favored formal organizations or societies such as the German-American Bund. Citizens of German origin who had retained an intellectual sympathy for German culture fell into the second group. Groups three and four consisted of German-Americans of Jewish faith and German-Americans identifying primarily with organized labor. Banks, 266, 268.

¹⁴⁸ <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/census-1911/index-e.html>; accessed November 17, 2012. See also Karl von Loesch, *Deutsche Züge im Antlitz der Erde. Deutsche Siedeln, deutsche Leistung*. München: Verlag F. Bruckmann, 1935 who estimated the number closer to half a million, 237.

¹⁴⁹ Grant Grams, *German Emigration to Canada and the Support of its Deutschtum the during Weimar Republic*. Frankfurt: P. Lang, 2001, 232.

¹⁵⁰ Coburger Zeitung, *Der erste deutsche Tag des Saskatchan Deutschtums*, Sep 1, 1930. German-Canadians suffered a similar fate than their American counterparts during and after WWI.

¹⁵¹ Fürstenfeldbrucker Zeitung, *Deutsche Kolonie auf Labrador?*, Dec 17, 1931.

Immigration to Central and South America

South America was initially not as attractive to immigrants as North American shores, because both the economic and political instabilities in the Latin American nations hindered their development. Once the United States implemented quota systems after the Great War, however, South America became an appealing alternative. Regardless, North American German settlements were twice as old as those than in South America. Living conditions in United States and South America differed for the immigrants in a variety of ways including urbanization, religion, soil conditions, rhythm of work, and language. German communities in South America developed differently than those in the United States and Canada. Immigrants settled in close proximity to each other in Latin America, opened German schools, built houses of worship, and founded clubs and organization, so-called Vereine. Here German tradition and culture flourished, and the immigrants were able to build networks of aid to help the next wave of new arrivals in the transition and assimilation process.

It was estimated that by the mid-1930s only about twenty thousand Germans lived in Mexico and Central America. German industries like Siemens and Bayer operated plants in Mexico. A much larger group, about eight hundred thousand to one million, had settled in South America, including Brazil. The first German who set foot in that country was Hans Staden from a small town south of Kassel, in 1547, but few Germans actually settled there before 1824.¹⁵² This was the year when the Austrian-born queen Maria Leopoldina invited German-speaking settlers to come to Brazil. They settled predominantly in the southern part of Brazil, land that was still undeveloped and had not been cleared yet. It was relatively inexpensive land, but it

¹⁵² Hans Staden. *Wahrhaft Historia und Beschreibung eyner Landschafft der wilden nackten, grimmigen Menschfresser Leuthen in der Newenwelt America gelegen*, edited and translated by Neil L. Whitehead and Michael Harbsmeier. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008. See also Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung, *Hans Staden der Brasilien Fahrer*, #42, 1934.

made only sense to settle there if immigrants would do so as families. Most Germans who moved to Brazil were from the German country-side, those with few demands for a life of luxury.¹⁵³ Between 1910 and 1919 alone roughly twenty five thousand more Germans immigrated to Brazil and by 1930 about three hundred thousand Germans lived in Brazil. According to Frederick Luebke assimilation of German Brazilians into the local Brazilian culture was slower than in the United States.¹⁵⁴ The Brazilian government honored the German immigrants in July 1936 with a German Day and a set of postal stamps commemorating early settlers.¹⁵⁵

The first Germans arrived in Chile in 1854, and over the next decades their number steadily increased. In 1930, a little over ten thousand Germans called Chile home, the overwhelming majority being young, single males. The largest number of Germans could be found in the capital city, Santiago, and the country-side around Valparaiso and Concepción.¹⁵⁶ But recent German immigrants did not dominate most German Chilean associations. That leadership was in the hands of Germans born in Chile.¹⁵⁷ Still the country was not without internal troubles. The navy revolt in the port of Coquimbo in September 1931 invoked memories of the 1918 revolts in Germany, and in 1931 the German naval command discussed if it was a good idea to send the *Karlsruhe* under those circumstances to Chile.¹⁵⁸

Venezuela was another South American country that had a long historical connection with Germany. The first Germans reached that region only thirty years after Columbus, and the region was settled in large part because of the involvement of an Augsburg family, the Welsers.

¹⁵³ Rosalind Arndt-Schug, *Frauen wandern aus: deutsche Migrantinnen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*. Bremen: Labor Migranten Projekt, 1990, 179.

¹⁵⁴ Frederick Luebke, *Germans in the New World: Essays in the History of Immigration*. University of Illinois Press, 1999, 104.

¹⁵⁵ E. Fausal, *July 25, the Day of the German-Brazilians*, The American-German Review, Sep 1936.

¹⁵⁶ For more information on German-Chilenians in the early 20th century see Christel Converse, *The Rise and Fall of Nazi Influence among the German-Chileneans*. Dissertation, Georgetown, 1990. See also Otto Bürger, *Chile als Land der Verheissung und Erfüllung für Deutsche Auswanderer*. Leipzig: Diet'erische Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1920.

¹⁵⁷ Crystal Converse, *Rise and Fall*, 17-18.

¹⁵⁸ AA Berichte 1932, Meeting Dec 4, 1931.

Germans had established roots in the La Guairá region after 1843 and founded several cities there. Yet many moved on, and by 1920 only 850 ethnic Germans still lived there. However, German firms had established companies in Venezuela, and German know-how and technology built and financed a rather complicated stretch of rail that ran for 180 kilometers from Caracas to Valencia. Both cities had large German populations, evident in the German schools there. Although the three thousand or so Germans had clubs and organizations, an overarching association in Venezuela was missing.

More than forty thousand Germans lived in the capital city of Argentina, Buenos Aires, and a large majority was employed in the banking and trade sector, while another thirty thousand lived in the surrounding region. It was estimated that almost a quarter million Germans lived by 1930 in Argentina. Evident of the strong German influence were the twenty German schools in Argentina. By 1935 it was considered the largest German school district outside of the Reich.¹⁵⁹ The *La Plata Zeitung* was, with a daily edition of 30,000, the largest German newspaper, although others, like the *Argentinische Tageblatt* existed as well. The *Tageblatt* published a Sunday edition titled *Hüben und Drüben* (On Both Sides) with useful tips for the German Argentinian housewife and the latest news from Germany.

Associations and Clubs

The vivid, rich club and association life that dominated German society could also be found overseas. Immigrants duplicated the associations they left behind and countless German political, religious, military, social, regional, and sports clubs. Women's and youth organizations also emerged. These associations brought the immigrants together. There were anti and pro-Weimar clubs, associations loyal to the Kaiser, former front soldier interest groups, fraternities,

¹⁵⁹ Von Loesch, *Deutsche Züge*, 286.

and many more.¹⁶⁰ Many of these clubs and associations owned their own clubhouse and were often one of the first structures besides a church erected by the German communities. But these organizations and clubs also were often at odds with each other. In typical German fashion a new club was then founded. This way within a few years a region had oftentimes a dozen or more German clubs and associations. This so-called *Vereinsmeierei*, or club nonsense, affected all sorts of clubs and associations, even the most prestigious and influential ones. The Steuben Society of America, founded in 1919, was represented in the fall of 1934 by Theodore Hoffmann.¹⁶¹ Hoffmann went to Berlin and met Hitler, where he informed the German chancellor during his audience about the behavior of the Friends of New Germany in America. The head of the Steuben Society criticized the Friends, whose local heads were not even U.S. citizens, but newcomers to the country and totally unknown within the local German communities. Hoffmann also perceived the Friends as competition for organizations like Steuben. The activities of the Friends, so thought Hoffmann, created only disharmony. To make matters worse, the German Ambassador Dr. Hans Luther as the official representative of the Third Reich supported the Friends. Luther believed that the Friends were one of the few organizations that were active in championing Nazi Germany actively and fearless overseas.¹⁶² The bickering and jealousy between the various associations and clubs particularly in North America continued well into the late 1930s and only stopped when some organizations merged and others like the Bund were later officially banned. Older organizations mostly held back on their support for the Reich because they simply did not know what to think of Nazi Germany.

¹⁶⁰ Former front soldiers who left Germany after 1918 founded military organizations overseas. In 1932 a *Deutsch Amerikanischer Marine Bund* (German American Navy Association) operated in large cities in the USA.

¹⁶¹ The Steuben Society is an educational, fraternal, and patriotic organization of American citizens of German background and named after Major General Frederick von Steuben who came to the American colonies to train Washington's troops in the Revolutionary War.

¹⁶² Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945, Series C, The Third Reich, vol III, #571, 1119.

Singing was an important tool used abroad and to promote Deutschtum. Germanness, it seemed, was particularly present in the choir culture, which consisted traditionally of all-male singers.¹⁶³ Choirs had names like Germania, Concordia, or Edelweiss. The German Sängerbund, headquartered in Berlin, encouraged German choirs to sing in their native language, German. Although they respected the American citizenship, it was necessary to remind the fellow „hyphenated“ American brothers that they should always practice German character and customs, the *Deutsche Art und Sitte*. Unfortunately, just as the language restrictions in 1917 curtailed development of German culture in the United States, so too did Prohibition. In some cases the once popular Sängerfests and other annual German festivals were suspended for more than a decade.¹⁶⁴

Visits of the War Cruiser

In general, Germans around the world showed great enthusiasm and excitement when one of the German war cruisers arrived. These ships brought together Germans who often lived far apart and old and young tried to catch a glimpse of the ships. German veterans from the 1866 and 1870-71 wars visited the ships with delight and pride.¹⁶⁵ It was not uncommon for neighbors to meet on the ships and realize that they were both of German origins.¹⁶⁶ Opitz recalled a scene in Puerto Montt in the German club. One of the Chilean Germans heard his dialect and as it turned out, both had attended the same school. Yet, when the news made the round that afternoon, another Chilean German stepped forward and he also had attended that school. The

¹⁶³ See the comments and discussion about women and mixed choirs during the monthly board of directors meeting of the Houston Sängerbund, April 23, 1935; Theodore Gish. *The History of the Houston Sängerbund, 1874-1985*. Houston: Institute of Texas-German Studies, 1990.

¹⁶⁴ Omaha World Herald, *Omaha German Americans reviving activities as beer becomes legal*, Aug 7, 1933.

¹⁶⁵ Schönberg, *Amerika Reise*, 69.

¹⁶⁶ Luv und Lee 1934, *Auslandsstudien zu deutschen Kriegsschiffbesuchen*, 25-26.

two men from Chile knew nothing of each other until the ship came.¹⁶⁷ When the cruiser departed, a familiar picture repeated itself in most ports: Germans accompanied the ship along the piers and canals, along the waterways and passages, or in chartered boats to sail alongside. Sailors reported that some of the more affluent Germans flew from one stop to the next to greet the ship for a second time. When the *Karlsruhe* stopped in June 1932 in Portland, Oregon, the local newspapers reported that a girl from Galveston flew all the way from Texas to meet the ship and one of the cadets for a second time.¹⁶⁸

These immigrants longed for a piece of *Heimat*, something that was evident in the official ceremonies performed onboard. A German war cruiser was considered German soil, standing under German law, jurisdiction and protection. Therefore, any official ceremony conducted was seen as performed on German soil.¹⁶⁹ Many immigrants took advantage of this opportunity and the chaplain was busy conducting weddings and baptisms in almost every port. This implies that a cultural separation between the immigrants, their *Deutschtum* and their new homeland existed and a full integration into the culture of their newly adopted home had not yet been completed. The *Karlsruhe* was described as “in every port Germans abroad caress with their eyes a piece of *Heimat*”. The ship represented Germany and the Germans abroad saw the strong will of survival and a will to act.¹⁷⁰

Just as important as visiting Germans overseas and bringing the *Heimat* to them was the contact the sailors kept with their loved ones during their year abroad. Families and friends had the opportunity to send letters and packages of up to ten kilograms to the cruiser. The material

¹⁶⁷ Entry logbook Opitz, Chile, 1934.

¹⁶⁸ Oregonian, *Germany needs Colonies, Karlsruhe Captain says*, June 23, 1932.

¹⁶⁹ Leitfaden für den Unterricht an der Marineschule 1929, 32.

¹⁷⁰ Die Reichsmarine, #1, 1932.

had to be sent to Hamburg at cost, from there it was transported free of charge to the ship.¹⁷¹

The sailors were able to receive letters and packages every three to four weeks. In the case of mate Karl Lischke these packages had fatal consequences. He died after the consumption of fish sent from home.¹⁷² The importance of communication was also evident in the fact that sailor Kurt Gross was engaged when he left Kiel in 1932. Because of a lack of letters he broke off this engagement as soon as he returned back home.

Conclusion

Germans have always had wanderlust, migrating and settling over centuries around the globe. In the process, they have built and re-created a piece of the old world and constructed an identity for themselves in the countries where they resided through a variety of means. In the early twentieth century, many organizations, some official and some not, existed and aided immigrants abroad in a variety of matters. Germans abroad were advised to preserve their heritage, culture, and language by the main organizations involved in immigration matters. Germanism abroad was crippled in many places during and after World War I. The largest receiving nation, the United States, established a quota system that hindered immigration but opened up avenues to previously untapped nations, particularly in South America. Germanism recovered by the time the war cruiser *Karlsruhe* visited these places overseas in the 1930s. Because of the wide geographical areas, particularly in South America, an idea of *Heimat* and associated feeling and belonging took shape across the Atlantic.

¹⁷¹ Marineverordnungsblatt, 60, 1929, March 15, 1929, #55.

¹⁷² He was buried in 1934 Mountain View Cemetery in Tacoma. Seattle Daily Times, *Body of German sailor rests in Tacoma grave*, March 19, 1934.

Germans are often accused of so-called *Vereinsmeierei*; too many clubs and association, oftentimes duplicating the exact services and programs that similar associations do already.¹⁷³ In many cases they emerged after a dispute amongst members, who then split from the original club and form a new association. This trend also continued among the political and military associations founded overseas after the take-over by the Nazis and these split and quarrels were noticed and described by the commander and crew of the *Karlsruhe*.¹⁷⁴ In Massachusetts for example the Bund deutscher Kriegsteilnehmer (German Veterans Associations) founded in 1933 and the Stahlhelm merged in 1935, but not every member was happy with the direction the new Stahlhelmbund was headed. After the two associations merged, a smaller group of fourteen members split off and named their newly formed association German Legion. To add to the confusion, these new associations used similar names for their new group. The German League exclusively used the black, white, and red flag with the iron cross during their meetings. It was reported that when the Horst Wessel Song was played at the Stahlhelmbund meetings in Massachusetts, the orchestra there purposely butchered the song. As a reminder the lyrics of the Horst Wessel Song were printed in major German language newspapers in the United States, and for those German Americans that no longer could read or speak German, the text was published in English as well.¹⁷⁵ Another example of how dysfunctional some overseas German communities acted can be illustrated in a letter send to the RWeM in Berlin that was signed by the “majority of the German colony” in Vancouver, Canada. The author started out by thanking Berlin for sending the *Karlsruhe*. He claimed that the ship was the best propaganda material since the war had ended and that it opened the eyes of many British to the true Germany. Yet the

¹⁷³ The cadet yearbook crew 1934 reported the same problems. Rio de Janeiro alone had 120 German clubs and associations, 13.

¹⁷⁴ Erich Topp, *Odyssey*, 29.

¹⁷⁵ *California Journal*, February 28, 1935. *Jahrbuch Kadetten* 1934, 14.

larger portion of the letter dealt with the dissatisfaction of the Germans about Dr. Heinrich Seelheim, the German consul to Western Canada. The author, and in his opinion most Germans there, believed that someone who “looked like a half-Jew” should not represent the Germandom in the rather exclusive British and white Vancouver.¹⁷⁶ Berlin had also considered appointing an honorary consul to Vancouver, a Mr. Mahler. Mahler was according to the anonymous writer not worthy to be that consul either; not only did he looked “un-Germanic” and Slavic, but he also had no manners.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁶ Unsigned letter to RWeM from Vancouver, March 23, 1935; R33435.

¹⁷⁷ Unsigned letter to RWeM from Vancouver, March 23, 1935; R33435.

CHAPTER 4

MAIDEN VOYAGE AND INCIDENT IN AFRICA

After the cruiser *Emden* successfully visited in 1926 Africa, Asia, and South America and in 1929 Australia and Hawaii, the naval command decided to dispatch another war cruiser, this time the *Karlsruhe* on her eight-month maiden voyage in May 1930.¹⁷⁸ Many considerations went into the planning and selection of the ports and nations to be visited. In July 1929, Eugen Lindau was appointed by the naval command to captain the ship, and in November he took command of the vessel.¹⁷⁹ Lindau, an experienced commander had come up through the ranks of the German navy. He entered the imperial navy in 1903 and gained valuable skills in the torpedo division during the war. After the re-establishment of the German navy, he served in a variety of positions at naval stations in both the Baltic and North Seas, but like many other former imperial officers he had problems with democracy in Weimar. Lindau openly described himself as an arch-reactionary and a monarchist to the bone. After some dubious public comments he made to his officers when he commanded the cruiser *Arkona*, the Marineleitung questioned him but “he argued that his personal convictions had no influence on the performance of his duties.” Admiral Zenker defended him, claiming that he only “tried to gain the trust of his men” but used unwise words.¹⁸⁰ These comments did not damage his career, though and he continued to move steadily through the ranks. Lindau used the time between his appointment and the start of the voyage to get acquainted with his new command: the vessel itself, his officers, and finally the crew and cadets. He inspected the ship for a final time, ordered and loaded provisions, held meetings with the Marineamt and studied his instructions from the Foreign Office.

¹⁷⁸ The *Emden* was the only light cruiser in her class, built in 1921 and scuttled in 1945.

¹⁷⁹ *Marineverordnungsblatt*, 60, Heft 15, July 15, 1929.

¹⁸⁰ Keith Bird, *Weimar*, 143-144.

The nations and ports were cautiously selected for a variety of reasons by Berlin. Political and economic issues had to be considered. During an earlier trip, in 1926, a stop in China by the cruiser *Hamburg* was considered at the former German colony of Tsingtau (Qingdao) and the city of Shanghai. The German diplomatic mission there, however, believed that this would be a political mistake, not least because of the strong nationalist movement in China. Although twelve years had passed since the war ended, tensions were still high between Germany and some of her former adversaries. French ports, as well as the countries of Morocco, Tunisia, and Syria were avoided by the naval command.¹⁸¹ On the other hand no objections were raised to stops at Greece, Crete, or ports in Yugoslavia. Large contingent of former Austrian officers were serving in the Yugoslavian navy, and Berlin believed that a German war cruiser would be much welcomed.¹⁸²

German companies involved in overseas trade, particularly in Africa, were also engaged in the planning phase. Visits like the upcoming one gave them prime insight into German communities and economic conditions abroad. President Paul von Hindenburg issued the official orders with a typed memorandum that described in a few, short words the mission and route of the *Karlsruhe*. “The cruiser *Karlsruhe* has to report on May 19, 1930, for a 7-month tour abroad.” The destinations followed. Similar orders were issued before each of the five voyages without a change in wording, even after 1933.¹⁸³ The first stop abroad for the *Karlsruhe* was Sicily where the vessel arrived on June 2, 1930. From there, the sailors went to Greece, then through the Suez Canal to Port Said in Egypt where they took on 500 tons of oil, and then into

¹⁸¹ It was not until 1934 when the German war cruisers *Königsberg* and *Leipzig* visited Portsmouth, England.

¹⁸² Telegram Windecker, July 2, 1929. Politisches Archive AA, R 33431, Kriegsschiffe, März 1929 – September 1930, Bd 12 and 13.

¹⁸³ During this first trip no official travel account was published in the German media. Partial reports of the 1930 trip appeared a year later. The official organ of the NSDAP, the *Völkische Beobachter* in print daily since 1923 did not mention the travels abroad until the Nazis were in power.

the Indian Ocean to Fort Victoria in the Seychelles Islands. All visits proceeded without a glitch until the ship arrived at the port of Tanga.

Tanga, located about 80 miles south of the border of British East Africa (modern-day Kenya), had a long history of European involvement. The Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama arrived there first in 1498 with a group of sailors, including a few Germans. Trading posts were established in the area, but 200 years later, the Portuguese were replaced by Arab spice and slave traders.¹⁸⁴ By the early nineteenth century the Europeans were back. In the 1840s German explorers reached Mt. Kilimanjaro and in 1857 a British expedition discovered Lake Tanganyika. In the mid-1880s the German Karl Peters founded the German East Africa Company (Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft, DAOG) and although Peters acted independently of the imperial German government, Germany considered the region theirs. The DAOG then recruited natives to serve as askari under the German Colonial Army in the late 1880s. The British meanwhile, took control of the island of Zanzibar and in 1890 the two nations divided the region officially between them. German East Africa, as it was called, included modern-day Burundi, Rwanda, and large parts of present Tanzania. In January 1891 the German government formally took control of the region, and started to improve the local infrastructure, particularly the railway system. Tanga became one of the busiest ports on the Indian Ocean. Nevertheless the Germans faced stiff resistance and revolts from the native tribes, culminating in the 1905-1907 Maji Maji rebellion. At least 100,000 Africans were killed during these uprisings after the Germans adopted a scorched-earth policy.

The outbreak of World War I in August 1914 affected the region almost immediately. The British objective was to control the entire, strategically important African east coast. The

¹⁸⁴ A Brandenburgische-Afrikanische Kompany was founded 250 years ago.

Germans put Colonel Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck in charge of their forces and he was able to defeat a British amphibious landing of the Indian Expeditionary Forces at Tanga on November 5, 1914, led by British Major General Aitken. Yet by 1916 Britain was able to gain a foot hold in the area, although they were not able to defeat the Germans contingent completely. Lettow finally surrendered on November 25, 1918, two weeks after the armistice in Europe, and as a result of the 1919 peace treaty, German East Africa was divided between the victors. Belgium received the northwestern part as Ruanda-Urundi. Portugal took the area south of the Rovuma River which became part of Portuguese Mozambique. The League of Nations gave Great Britain the remainder of the area, which was renamed Tanganyika. Sir Donald James Cameron became the governor of Tanganyika in 1925 a position he held until 1931.¹⁸⁵

The war cruiser arrived as scheduled in Tanga, a former German colonial port, at noon on the 26th of July. The visit was arranged by Sir Orme Sargent from the British Foreign Office after he was approached in July 1929 by the German ambassador Gustav Friedrich Sthamer about a possible visit.¹⁸⁶ No objections were raised on the British side until July 1, 1930, when the *Karlsruhe* was already on her way to Africa. The British secretary of state considered deferring the visit to Tanga.¹⁸⁷ However, the Colonial Office believed that the Foreign Office would not back this request. They believed that “in these Locarno days we cannot assume in advance that the cruiser’s officers and crew will behave improperly.”¹⁸⁸ The British referred to the Locarno Treaties, a series of post-WWI agreements in which the Allies and central and eastern European countries tried to return to normal relations with Weimar Germany. Locarno

¹⁸⁵ The area stayed under British control until 1961.

¹⁸⁶ Sthamer’s daughter Mary was married to Otto Georg Karlowa who was Consul General in Dutch East Indies, Batavia.

¹⁸⁷ Telegram #99, July 1, 1930, D. Malone; The National Archives Kew, Richmond Surrey, German Cruiser Karlsruhe Visit to the Port of Tanga. CO 691/112/10.

¹⁸⁸ Memo G.L.M. Glauson, Kew, CO 691/112/10.

was regarded as one of the cornerstones to improve the western European diplomatic climate in the mid to late 1920s. The “spirit of Locarno” was a hope of international peace, especially when foreign troops withdrew from the Rhineland, and Germany was admitted to the League of Nations. In July 1930, Britain was afraid that if it abruptly cancelled the visit of the German cruiser without any reason it could be seen as an unwarranted confession of failure on its part. On the other hand the British hoped for a misstep by the German sailors because then “we can bring terrific weight, including that of the League if necessary, to bear on the German government.”¹⁸⁹ It seemed that Great Britain was waiting for a mishap, a wrong word or speech, the wrong song, because they knew “of course it will happen sometime, but every year will make it less important.”¹⁹⁰ Neither could anyone predict the reaction of the natives to the German war cruiser. The British did not want to take up the attitude that “merely seeing a German cruiser was going to upset the native mind.” Others were not so much troubled with whatever reaction the natives would display, but that the “local British will be furious and the rather numerous Germans will wave the flag all over the place and ”Deutsch-Ostafrika“ will be much in evidence.”¹⁹¹ The British feared that such a visit could also spur a deterioration of relationships among the settlers of the other nationalities in the area.¹⁹² Regardless, the British mandate government had approved entertainment for the cruiser at the local Hotel Tanga for the evening. A general invitation was extended to all local British subjects, and several came to Tanga. The

¹⁸⁹ Memo G.L.M. Clausen, July 2, 1930, Kew CO 691/112/10.

¹⁹⁰ Memo signed W.C.B. July 2, 1930, Kew CO 691/112/10.

¹⁹¹ Around one hundred Germans lived in Tanga itself while more owned or operated sisal plantations in the interior in 1930.

¹⁹² Memo G.L.M. Glauson, Kew, CO 691/112/10.

British delegation included the provincial commissioner, the local police commissioner, and other high-ranking British subjects.¹⁹³

Welcoming the crew to the African east coast was the German consul, Dr. Hermann Speiser, from Mombasa. His administrative district encompassed most of former German East Africa, Kenya, Uganda, the Tanganyika Territory, Zanzibar, and Nyasaland. The crew was invited by the local German community to excursions to see the African wilderness and in particular the German Kulturarbeit, or cultural work, done in the region. The sisal plantations of a Major von Brandis, located several hours in the interior and worth twenty- two million RM, were highlighted by the sailors.¹⁹⁴ Here time and history stood still. Several photos in Cadet Walter Holt's logbook show German estate houses with the imperial flag proudly displayed in the front. Holt himself drew the so-called Peters flag, five stars on red background, prominently in his logbook.¹⁹⁵ A trip to the battlefields of the Great War rounded off the itinerary and the sailors participated in a commemoration for the fallen of Tanga at a cemetery where both German and native askari are buried.¹⁹⁶ Wreaths at both German and askari graves were laid down, much to the delight of the natives.¹⁹⁷ Policy II F 2940, issued in May 1929 by the German Foreign Office, stated that a crew should only participate in wreath ceremonies abroad if the local German representative consented to it, since he was the one who knew the local conditions

¹⁹³ For the established rules and etiquette between commander, diplomatic corp and delegation visited see *Dienstkenntnis, Leitfaden für den Unterricht an der Marineschule*, Berlin: Mittler, 1929: 68ff.

¹⁹⁴ Diary entry August 1930 Walter Troll. Marine Archive Flensburg. Walter Prell reported that 75 cars were waiting for them at the pier for the sailors. Major von Brandis was the brother of Cordt von Brandis who conquered Fort Douaumont during WWI and received the Pour le Merite.

¹⁹⁵ Archive Flensburg, Logbook Walter Holt, 198-199. Not much is known about this diarist. Engineer cadet Walter Holt was born in June 1910 in Elberfeld and died on February 21, 1941 in the English Channel.

¹⁹⁶ The British used a separate cemetery for their fallen, showing a strict racial divide.

¹⁹⁷ The Weimar government was careful in the selection of the ports and nations and the ceremonies and festivities the crew would attend. Policy II F 2940 was issued in May 1929 and stated that a crew should only participate in wreath ceremonies abroad if the local German representative ok-ed the participation See footnote, telegram from von Bülow to German embassy in Pretoria, August 14, 1930. Politisches Archive AA R 33470, Akten betreffend die Kriegsschiffauslandsreise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe Berichte, Tanga & Daressalam Zwischenfall.

better than anyone else.¹⁹⁸ Overall, the former askari showed great enthusiasm when the ship arrived.¹⁹⁹

Speiser, as the highest ranking German official that evening, gave a celebration speech in German, trailed by remarks from Captain Lindau and music from the ship's orchestra followed by a taps ceremony performed by forty sailors in front of the hotel.²⁰⁰ Sailor Walter Prell recalled in his diary that the natives enthusiastically danced with traditional masks while the ship's orchestra played.²⁰¹ Shortly before midnight however, the British police commissioner who attended the festivities earlier in civilian dress, returned in uniform, making his appearance official. He closed the hotel bar without explanations. Although the provincial commissioner was no longer present, Speiser was able to locate him and the reasons given to Speiser were drunken sailors and "military display."²⁰² Speiser and Captain Lindau decided to shut down the festivities, and the crew returned back to the ship without incident. The two discussed the proper reaction to the disruptions by the British authorities and while both agreed that the *Karlsruhe* had reason to leave Tanga immediately, they agreed that such an act would be overstated and it would certainly not be in the interest of the Germans in Tanganyika or elsewhere. This was in their mind the best decision since the relationship in the former German colony between the British and the former colonists was still fragile.

¹⁹⁸ See footnote, telegram from von Bülow to German embassy in Pretoria, August 14, 1930. Politisches Archive AA R 33470, Akten betreffend die Kriegsschiffauslandsreise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe Berichte, Tanga & Daressalam Zwischenfall; After the Tanga incident von Bülow was cautious and although a wreath ceremony was scheduled in Pretoria/Durban, Germany did not want that this would look like an atonement attempt.

¹⁹⁹ Lindau was also told that the askaris were reminded to show the HRH *Enterprise* who arrived just two days later as a responds to the *Karlsruhe* visit "the same interest". Official report Lindau. Politisches Archive AA R 33470, Akten betreffend die Kriegsschiffauslandsreise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe Berichte, Tanga & Daressalam Zwischenfall.

²⁰⁰ Taps or *Zapfenstreich* is a 200-year ceremonial choral performance confined to the army and navy.

²⁰¹ Diary Entry Walter Prell, August 1930, Marine Archive Flensburg.

²⁰² It later turned out that none of the sailors was actually drunk, but one of the attending Germans, who drove into a crowd outside the hotel. He was arrested and fined. Document #88, Kew, CO 691/112/10.

The following morning, Speiser went back to the provincial commissioner for an official explanation. The commissioner, who resided across from the hotel, replied that he could see and hear the festivities, especially the taps. He reported that several high-ranking Britons were irritated and much displeased over the display of German militarism and propaganda and complained to him.²⁰³ He also heard a rumor that that one German sailor was drunk, which gave him more reasons to close early. The English believed that taps was a calculated behavior by the Germans to provoke public disorder and amounted to a gross breach of international courtesy.

The *Karlsruhe* sailed from Tanga as scheduled the following morning for her next destination, the island of Zanzibar. Here she met with the *H.M.S. Enterprise*, which had already been informed about the Tanga incident. The Germans saluted in accordance with naval rules with a 21-guns salute before they entered the harbor.²⁰⁴ The British vessel, however, decided not to return the salute immediately as was customary, but to wait over an hour. Further, Commander H. D. Pridham-Wippell of the *H.M.S. Enterprise* was quite surprised and annoyed that the German commander Lindau was two years his junior, and he felt slightly insulted by this fact. What followed was a series of communications between the two ships on who would receive the other first. The British saw it as quite discourteous that Lindau had a planned lunch appointment already set up before this topic was resolved.²⁰⁵

²⁰³ Most of the information from that evening and the speech came from the British District Engineer of the Tanganyika Railway Dept. Mr. L.J. Martin who was present that night and understood German. Telegram #140, August 8, 1930 by H.F. Downie to Mr. Clauson and Sir Grindle, Kew CO 691/112/10. Martin also translated Speisers speech as he recalled it into English. Enclosure "C" Martin, Aug 6, 1930, Kew, CO 691/112/10.

²⁰⁴ Marineverordnungsblatt, 60, 1929; Feb 15, 1929, *Flaggen, Salut, und Besuchsordnung*.

²⁰⁵ Memo from Commander Enterprise, #164B/203, August 10, 1930, Kew, CO 691/112/10. Lindau served in the German navy since 27 years.

The *Karlsruhe* was expected by August 9 in Lourenço Marques, her next destination.²⁰⁶ Yet before the ship reached that port an emergency on the fourth made it necessary to request an unscheduled stop at Dar-es-Salaam, the largest city in Tanganyika which was once the commercial center of German East Africa. One of the crew members required an emergency operation that could only be performed at a hospital. In 1897 Germany built the largest hospital in the region, now run by the British, which also housed a modern biological research institute where Robert Koch, the father of microbiology once worked.²⁰⁷ Although Captain Lindau was aware of the severity of the case already in Zanzibar, he did not request assistance since the Tanga question was still unresolved and the leading physician there was on vacation. Lindau believed that a short stop in the middle of the night to ship out a sick sailor would never be considered a “political question.” Yet this was exactly how the British interpreted this latest episode.

The Germans requested permission to stop at the pier in Dar-es-Salaam between 6 pm and 7 pm to bring the crew member to the hospital. The ship would immediately thereafter continue the trip. The British officials cabled back with a decline and suggested that the sick should be brought back all the way to Zanzibar. A series of communiqués between the British war cruiser *Effingham*, which laid in port, the governor, and the *Karlsruhe* were sent that night. Lindau requested to stop again and again; the *Karlsruhe* was in sight of the city and the situation life threatening. After several hours and numerous requests, the mandate governor finally gave his permission to ship out the sick sailor. Under the circumstances and the delay by the British authorities, the Germans viewed the behavior as an unfriendly act by the mandate government

²⁰⁶ Today Lourenço Marques is the modern-day city of Maputo, and the capitol city of Mozambique, located about 120 km north of the border to South Africa on the south east coast of Africa.

²⁰⁷ Koch is credited with isolating the tuberculosis and cholera bacillus and awarded the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1905 for his tuberculosis findings.

and preferred now to sail directly to Mozambique.²⁰⁸ The illness of sailor Gau was downplayed by the British in a letter from the British consul in Lourenço Marques to the Foreign Office in London. The consul, Joseph Pyke, referred to the suffering of the sailor as “precisely the nature of the malady of H.M. King Edward VII,” an acute appendicitis, when in reality Gau suffered from an ulcer of the Thoracic diaphragm.²⁰⁹

At that point only a handful of men in Africa, London, and Berlin knew about the two episodes, but all that changed on August 6 when the *Daily Mail* printed a story about a “Naval Parade in British Port.” The press coverage claimed that the Germans were “goose-stepping through the city of Tanga accompanied by many cries of „*Hoch*’ from Teuton bystanders and that Consul Speiser in his speech dilated on the historical glories of the Tanganyika Territory and the ill-fated sea landing in 1914 by the British.” These orations were “followed by a parade of marines ... and many hundreds of natives witnessed this demonstration.” The paper further called for his resignation.²¹⁰ The British Foreign Office claimed that it had not called for the resignation of Dr. Speiser but that the request emanated from several members of the local German community in Tanga.²¹¹ G. L. M. Clauson even suggested that the German community in Tanga should take action themselves, because such a step would then secure Speiser’s recall or resignation.²¹² The following day the *East African Standard* in Nairobi interviewed Speiser. He denied the allegations raised by the *Daily Mail* and believed that the newspaper was using the Dar-es-Salaam incident to gain political capital for the mandate government. He said that the

²⁰⁸ Transcripts of Telegrams to Marineleitung, August 6, 1930. Politisches Archiv Auswärtiges Amt, R 33470; Akten betreffend die Kriegsschiffauslandsreise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe Berichte, Tanga & Daressalam Zwischenfall. The operation was eventually performed successfully onboard.

²⁰⁹ Letter Lindau Aug 9, 1930, R33470 and letter Joseph Pyke to Secretary of State at F.O. Dec 16, 1930, Kew, CO 691/112/10. Lindau noted a “Zwerchfell Abszess”.

²¹⁰ “Germans Provoke A Storm”, *Daily Mail*, August 6, 1930. Kew, CO 691/112/10.

²¹¹ Telegram #140, Aug 11, 1930, H.F. Downie, Kew CO 691/112/10.

²¹² G.L.M. Clauson, Aug 12, 1930, Kew CO 691/112/10.

information must have come directly from official British sources who leaked the information to the press.²¹³ Speiser based his conclusion on the fact that he was well known in the region and always addressed as “Dr. Speiser.” Only the mandate government referred to him as “Herr Speiser,” and this was how the *Daily Mail* articles mentioned him.

During the following days more newspapers reported on the visit of the German war cruiser to East Africa. Some claimed that Lindau refused during a soccer match in Tanga “to meet any team containing coloured players, so the only match played was against a weak English team, whom the Germans defeated.”²¹⁴ Now that the episode had made its way around the world it “caused a great sensation and public opinion was not inclined to minimize the affair.”²¹⁵ British groups and associations closely linked to colonial affairs, like the British Joint East African Board and the Associated Producers, requested clarification by the Colonial and Foreign Offices. The board strongly approved of the actions taken by the British provincial commissioner in Tanga.

On August 9, however, the *London Times* printed a correction titled “The Alleged Incident at Tanga,” contradicting the *Daily Mail*’s version. The *London Times* called taps simply “an open-air concert.”²¹⁶ With this, the case should have been closed. The German Foreign Office as well as the press in Weimar were not particularly interested in the affair either,

²¹³ Newspaper clippings German Cruiser’s Visit to Tanga – Unfortunate Incident Explained. Politisches Archiv Auswärtiges Amt, R 33470; Akten betreffend die Kriegsschiffauslandsreise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe Berichte, Tanga & Daressalam Zwischenfall.

Memo from Speiser (Nairobi) to the AA, August 23, 1930. Politisches Archiv Auswärtiges Amt, R 33470; Akten betreffend die Kriegsschiffauslandsreise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe Berichte, Tanga & Daressalam Zwischenfall

²¹⁴ Karlsruhe Incident Rouses Berlin, *The Register News-Pictorial*, Adelaide, Australia, August 8, 1930.

²¹⁵ Newspaper clippings German Cruiser’s Visit to Tanga – Unfortunate Incident Explained. Politisches Archiv Auswärtiges Amt, R 33470; Akten betreffend die Kriegsschiffauslandsreise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe Berichte, Tanga & Daressalam Zwischenfall

²¹⁶ *The London Times*, August 9, 1930.

although the *Coburger Zeitung* published a short article titled “Invented Incident.”²¹⁷ The article only summarized the accusations of the *Daily Mail*. The newspaper, however, referred to Tanga as Tanager and the region as Deutsch-Ostafrika as though the war and the Treaty of Versailles never happened. The *London Times* printed in a short article comments from three different German newspapers, the moderate *Vossische Zeitung*, the *Vorwärts*, a left-oriented publication who believed that if the incident occurred it showed a lack of tact by the Germans, and the nationalistic newspaper *Deutsche Tageszeitung*. This newspaper believed that if the incident helped to make it clear that German East Africa was legally a mandate territory and not a British colony, it could only serve the nationalistic interests.²¹⁸ Like in Britain, several German trade associations including the Aussenhandelsstelle (Foreign Trade Office) in Hamburg and Lübeck, were concerned about the matter and requested clarification from the Foreign Ministry in Berlin. They pointed to the fact that another cruiser, the *Emden*, was scheduled to visit East Africa during her 1930 training cruise. One of the objectives was to establish economic ties during these stopovers.²¹⁹

Seven weeks later on September 11, 1930, the *East Africa* published a follow up article regarding the “German Goose-stepping in Tanga.” According to this latest version, natives who had served as German askari before the war had been invited to Tanga to see the battleship. Evidence for the popularity of the war cruiser was the fact that over one hundred applied for wage advancement to pay the train fare; many treated the visit like a two-day holiday.²²⁰ Yet the British Foreign Office did not let the incident rest either. Secretary of State Bernhard Wilhelm

²¹⁷ *Coburger Zeitung*, August 11, 1930, *Erfundene Zwischenfälle*.

²¹⁸ *The Times*, Aug 9, 1930, *German Press Comment*.

²¹⁹ The *Emden* left mid November 1930 with the cadets from the *Niobe* Wilhelmshaven for their training cruise

²²⁰ German Goose-Stepping in Tanga, *The East Africa – A Weekly Journal*, September 11, 1930. Official report of the commander Lindau, August 3, 1930. Politisches Archiv Auswärtiges Amt, R 33470; Akten betreffend die Kriegsschiffauslandsreise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe Berichte, Tanga & Daressalam Zwischenfall.

von Bülow received a letter from the British Ambassador in Berlin, Horace Rumbold, regarding Tanga and Dar-es-Salaam on October 20, 1930, asking to discuss the incident further. The British did not want to magnify the importance of the situation, but the discourteous behavior of both the captain and Speiser left, in their opinion, much to be desired. The attitude of the British in the summer 1930 towards the Weimar government was also that if they would “merely pass over it in silence it will be taken as a sign of weakness and invite further affronts [by the Germans].”²²¹ Rumbold claimed that Speiser’s speech differed considerably from the text subsequently communicated to the authorities of the mandate territory. The British also believed that the incident in Tanga amounted “to a public affront to the Mandatory Power,” and the behavior of both Speiser and Lindau seemed inexcusable, and in the British mind the “local government has suffered not merely temporary embarrassment.”²²² According to Rumbold the consul had stated that the territory belonged by right to Germany and the British should be the guest of the Germans and not the other way around. Therefore Rumbold wanted nothing short of an official apology and believed that Weimar Germany was at fault in both cases. He believed that Bülow should not hesitate to condemn the breach of recognized rules of international courtesy. Furthermore Bülow was informed that Dr. Speiser was no longer allowed to enter the Tanganyika Territory while he held any official position for the German government.²²³ Speiser was replaced in November 1930 by Baron Leopold von Plessen.²²⁴ Later that week Rumbold met in person with Bülow and once again complained about the speech, the performance of the taps, and the sick sailor. He stressed that both Speiser and Lindau were at fault because Speiser’s visit

²²¹ Letter to Admiralty and Foreign Office, #9, Sep 15, 1930, Kew, CO 691/112/10.

²²² Letter to Admiralty and Foreign Office, # 9, Sep 15, 1930, Kew, CO 691/112/10.

²²³ Speiser stayed in Africa, married to Retha Susan Dold and lived in South Africa after WWII.

²²⁴ Plessen was consul in Peking [sic] and already in Africa, attending the coronation of Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia on Nov 2, 1930.

to the provincial governor could only be interpreted as an apology.²²⁵ Yet not everyone in England believed that the two incidents were the fault of the Germans. The British Admiralty did not concur with the interpretations and actions of the Foreign Office. The Admiralty believed that what happened “was probably due to the personal peculiarities of the consul and the captain of the *Karlsruhe*.”²²⁶

The German Foreign Office determined that it was impossible through written communication to clarify the situation, so Speiser was personally recalled to report to Berlin in December 1930. Only then could they make an objective decision. As expected, Speiser’s report differed from that of the British. According to him no one yelled “*Hoch*” when taps was performed and no sailors marched through the city. Further he was not ordered to appear in front of the provincial governor. He rather believed that the incident was used as retaliation by the mandate government against him because he was able to secure the more economically valuable southwest highlands into German planters’ hands.²²⁷ Lindau emphatically confirmed to the naval command what Speiser had already reported: the vessel arrived as planned and was greeted by an official welcoming committee that included a retired Royal Navy commander, the Swiss consul, and a Mr. Gähde from the Deutsch-Ostafrika Linie.²²⁸ No British mandate official came onboard; the first contact with the authorities was made when Lindau and Speiser visited the provincial commissioner, Mr. Baines, who was described by Lindau as “friendly.”²²⁹

²²⁵ Letter from von Bülow to AA and Reichswehrminister, October 22, 1930. Politisches Archive AA R 33470, Akten betreffend die Kriegsschiffauslandsreise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe Berichte, Tanga & Daressalam Zwischenfall.

²²⁶ Letter Hancock, Oct 4, 1930, Kew CO 691/112/10.

²²⁷ Memo Speiser to AA, September 9, 1930. Politisches Archive AA R 33470, Akten betreffend die Kriegsschiffauslandsreise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe Berichte, Tanga & Daressalam Zwischenfall.

²²⁸ Speiser was already onboard since the night before when the ship had stopped in Mombasa for another oil intake.

²²⁹ Baines was described as a 28-year old veteran of the colonial office nick-named breezy Bill and described sometimes as a devil. Report Lindau to the AA, August 3, 1930.

All this played out as a backdrop in 1930 when the British government presented a plan to the League of Nations to combine their mandate areas, including Tanganyika, with their bordering colony Kenya.²³⁰ The Germans, of course, showed particular interest in this proposal. Further, the British government was debating the need to extend and eventually connect the two existing railroads in the region to tap into the unexploited resources laying south of the central line which ran from Dar-es-Salaam to Kigoma on Lake Tanganyika.²³¹ While the Treaty of Versailles was hated widely in Weimar, few believed by 1930 in a complete reversal, a return of Germany's colonies, or expansion back into Africa. Yet the call for a return of the colonies was still loud in some circles. Admiral Erich Raeder, for instance, believed that "sea and colonial service are siblings" and that the German navy should foster colonial thinking.²³²

Part of the commander's mission was also to assess the state of Germandom (Deutschum) around the world during these voyages. Lindau's visit to Tanga was too short to make any keen observations about the political situation of the former German colony. The commander recommended that because of the current political difficulties that a war cruiser should no longer visit the Tanga region. Regarding the Deutschum or Germandom in Tanga, Lindau was also unable to form a clear picture. The colony had recovered after the war and the number of settlers was growing. By 1929 two German schools operated in the region but the need for more existed. Yet many settlers were alarmed by the fact that the British planned to

²³⁰ In the summer of 1930 Great Britain faced several problems with her colonies and mandates around the world. For once, there was unemployment in England itself while Australia restricted immigration from England. Voices in India became louder regarding independence, the pro-British Egyptian king Fuad had problems in his country with riots against him and the United States had just annexed the South Pole.

²³¹ The Times, August 7, 1930, *Railway Problems in E. Africa*.

²³² Speech Raeder, May 28, 1931 in Berlin, *Deutsche Marine Zeitung* #21, November 1, 1931. In November 1930, the Hamburg Übersee Club held a lecture series with the topic: *Our former Colonies* with a Dr. Alfred Herrmann from the local university as one of the presenters. Attendees were against the annexation plans by the British regarding the Tanganyika mandate since this would forever obstruct the way to future, active German politics in the former East German Africa.

open a school in the region, which would diminish the Deutschtum in their former colony.²³³

Lindau believed that the colony lacked coherence, although a former officer of Lettow-Vorbeck by the name of Brandis seemed to be in charge. Brandis was a well situated sisal planter with over 62,000 acres and several industrial plants.²³⁴ Therefore, the captain recommended that if German war cruisers would visit the region in the future to contact Brandis directly.

In summary Lindau believed that the visit left a deep impression on his sailors and showed them “what we have lost.” Sailors Troll and Prell echoed this observation in their diary entries. NCO Prell spent several passages highlighting the German achievements under Lettow-Vorbeck instead of reporting on the visit itself. Detailed information about the political situation in Tanga came from Cadet Holt, who reported on the effort of the English to “slowly melt the colonies together into one.”²³⁵ Nevertheless the visit supported and cultivated the colonial thinking in the German nation and the board chaplain performed a wedding ceremony between planter Herr von der Lanken and a local German woman onboard the *Karlsruhe*.²³⁶

No other noteworthy incidence occurred on the remainder of the African leg of the voyage. In Durban a reception and dance was given in honor of the German crew, and the local British press reported that the German officers made a smart appearance and the crew’s conduct was excellent ashore.²³⁷ Lindau entertained British officers from the African Station, and around 6,000 local residents visited the ship at opening day. From Durban, the ship sailed to Cape Town, South Africa and to Lüderitz, a coastal city in former German South-West Africa (Namibia). Portuguese Lobito was the last stop in Africa before the cruiser crossed the Atlantic to Brazil.

²³³ Coburger Zeitung, *Deutschtum in Deutsch-Ostafrika*, Nov 29, 1930.

²³⁴ Over 100.000 Morgen of land.

²³⁵ Cadet Walter Holt, 196.

²³⁶ Official report Lindau, Politisches Archive AA R 33470, Akten betreffend die Kriegsschiffauslandsreise des Kreuzers *Karlsruhe* Berichte, Tanga & Daressalam Zwischenfall.

²³⁷ The *Emden* visited Durban in September 1931 and no incidents were reported then either.

German involvement in the largest nation in South America was not much older than that in Africa but more profound. The first German immigrants to Brazil arrived only in 1824 but by 1930 about 300,000 immigrants of German descent lived in Brazil with the largest portion in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sol.²³⁸ Names like Hohenau, Liebig, Blumenau, or Neu-Württemberg attested to the old *Heimat* and eighteen German newspapers in all were published at that time in Brazil. The *Karlsruhe* arrived in Rio de Janeiro on October 4 and was scheduled to leave on the 17th.²³⁹ Sailors were able to visit Corcovado and see the construction of the statue of Christ, while others soaked in the lights and life of this metropolis. Two sailors fell sick while in Rio and had to be hospitalized, and sailor Bartsch died of pneumonia and was buried there. Regarding fallen sailors, the naval policy called for a division of duties with the Foreign Offices for those who passed after October 1, 1919. If a sailor was buried in a civilian cemetery but his relatives were unable to maintain the grave, the navy would administer for up to thirty years the burial plot. Graves abroad however were supported by the Foreign Office. Navy chaplains from visiting German ships were in charge of checking and reporting on these graves scattered around the world.²⁴⁰

The political situation in the fall of 1930 in Brazil was unstable and precarious. President Washington Luis Pereira de Sousa faced since 1929 a crisis in the country. Because of the Great Depression coffee prices fell sharply on the world markets and the ruling *paulista* coffee planters, experienced financial difficulties. This cost President Washington Luis his support in wide circles, and with the help of the military he was overthrown and replaced with Getulio

²³⁸ The involvement of Germans in Brazil however goes back to Moritz von Nassau-Siegen who administered North Brazil, around Pernambuco in the name of the Dutch in the seventeenth century. Furthermore emperor Dom Pedro I had an exclusive German body guards. The estimates of Germans in Brazil range from 233,000 to over 400,000, see Frederick C. Luebke, *Germans in the New World*, 98 and Rene Ernaini Gertz, *Politische Auswirkung der Deutschen Einwanderung in Südbrasilien*, 13.

²³⁹ The ship actually arrived three days earlier in Rio than scheduled.

²⁴⁰ *Marineverordnungsblatt*, 60, 1929, June 15, 1929.

Vargas. While the *Karlsruhe* was on her way to Brazil, the German steamer *Baden*, a ship from the Hamburg-Amerika Linie, was shot at in the harbor of Rio de Janeiro by government troops. The steamer was hit at the stern, killing 27 passengers and injuring dozens more.²⁴¹ Brazilian soldiers patrolled the streets, and the sailors could see bullet-riddled buildings on shore, although none of the diarists seemed unduly alarmed by these images. All had lived through World War I and the revolution in Germany. Born in 1910, Holt was the youngest of the diarists and only four when the Great War broke out. After he saw Brazilian troops in Rio, childhood memories about Germany soldiers marching off into battle and enthusiastic Germans waving good-bye were evoked. Holt believed that the German civilians showed more enthusiasm than the population in Brazil. The next scheduled stop for the *Karlsruhe* was Sao Salvador da Bahia, where the ship arrived on October 22nd.²⁴² Wassner was advised by the German consul in Bahia not to enter the harbor facilities unless there was an immediate danger for the Germans living there. He should wait until the British and American cruisers arrived, and avoid being the first warship there. The German vessel was not allowed per German consulate to enter the harbor and the crew not allowed to leave for two days. Heavy fighting in the city and region prevented both. A contingent of other warships arrived including several Brazilian vessels, the *U.S.S. Pensacola*, and the British cruiser *Delhi*.²⁴³ Finally on the 28th the situation on land seemed defused, and the sailors were allowed to leave the ship. Regardless of the fighting and unstable situation, the German community in Bahia welcomed the sailors to a variety of activities, including a bowling match in

²⁴¹ By the time the *Baden* was shot at, the revolutionaries were successful and heavy fighting was reported around Porto Alegre. Berlin was informed about the incident but decided not to stop the *Karlsruhe*. Rio claimed that the vessel was asked to show flag but did not do so. The captain of the *Baden*, Rollin stated that he showed the German flag when asked and he called the whole thing a series of unfortunate mishaps. Nevertheless the Brazilians shot. But since the *Baden* was allowed to continue her travel it indicated that the two governments were anxious to continue under friendly relations.

²⁴² The official itinerary had the ship arrive on the 24th of October 1930. AA, Besuch deutscher Kriegsschiffe im Ausland, R33432.

²⁴³ The HMS *Delhi* was a *Danae* class cruiser, launched in 1919 and scrapped in 1948.

their club house.²⁴⁴ Yet Wassner detected a certain apathy and trepidation from the Germans. He blamed it on the unstable conditions in the country, and he detected, particularly in Rio, that the Germans there were rather happy when the cruiser left earlier than scheduled.²⁴⁵ German Brazilians asked the commander bluntly what a German cruiser was doing in Brazil at such a time. The Germans there did not need nor ask for any protection. They believed that the visit could potentially attract the resentment of the Brazilian government, which was not in the overall economic interest of Germany.²⁴⁶ The *Karlsruhe* stayed twelve days in Bahia. The last stops on the 1930 trip were Pernambuco, Brazil, followed by a one-day stop at St. Vincent. Here the *Karlsruhe* took on oil for the last time and met her sister ship the *Köln*. Together they sailed via Tenerife to Vigo, Spain. These last weeks of the maiden voyage were filled with more exercises at sea. The crew conducted torpedo maneuvers, drills, and training during their eleven days in Vigo. This was also an important stop for the cadets. Their pre-exams were administered several weeks earlier during the Lobito-Rio leg, and now they took their last exams in Vigo. The sailors also had the opportunity to meet with the crew of the Dornier DO X, a semi-cantilever monoplane, the largest of its kind at the time. Pride in German technology and know-how was evident in the diary entries of the sailors. The plane was built on the Swiss side of Lake Constance, at Altenrhein, to circumvent Versailles and was on its transatlantic flight to New York, via Holland, England, France, and Spain.²⁴⁷ When the *Karlsruhe* arrived back in Kiel and anchored at the Scharnhorst Bridge on December 13, 1930, the crew was welcomed by enthusiastic families and fellow sailors. Walter Prell's last entry in his diary reads: "Everything ok. Sunday in the *Heimat*."

²⁴⁴ The sailors reported that the curfew for civilians started at 6pm.

²⁴⁵ AA Auslandsreise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe, R33467.

²⁴⁶ Report Lindau to AA, R33467.

²⁴⁷ The DO X had technical problems during the next stop in Lisbon before the airplane made the flight to New York.

Much planning and consideration went into the first itinerary of the *Karlsruhe*. Both the political situation and economic interests along the route had to be considered, as well as requests from the various German communities and German embassies overseas. Regardless of the detailed planning, one major event occurred in Tanga, East Africa. Tensions were high when the crew was accused of displaying German militarism during the fragile times of 1930 by British authorities. This accusation could have produced a major diplomatic and political incident between Great Britain and Germany and at one time threatened to become a serious situation. The incident was considered by the British to be a gross breach of international courtesy, but as it turned out, much inflated. In the end, however, it died down quietly and calmly. Overall, the sailors experienced new nations, people, and cultures on their seven month voyage, and came back to Weimar Germany with new impressions.

CHAPTER 5

THE LAST VOYAGE UNDER THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC

Captain Erwin Wassner became the *Karlsruhe*'s second commander in September 1931, just twelve weeks before the cruiser was scheduled to leave for a good-will tour around the world with 69 cadets and a total of 532 men on board.²⁴⁸ The official travel plan was approved on November 6, 1931, but it had to be adjusted several times thereafter. Training abroad for the cadets included two shooting exercises, one off the North American west coast, the other off Argentina, but both in international waters.²⁴⁹ These exercises involved the elaborate building of targets, and the cruiser did not carry the supplies needed onboard. The navies of both the U.S. and Argentina were therefore contacted by the German Foreign Office, the Auswärtige Amt (AA), to construct the targets needed and at the same time to assist with tugboats and towing of the target disks. The American liaison officer, however, suggested using a harbor further south than Seattle, since unexpected fog in these waters could make practice at times difficult. Berlin then decided to move the exercise to Hawaii.²⁵⁰ In all the *Karlsruhe* was expected to spend a little over a year away from home and cover roughly 43,000 nautical miles.

²⁴⁸ 25 officers, 3 civilian government employees, 69 cadets, 19 officers of the deck, 293 enlisted, 10 civilian personnel. The laundry facilities on board the ship were run by Chinese workers hired as civilians by the navy.

²⁴⁹ AA, Akten betreffend Besuch deutscher Kriegsschiffe im Auslande, Kriegsschiffauslandsreisen, Allgemeines; II F 3362; September 1930-März 1932, Bd 13/14; R 33432.

²⁵⁰ Telegram Prittwitz to AA, Feb 1, 1932, Akten betreffend Besuch deutscher Kriegsschiffe im Auslande, Kriegsschiffauslandsreisen, Allgemeines; II F 3362; September 1930-März 1932, Bd 13/14; R 33432. The government of Argentina agreed to support the exercise of the German navy, letter AA to Reichswehrminister, Jan 28, 1932, Akten betreffend Besuch deutscher Kriegsschiffe im Auslande, Kriegsschiffauslandsreisen, Allgemeines; II F 3362; September 1930-März 1932, Bd 13/14; R 33432. On Nov 6 the naval command sent a thank you letter to the American naval attaché in Berlin to thank him for the support during the many stops in US ports.

Erwin Wassner was a well-known former submarine commander who was decorated with the „Pour le Mèrite“ for accomplishments during World War I.²⁵¹ This award, for the merit, was the highest honors given by Prussian kings in a military class and originated with Frederick the Great. Prior to his appointment, Wassner served for almost three years as commander of the training schooner *Niobe*, which acquainted him with cadet training and made him suitable to command the war cruiser. The commander and his officer staff celebrated their departure at the Schlosshof Hotel in Kiel where Wassner stressed in a short speech that his crew should “appear abroad for the good of our fatherland.”²⁵² In a last meeting with the naval command and the AA in Berlin on November 10th, he received more instructions for the year abroad.²⁵³ Since Germany and most nations around the world experienced economic difficulties in the early 1930s, Wassner was informed that he should not expect costly entertainment on the part of any German colony.²⁵⁴ Because of the world depression, numerous requests by countries or cities could also not be considered. In most cases the German communities were either too small to validate a stop or the ports not suitable to accommodate 500 men. All visits were handled as unofficial, which required less representation, fewer events and gatherings, but also fewer excursions into the interior of the country visited.

The week before a voyage started, the cadets and new crew member were conditioned for life on the cruiser. Safety and fire drills were conducted and so was the first torpedo exercise off

²⁵¹ Wassner was not the only decorated officer onboard. Heinz Degenhardt, gunnery officer participated at the Battle of Jutland where he won his first iron cross. Battle of Jutland is the British equivalent to the Skagerrak Schlacht. Onboard of ship were six sailors who had participated in the battle.

²⁵² Schönberg, *Amerika-Reise*, Kiel: C. Schaidt Verlag, 1933, 3.

²⁵³ Akten betreffend Besuch deutscher Kriegsschiffe im Auslande, Kriegsschiffauslandsreisen, Allgemeines; II F 3362; September 1930-März 1932, Bd 13/14; R 33432. Wassner was appointed to commander on July 1, 1930. After the Good-Will tour on the *Karlsruhe*, Wassner became the naval attaché in London. Erwin Wassner died August 24, 1937.

²⁵⁴ Letter AA to German Embassy, DC, Nov 9, 1931, Akten betreffend Besuch deutscher Kriegsschiffe im Auslande, Kriegsschiffauslandsreisen, Allgemeines; II F 3362; September 1930-März 1932, Bd 13/14; R 33432; see also decree RWM August 19, 1931, II F 2538.

the Baltic coast. The over 500 men needed to be fed and entertained for a year and supplies started to arrive in Kiel as scheduled.²⁵⁵ This time the provisions included Christmas trees, since the *Karlsruhe* would be at sea during the holidays. Beer also arrived in large cargo cars via rail. The extreme economic situation of the Weimar Republic became evident when 577 empty beer kegs were picked up by a ship of the Hamburg-Amerika Line in Portland in June and sent back to Bremen to be re-used.²⁵⁶ A last church service for the crew and their families was performed by protestant chaplain Armin Schallehn before the ship lifted anchor.²⁵⁷ The ship then sailed through the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Kanal along the way to the Brunsbüttel locks, which eventually released the *Karlsruhe* into the North Sea. Admiral Walter Gladisch, chief of the fleet and other high ranking naval officers were among the many dignitaries sending the cruiser off. The ship's orchestra played Eichendorff's "*Wem Gott will rechte Gunst erweisen*" while 800 sailors from the *Köln* and *Leipzig* saluted in honor.²⁵⁸ As the *Karlsruhe* made her way toward the English Channel, Commander Wassner read three telegrams to his crew. President Hindenburg, Admiral Raeder, and Minister of Defense (Reichswehrminister) Wilhelm Groener all sent greetings of best wishes and success. The sailors were aware that this was not a twelve month vacation but rather a test of their abilities, stamina and determination, to bring honor to the fatherland and to raise the level of "Germandom abroad."²⁵⁹ The good-will tour was seen in the Germany public and in German navy circles as one of the more important trips a cadet cruiser could undertake

²⁵⁵ Letter German Consulate Cali, March 25, 1932 to AA regarding a visit to Buenaventura, Columbia; AA Auslandsreise, Feb 1932-IIF397; R 33472.

²⁵⁶ Oregonian, *Empty beer drums will be sent home*, June 29, 1932.

²⁵⁷ Armin Schallehn undertook three cruises with the *Karlsruhe* and moved after the war in 1947 to Marburg/Lahn where he worked at the Städtische Pfarrkirche and Lukas Gemeinde until his retirement in January 1970.

²⁵⁸ If God wishes to show true favor to someone, he sends him out into the wide world and points out his miracles in mountains and forests and river and fields.

²⁵⁹ Schönberg, *Amerika-Reise 1931-32*, 4. The trip was also well publicized in Germany at the time. *Coburger Zeitung*, Dec 1, 1931 #287; *Fürstentum Coburg Zeitung*, Dec 2, 1931. Schönberg was Kapitänleutnant, Div Officer II, AD.

after the Great War, and the crew saw themselves as pioneers of *Deutschtum*.²⁶⁰ The *Blau Jacken* or blue jackets as they were called had an opportunity to meet new people but also to show foreign nations the impression of the unbreakable German will of survival. A second, but not less important mission was to bring the German brothers overseas greetings from the *Heimat*.²⁶¹ Since the *Karlsruhe* was built and launched during the Republic, the ship was seen by many as a symbol of progress, modernity, and overcoming the Versailles Treaty.

Passing through the English Channel, Captain Wassner reminded his crew of the heavy submarine losses the Germans suffered there in the last war. In honor of the fallen comrades, an iron cross wreath was placed in the dark water.²⁶² The weather in the Channel was rough these last days in November of 1931 and the fully loaded vessel shook and trembled and continued to do so in the Bay of Biscay. The first overseas stop was reached when the ship anchored in Pontevedra, Spain, an “A” port. Stops at these training ports were used for both theoretical and practical training. Here the cadets learned how to release smaller boats into the water, but also practiced with the international maritime signal flags and Morse code. After a few days in Spain, the ship sailed to St. Cruz, Tenerife, for their first fuel intake.

From there the vessel crossed the Atlantic Ocean to stop in Hamilton, Bermuda. Within a year and a half the attitude and position of the British government and military had changed since the *Karlsruhe* last visited an English port. The crew and officers anticipated the arrival with great eagerness since it was not often that a German war ship arrived in English territory. To prevent a second Tanga, the British Foreign Office was informed about the travel plans of the ship, and they “had no objection to these visits by the competent British

²⁶⁰ Schönberg, *Amerika-Reise*, 132.

²⁶¹ Fürstenfeldbruck Zeitung, Dec 9, 1932, #286.

²⁶² See also Grafinger Zeitung, Dec 5, 1931, *Totengebenfeier des Kreuzers Karlsruhe im englischen Kanal*.

authorities.”²⁶³ Three English warships lay in port already but none replied to the *Karlsruhe* salute. Mechanic Robert Buttmi as so many others onboard was uneasy about the reception in this British port. Fourteen years had passed since the war and he considered himself part of a new, young, open-minded generation who came to a friendship visit.²⁶⁴ Officer Schönberg reported that the Germans sensed a certain skepticism and reservation in Hamilton; they were at first not allowed to enter restaurants and bars on the island. Therefore some sailors felt a certain dissatisfaction on their first shore leave.²⁶⁵ After a few days, however, the initial “reservation turned into esteem and friendly cooperation” and the discrimination attitude of the British counterparts turned into a positive one.²⁶⁶ Both sides, the English soldiers stationed on the island and the German crew, wanted to forget about the past animosities and assured with statements and actions.²⁶⁷ As a gesture of good-will, Schönberg reported that some English sailors and fusiliers took off their war medals for the time being. In all, the visit was a complete success, the crew was able to tear down existing prejudice and preconceived sentiments and feelings of bias were abolished. Sailor Gross also had no problems connecting with the English sailors. He marveled at the camaraderie. The “Tommies, they forgot about the war,” he wrote, adding that “the English were gentlemen and open people.”²⁶⁸ Regardless, the lost war and the Treaty of Versailles were an ever present companion on the trips. Old wounds from the war were still raw, even fourteen years after it ended. Hilmar Schroeter wrote in the *Reichsmarine* that the sight of

²⁶³ Letter, German Embassy London to AA regarding decree Aug 10, 1931 (II F 2538) Akten betreffend Besuch deutscher Kriegsschiffe im Auslande, Kriegsschiffauslandsreisen, Allgemeines; II F 3362; September 1930-März 1932, Bd 13/14; R 33432.

²⁶⁴ Buttmi, *Werben* 51.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 53.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 54.

²⁶⁷ Schönberg, *Amerika Reise*, 17.

²⁶⁸ Kurt Gross, *Die Reise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe, 1932*. Bad Schussenried: Gerhard Hess Verlag, 2013, 38-39.

the former German steamer *Imperator* in the English Channel deeply moved the sailors.²⁶⁹ A distressing reminder that Germany was not allowed any U-boats became clear while in Honolulu when the cadets inspected an American submarine and believed that it was a “shame and disgrace that a German cadet can only see a U-boat abroad.”²⁷⁰

A problematic stop was the port of Havana, Cuba. Domestic turbulences, public riots, and an explosion at the British mission there made the visit questionable. A stay by the British cruiser HMS *Prince of Wales* had been cancelled, but the German mission chief in Havana, Karl Zietelmann, assured that the public would welcome a German war cruiser.²⁷¹ This was in fact the case. The sailors visited numerous facilities and installations including the local naval academy, museums, and sugar and tobacco plantations. The sailors also saw for the first time a then called “*Windmühlenflugzeug*.”²⁷² This proto-type of a helicopter was a further reminder of the restrictions on Germany in the Versailles Treaty since Germany was not allowed to have an air force. After the sailors showed their parade skills in Havana, a Cuban officer commented on the “exquisite (German) soldier material and (he) could not believe that Germany still paid reparations to France.”²⁷³ Some of the crew was invited to a bowling evening at the local German Club. Gross described the club as located in an elegant villa with bowling alleys and tennis courts. What amazed him were the oversized, large pictures of Kaiser Wilhelm II, Hindenburg, and numerous ships that visited Cuba over the years. It seemed again that in some

²⁶⁹ Hilmar Schroeter, Reichsmarine #1932, 23. *Schmerzlich beruehrte uns der Anblick des einst deutschen Dampfers der jetzt unter fremder Flagge an uns vorüberzieht.*

²⁷⁰ Hoffmann letter March 4, 1934

²⁷¹ Letter Zietelmann to AA Berlin, Oct 1, 1931. Akten betreffend Besuch deutscher Kriegsschiffe im Auslande, Kriegsschiffauslandsreisen, Allgemeines; II F 3362; September 1930-März 1932, Bd 13/14; R 33432. Cuba was considered a “B” and “R” port. Zietelmann on Dec 1, 1931 re-inforced that the situation in Cuba was still precarious and he would only recommend a visit “if crew behaved cautiously and without overnight furlough.

²⁷² Buttmi, *Werben* 55. Windmill plane or helicopter.

²⁷³ Schönberg, *Amerika Reise*, 22.

German communities abroad the current government of Germany was disregarded.²⁷⁴ This imperial thinking was also prevalent among the crew itself. Chancellor Otto Bismark's birthday, April 1, was still marked in the diaries, and when the weather was sunny and the sea calm, the day was described as Kaiserwetter, emperor's weather. The spring season brought back memories of parades in Berlin and at one point a wide avenue overseas reminded the crew about the former grandeur of the *Unter den Linden*, the parade avenue of the German emperor in Berlin.²⁷⁵

The city and port of Galveston had received preference in October 1931 over Pensacola, Florida. The German Ambassador in Washington D.C. Friedrich von Prittwitz and Gaffron believed that Pensacola's influence over the Gulf region as a port city had decreased. Furthermore not enough German-Americans lived in the region to validate a stop. Houston was also looked at as a possible stop. That city had expressed interest in a visit but the naval command needed to keep the number of stops to a minimum and could not possibly add another port. The foreign office evaluated the economic situation in Houston and compared it to that of Galveston, and although Houston surpassed Galveston in importance, Galveston received the honor.²⁷⁶ However the visit in Galveston was extended until February 23, so the crew could at least visit Houston and participate in a 200-year birthday celebration of George Washington, an important political statement from the side of the Germans.

On the morning of the 9th, the crew sighted land and within an hour the *Karlsruhe* arrived in Galveston, which was classified by the naval command as an "A/B", both a training and fuel port. The 21-gun salute was fired, the Stars and Stripes hoisted, and both national anthems played by the board orchestra. Hundreds of Texans waited at the pier, while nine bi-planes flew

²⁷⁴ Gross, *Die Reise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe*, 45-46.

²⁷⁵ Fuchs, *Heimkehr*, 157.

²⁷⁶ Memo from German Embassy von Prittwitz to Foreign Office Berlin, Oct 9, 1931, Berichte 1932.

formation above the harbor. German consular representatives from Houston and New Orleans and representative of the governor's office and the City of Galveston exchanged official calls. Robert Buttmi was much impressed by the heavy applause and the sudden invasion by journalists and film crews.²⁷⁷ He later learned that the last German warship had visited Galveston twenty five years earlier.²⁷⁸ One of the German exchange officers, Captain Eberhard Baier, who was stationed at the Advanced Flying School at Randolph Field in San Antonio, flew to Galveston with his U.S. military airplane to greet the *Karlsruhe*. Before the crew was allowed to set foot on land, they received an information sheet about the host city.²⁷⁹ Chaplain Schellahn was not only in charge of the spiritual well-being of the crew but also for the information given out about each and every country and port visited.²⁸⁰ The visitors to Galveston were warned of two things in particular: local brothels and the speak-easies which served inferior, illegal alcohol! Prohibition still existed in America and drinking alcohol was technically not allowed. Kurt Gross referred on several occasions in his diary to the request by the Americans for beer from the *Karlsruhe*, which they carried in large quantities. Commander Wassner, however, gave strict instructions to obey the prohibition laws of the country, and Staff Sergeant Gross understood that the *Karlsruhe's* mission was not to defy local laws.²⁸¹ Visitors could not be served alcohol; it was, however, possible to have a beer with a sailor if a private invitation was extended onboard. In Honolulu for instance the Bordfest was celebrated with champagne served in coffee cups. The sailors were instructed if someone would ask to tell that it was mineral water.²⁸² Even Erwin

²⁷⁷ Buttmi, *Werben*, 65.

²⁷⁸ See also Freie Presse, Feb 12, 1932, no 41, *Die Ankunft der Karlsruhe*.

²⁷⁹ These *Merkblätter* were printed right on board shortly before arriving and adjusted accordingly.

²⁸⁰ Chaplain Schallehn was every so often able to „weave“ religious writings into the trip of the *Karlsruhe*. For instance in the Wit Sunday sermon he talked about the fact that the “Juenger Christi should go and ... ziehet aus in alle Welt.”

²⁸¹ Gross, *Die Reise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe*, 53; “Wir sind auch nichts ins Ausland gefahren um Gesetze umzustossen.”

²⁸² Buttmi, *Werben*, 103.

Wassner served “tea” and had a last “one for the road” the morning of the departure in Texas with invited guests.²⁸³ Those that tasted the German beer were much awed with it, and the sailors recall the rejoicing of the visitors when they received two ½ liter bottles of “real” German beer from the pantry of the *Karlsruhe*. Since the ship sailed under the German flag, the American media reported that the U.S. customs and prohibition officials could not seize any of the Pilsner onboard. It was erroneously assumed that beer would be served to all.²⁸⁴ Thus, the disappointment was rather large when no alcohol was distributed, and in some ports the police was called out for crowd control.

The easy-going way of the Americans impressed the Germans. What puzzled them however, was the Unkenntnis, or ignorance of the people. Many confused Germany with Austria.²⁸⁵ Robert Buttmi encountered an older woman who first touched him and then his uniform because it was reported that the Germans “were wearing uniforms made out of paper.”²⁸⁶ Furthermore the sailors were asked on several occasions if German soldiers really hacked off the hands of children in World War I or committed other atrocities.²⁸⁷ During the stay in Texas the crew was up in smaller groups so representatives of the ship could participate in the many festivities, parades, events, and excursions. A group of sailors, for instance, traveled by rail into Houston and noted the cotton fields and wide, open landscape along the way. This trip made an important impression on the crew because they realized the unimaginable dimensions of the New World with completely unused space and no settlements for miles.²⁸⁸

²⁸³ *Houston Post Dispatch*, March 4, 1932, 4. See also Schönberg, *Amerika-Reise* for his observations.

²⁸⁴ *Seattle Daily Times*, *Beer in German Cruiser beyond reach of Dries*, June 10, 1932.

²⁸⁵ Buttmi, *Werben*, 65.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 120. Buttmi had to correct her and explained that in the fabrication of the uniforms *Zellstoffaser* or cellulose fiber were used.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 120 and 226. Buttmi explained it away as part of propaganda and that Germans are just humans just like the Americans.

²⁸⁸ Schönberg, *Amerika-Reise*, 25. Hans Grimm’s book *Volk ohne Raum* was published in 1926 for the first time in Germany but it is unknown if our diarists read it or were familiar with its message.

The Germans were overwhelmed by the wide streets and the many luxury cars in Galveston and could not believe that no one walked in this country. Officer Schönberg described Galveston as a young, but sober colonial city without a romantic historic center, as often seen back in Germany. Most sailors made friends in America fast, oftentimes close to one hundred cars were waiting to pick up the visitors on the piers. The 1930 Texas census revealed that Galveston had a population of about 35,000 people of whom one-third claimed to be of German origins. Buttmi's first invitation came from an older German couple, where home-brewed beer was served at the residency while the hostess cooked German food for the guest. His host reminisced about the time in this country, after he immigrated to Texas and the many negative things he and his fellow Germans had to endure because of their *Deutschtum* after 1917.²⁸⁹ Kurt Gross made the acquaintance of another German immigrant, Mr. August Gessner. Gessner, a well-respected figure in the Harris County community operated a cabinet manufacturing business in Houston and drove out to Galveston to greet the ship.²⁹⁰

The City of Galveston and the event committee put together a rich program for the visitors. All official teas, picnics, dances and other forms of entertainment were planned by the welcoming committee. The arrival of the *Karlsruhe* was announced months before in the local press and German-American clubs, lodges, and organizations were involved in all planning stages. Regional businesses, not only in Texas but in other port cities placed welcome signs in

²⁸⁹ Buttmi, *Werben*, 65, 69.

²⁹⁰ August Gessner was born August 1870 in Elbing/Germany and married to Anna Gessner who also came from Germany. He died in September 1953 in Houston. US Census, T-626, 2344, p.32; Marks Hinton. *Historic Houston Streets: The Stories Behind the Name*. July 19, 2007. "Gessner arrived in the United States in 1886 and was a Spanish-American war veteran, and he was so pleased with that he went back to Puerto Rico, and built a monument to Teddy Roosevelt and The Rough Riders. He arrived in Houston and opened A. D. Gessner Cabinet Works. Gessner became friends with the infamous long-time Harris county Commissioner, E. A. "Squatty" Lyons. Squatty liked him so Squatty decided to name a street after him in Houston." Furthermore Gessner was treasurer and on the board of directors of the Houston Sängerbund and active in the Deutsch-Amerikanischem Bund. Houston Sängerbund Records, 1874-1985, Special Collections & Archives, University of Houston Libraries, UHSHA 89. Box 1.

their stores and took out ads in the newspapers greeting the ship and crew.²⁹¹ Gatherings followed for the sailors in the Texas country side where regardless of prohibition more alcohol was served. When the sailors inquired about the beer, they were informed that the long arm of the law could not reach out there. Some of the officers were invited as far away as Lake Charles, Louisiana.

To keep with German naval customs, separate events for the crew and the officers took place. Captain Wassner and four of his officers visited San Antonio and Austin, while the rest of his men stayed behind in Galveston.²⁹² In Austin, the commander made an official visit to the Texas legislature. A dinner in San Antonio was sponsored by the local Chamber of Commerce and its president Herman H. Ochs in the San Antonio Hotel. Senator W. Albert Williamson of Bexar County and other Texas dignitaries were present, and it was stressed that in light of the developments in Germany the constitution of the United States “preferred no specific race.” Wassner also went to Houston for a short visit where he was greeted by Mayor Walter Monteith. A brief visit by Governor Ross S. Sterling on February 11 was highlighted by the diarists and left a big impression on them.²⁹³ A short speech by Sterling stressed the positive German influence on the development of Texas, and he furthermore reminded the attendees of the cooperation and good-will of Germany.²⁹⁴ Sterling took part in an international luncheon, and his fifty-seventh birthday was celebrated with cake onboard the cruiser. Consuls and vice-consuls of various countries, as well as the officers from the battleship *U.S.S. Wyoming* and the *Karlsruhe* took part in the gathering, and Commander Wassner emphasized the preservation of German culture

²⁹¹ See also Gross and Buttmi on the stop in Juneau, and Portland on the welcoming signs.

²⁹² DMN, Feb 23, 1932, *Cruiser Karlsruhe to sail for Vera Cruz*.

²⁹³ Gross recalled him as a handsome man, surrounded by men in cowboy uniforms. Gross, *Die Reise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe*, 54.

²⁹⁴ *Houston Post Dispatch*, February 12, 1932; Buttmi, *Werben*, 70. Dallas Morning News, Feb 11, 1932, *Sterling to celebrate Birthday at Luncheon*. Schönberg, *Amerika-Reise*, 29.

abroad. The German Consul in Galveston Julius von Jockusch underlined the importance of *Germandom*, unity and strength.²⁹⁵ German-Americans were well aware of the political situation in Germany. The *Freie Presse* informed the readership in 1932 about Hitler's programs and goals.²⁹⁶ But the main stream press also kept Texans up-to-date about developments in Europe. The *Houston Post Dispatch* reported on the possible re-election of Hindenburg as president and the "definite nomination of Hitler as a presidential candidate in the upcoming election in Weimar".²⁹⁷

The big parade through the streets of Galveston in honor of Washington's Birthday was cancelled due to inclement weather, but the organizers quickly adjusted the schedule. The Twentieth Century Fox film crew came on board Sunday afternoon, while the ship was open to the general public to visit. About 10,000 visitors took advantage of the invitation that Sunday afternoon, including some of the local organizers like the members of the Sangerbund of Texas. The first Sunday morning in Galveston was reserved for church services. Gross recollected that the Lutherans were picked up in private cars, while the Catholics had to walk to church. The Lutheran service was held in a small, decorated church with a sermon in German.

The men of the *Karlsruhe* also received a welcome poem from a Mr. Paul Otto Bottler in which he referred to the Treaty of Versailles and German history. Bottler was very much part of the Deutschtum in south Texas and a popular figure in Houston. He was since at least 1920 on the board of directors of the Houston Sangerbund. In his opinion America was a country where no one had to be ashamed; people, according to Bottler, knew no guilt here.²⁹⁸ During one of the

²⁹⁵ *Freie Presse fur Texas*, February 26, 1932.

²⁹⁶ *Freie Presse fur Texas*, Jan 1, 1932, no 35; *Was will Adolf Hitler?* Jan 22, 1932, 4.

²⁹⁷ *Houston Post Dispatch*, February 23, 1932.

²⁹⁸ Kurt Gross, Information sheet *Willkommen Gruss. Wir brauchen uns hier nicht zu schamen, wir sind uns keiner Schuld bewusst, drum fort die Sorgen und das Gramen, den Kopf hoch und heraus die Brust*. According to the 1930 census records, Bottler was born in September 1880 in Koblenz/Germany and listed salesman as his occupation. Bottler died March 2, 1964 in Harris County, 1930 Census, Harris Co, T626, roll 2352, 17. See also Houston

many celebrations Bottler recited his verse in front of the crew and received general approval. The *Freie Presse* greeted the Germans with another six verse poem by its editor Fritz Neuhäuser titled *Karlsruhe, vernimm den Schwur!* (Witness the oath) Neuhäuser highlighted the hard times for Germans after 1917 in the United States, but how despite the enemy's effort German-Americans stayed faithful Germans and only love one language.²⁹⁹ The same newspaper announced on the 26th in big letters on the front page "Versailles has to fall; disgraced treaty hinders economic progress! Deutschtum marches!" None of the fears that existed in Bermuda were expressed during the Texas visit.

With over two thousand Galvestonians waving good-bye, the cruiser left for Veracruz, the only Mexican port on the 1932 itinerary on March 3 after an exhausting fourteen days in Texas. Eighteen planes flew over the ship as a last fare-well and many people followed the *Karlsruhe* for miles in their cars along the Gulf coast. A stop in Manzanillo, Mexico, was cancelled; reports described the town as bleak, debauched, and dirty. The harbor was further unprotected and not suitable for re-fuelling. Ensenada di Todo in Mexico was cancelled for similar considerations. It seemed the German community there was interested in using a cruiser visit as a tourist attractions and quick stop for Americans in these prohibition days. Plans to stop at Florianopolis, Bahia, and Paranagua in Brazil were abandoned as well.³⁰⁰ No ports in California were on the 1932 original itinerary either, since two German war cruisers had visited California since the end of the war.

Sängerbund Records, 1874-1985, Special Collections & Archives, University of Houston Libraries, UHSHSA 89. Box 1.

²⁹⁹*Freie Presse*, February 26, 1932; February 12, 1932, 4. Fritz Neuhäuser was born in Germany and immigrated in 1910 to the United States. By 1930 he was still a German citizen and published the *Freie Presse* in Texas. His occupation in the census was listed as newspaper editor. U.S. Census 1930, Texas, T 626, roll 2294, 4.

³⁰⁰Memo AA, October 22, 1931; Akten betreffend Besuch deutscher Kriegsschiffe im Auslande, Kriegsschiffauslandsreisen, Allgemeines; II F 3362; September 1930-März 1932, Bd 13/14; R 33432. Ensenada is the third-largest city in Baja California, located 80 miles south of San Diego on the Baja California Peninsula. These changes than made it necessary to re-direct the oil tanker to Pernambuco.

Entertainment in Vera Cruz included an invitation from the commanding general of Vera Cruz, a soccer game, visits to the German school, and a dance at the naval academy. Some sailors, including Gross were invited to the German Club in Vera Cruz. Here, a peculiar mix of nostalgic German symbols greeted the crew. One wall was adorned with a large picture of Hindenburg, flanked by the German Imperial flag, as though the Republic did not exist.³⁰¹ At the Plaza de Toro an equestrian exhibition and bull fight was showcased. The crew also experienced a nature spectacle, the so-called Northerner, a fierce wind storm. While some sailors were onboard at the time and had difficulties to keep the vessel stable, about two hundred members of the crew were on a day trip to Antigua when they were surprised by the storm. Eventually they had to spend that night on land and bitterly complained about their ruined white uniforms. They made it back to the coast but were forced to spend another night on the *Westerwald*, Count Luckner's yacht who also supplied a simple supper to them. From Mexico the ship sailed through the Panama Canal to Oahu, Hawaii.

The German sailors were unaware of the tension that existed between military personnel and the civilian population on the Hawaiian Islands. Countless incidents committed by sailors including assaults, break-ins, muggings, and rapes were reported. In the summer of 1932 U.S. sailors were no longer granted shore leave. The American and British sailors had a rather rude reputation and misbehaved or were drunk in public. On the other hand, the local business communities suffered under these orders since sailors spend close to three million dollars annually in Honolulu alone.³⁰² The ship was greeted by nine U.S. military planes and moored at the navy pier, which gave the *Karlsruhe* water and electric connection. Excursions to all parts of Oahu and places of interest filled the time. The U.S. military also led the German sailors use

³⁰¹ Scrapbook Kurt Gross, section Mexico.

³⁰² The US Senate looked into the accusations and crimes committed by sailors on Hawaii in the spring and summer 1932; AA Auslandsreise, Feb 1932-IIF397; R 33472.

their recreation facilities, not just in Hawaii, free of charge, another sign of friendship between the two nations in 1932.

Juneau and Sitka, Alaska, were the next stops following Hawaii. The German consul for the northwest area of the United States, Robert Clostermann, flew up to Alaska to greet the sailors there for the first time, underscoring the importance of the visit to the region.

Entertainment was mostly confined to expeditions to glaciers, but a dance for the crew and cadets and a separate dinner at the executive mansion given by Governor George A. Parks were held. While in Juneau the crew started to prepare for the important Skagerrak celebration on May 31st, another reminder of the glory days of the Imperial fleet but also deep wounds WWI left behind. Once out at sea, the old war flag was hoisted for this special occasion. Wassner remembered the deep meaning and importance of this day and reminded the crew of the “military and fatherland duties.”³⁰³ The Battle of Jutland or as the Germans call it Skagerrakschlacht was a naval battle fought on May 31 and June 1, 1916, near Jutland in the North Sea between the Royal Navy and the Imperial German Navy under the command of Reinhard Scheer. It was the largest naval battle during the war and Germany claimed victory.³⁰⁴ Lieutenant Hans Fuchs even went one step further. He believed that England’s influence as naval power started in 1805 with Lord Nelson and the victory at Trafalgar, but the English glory ended and shattered with Coronel and Skagerrak in World War I. Fuchs further believed that the British still had problems accepting this fact.³⁰⁵ “They still do not like to talk about the war, they do not want to hear about Coronel, Skagerrak, the U-boats, and blimps, about the *Emden* and von

³⁰³ Schönberg, *Amerika Reise*, 66.

³⁰⁴ Several British battleships and destroyers, battle cruisers and two cruisers were destroyed. The Germans however also suffered the loss of the destroyers *Pommern* and *Wiesbaden* and a few other vessels. The victory in the Battle of Jutland was celebrated in Germany as a nation holyday. The Skagerrak took on a symbolic meaning in the aftermath of WWI and was used to repress the memory of the defeat that war.

³⁰⁵ Hans Fuchs. *Heimkehr ins Dritte Reich*, 27.

Lettow –Vorbeck.”³⁰⁶ The *Karlsruhe* was well received in foreign ports, better than their British counterparts.

The ship arrived on June 9 in Seattle, where she anchored at the Lander Street pier, and a record in visitors was set here: ten thousand in just three hours.³⁰⁷ The crew participated in numerous events. Besides the annual Homemakers Exposition, the Germans received an insightful tour into the Ford Motor plant and production facilities. From Seattle the *Karlsruhe* made her way back to the coast and then down the Columbia River to Portland and was again greeted by hundreds of people. The city of Portland was added retroactively at the suggestion of von Prittwitz after the German Foreign Office was approached by U.S. senator Charles McNary of Oregon, and received the endorsement of the mayor of Portland and the governor of Oregon. In order to add Portland to the itinerary, the stops in Sitka and Seattle were shortened accordingly.³⁰⁸ The war cruiser was the first German navy ship since 1905 to visit Portland and an estimated sixty thousand persons who were German born or of German extraction lived in Oregon. The official hospitality committee included the Chamber of Commerce, the mayor, several business-men, an American Legion delegation, and Brigadier General Paul A Wolf. His 7th Infantry Regiment band from the Vancouver barracks played the German national anthem while the ship orchestra countered with the Star Spangle Banner. The Portland Post #1 of the American Legion earned the distinction of being the first veterans organization to carry the American colors aboard a German war cruiser. A full program was planned for the Germans including participation of the ship’s orchestra in the 12th Pacific Northwest German Sangerfest.

³⁰⁶ Hans Fuchs, *Heimkehr*, 52.

³⁰⁷ Seattle was an “A/B/R” port. The official welcoming committee included Mayor John F. Dore and members of the American Legion.

³⁰⁸ Letter to German Embassy from Secretary of State, Harvey Bundy, January 29, 1932, AA Auslandsreise, Feb 1932-IIF397; R 33472.

A soccer match and a visit to the battleship *Oregon*, a relic from the Spanish-American war, rounded off the visit. In order to keep the cost to a minimum, the consolidated German societies in Portland and surrounding area held a dance and reception at the local *Turnverein*, or sports association's hall. The commander and a cadet delegation paid tribute to George Washington at the university with a wreath ceremony. In a speech Wassner blamed the loss of the German colonies on Germany's current high unemployment. He believed that world balance would only return if Great Britain returned the German colonies. Once this happened prosperity would return to Europe and America. An unexpected visit to the ship was paid by the Umatilla tribe when some natives showed up in full tribal gear "to show the boys real Indians". However the stay in Oregon was cut short. While still anchored there Commander Wassner was notified that an immediate departure towards Chile was necessary. He was to sail directly to Balboa to take in fuel and wait in Callao (Peru) for further instructions.³⁰⁹ The situation in Chile was precarious with confusing conditions, the British cruiser *Durban* was already on her way to Chile and the American President, Herbert Hoover, was willing to deploy war ships as well.

The visit to Chile had caused tremendous headaches for Berlin all through the planning and execution phase. The port cities of Corral, Valparaiso, Puerto Montt, and Punto Arenas were on the original itinerary. The German associations and clubs in Chile suffered financially like those in other parts of the world under the Great Depression and preferred not to celebrate at all. Yet the German consul in Chile reported that if they celebrated, they did it in a larger, more elaborate style than they actually could afford only to keep up with the reputation of a prosperous German colony. He brought up the recent visit of a French training vessel, the *Jeanne d' Arc*,

³⁰⁹ Kurzbrief, secret, June 27 from the RWeM, The instructions were amended the following day and included a short stop in San Pedro (port of Los Angeles) to add fuel and then continue to Balboa for re-fueling. Letter marked secret RWeM to AA; AA Auslandsreise, Feb 1932-IIF397; R 33472. Another death was registered while in the Panama Canal. Sailor Ernst Hoffmann died of pneumonia and was buried in Colon.

which had cost the French-Chileans “eine Stange Gold”, a pretty penny. Thus he recommended not to include Chile in the travel plans of the *Karlsruhe*. In September 1931 Korvettenkapitän Lietzmann at the naval command in Berlin assessed the situation in Chile as well when the news of a mutiny by the Chilean sailors became public. It would not be in the interest of the German navy to bring their sailors in contact with mutinous sailors considering the recent history of the German navy itself.³¹⁰ The naval command suggested therefore to cancel the visits in Chile altogether. A final decision had not been made, when on November 24, 1931, a telegram from Consul Soehring, Santiago de Chile, arrived in Berlin requesting to cancel the visit to Valparaíso for both economic and political reasons.³¹¹ Four days later the matter was further discussed in the German Foreign Office with representatives from the RWeM attending. Yet the situation diffused within a few weeks and the naval command decided to keep Chile on the 1932 *Karlsruhe* itinerary. If Chilean ports would be completely eliminated, the cruiser would have to sail from Callao, Peru to Puerto Belgrano, Argentina, a 3,700 nautical-mile leg filled with technical difficulties. Furthermore several trade syndicates and the Gelateino, the German Chamber of Commerce in Latin America, headquartered in Hamburg, pushed for at least the Valparaíso stop since international trade contracts between Germany and Chile were discussed at the time.³¹²

Yet there was another, and it seemed larger problem with Chile, which involved the Germans there directly. The various German associations refused to fly the current flag of the Weimar Republic! These conservative thinking German associations and clubs preferred to cling

³¹⁰ Memo Henle AA with Lietzmann, Sep 23, 1931, Akten betreffend Besuch deutscher Kriegsschiffe im Auslande, Kriegsschiffauslandsreisen, Allgemeines; II F 3362; September 1930-März 1932, Bd 13/14; R 33432.

³¹¹ Telegram AA, Akten betreffend Besuch deutscher Kriegsschiffe im Auslande, Kriegsschiffauslandsreisen, Allgemeines; II F 3362; September 1930-März 1932, Bd 13/14; R 33432.

³¹² Present at the meeting in the AA were Dr. Schroeder, Vorwerck, and Gleisner from the Gelateino.

to the old Empire and rejected the post-war liberalism and “Marxism” of Weimar.³¹³ The naval command was in a conflict since the *Karlsruhe* was a symbol of Weimar’s modernity, while at the same time the whole existence of Weimar was rejected by these German-Chileans. These concerns and doubts about the visit continued in Berlin until January 1932 and eventually the official final decision was made not to stop in Chile based on political considerations, especially since Weimar had yet to acknowledge the Socialist’s Carlos Davilas’ provisional government.³¹⁴ In the end it was not necessary to protect the Germans in Chile and the *Karlsruhe* stopped twice for a few hours off the coast to welcome small German delegations on board.³¹⁵ A few grainy pictures exist of the short stop in Punto Arenas. Gross’ diary entry recorded a cold, windy day, and the handful of Germans in a small, old boat.³¹⁶

Before the *Karlsruhe* made her way along the South American coast and around Tierra de Fuego, however, she spent eight days in dry dock. The United States navy offered the German war cruiser their docks in Balboa. This unexpected stop was necessary because of two things. For one mussels and plant material were growing on the ship and needed to be removed. More important, a bronze cap that protected the starboard propeller was missing. Since no replacement was onboard, a special order was issued to a local machine shop in Balboa to build one.

Once Tierra de Fuego was rounded the *Karlsruhe* made her way through the La Plata river to Buenos Aires, with over 2.5 million population the largest city in South America, for a seven-day stay. Buenos Aires also had the largest colony of Germans abroad, about forty thousand. Here the sailors experienced city life, which Schönberg compared to that of Berlin,

³¹³ Christel Krause Converse, *The Rise and Fall of Nazi Influence among the German-Chileans*. Dissertation, Georgetown University, 1990, 28.

³¹⁴ Letter von Friedberg to Naval Command July 20, 1932; AA Auslandsreise, Feb 1932-IIF397; R 33472.

³¹⁵ Telegram June 16 and June 22, 1932 (Stempel), AA Auslandsreise, Feb 1932-IIF397; R 33472. See also telegram July 3, 1932 (Stempel) but was advised to stick to old itinerary and not to arrive in Callao before July 20th; AA Auslandsreise, Feb 1932-IIF397; R 33472.

³¹⁶ Scrapbook Kurt Gross, section South America.

while forty miles further north they were invited to unspoiled nature and gaucho life.³¹⁷ The political importance of the *Karlsruhe* visit to Argentina became clear when President General Augustin Justo visited the ship – it was the first foreign war cruiser he ever set foot on and Wassner was received by Argentinian politicians and high ranking military officers alike. But Argentina also paid tribute to the German sailors in another way. The *Golodrina*, an Argentinian convoy ship accompanied the *Karlsruhe* and offered telephone connections and other assistance to the Germans. Wassner, who spoke English and Spanish, addressed the crowd at a meeting with the Foreign Minister Dr. Carlos Saavedra Lamas first in German, then in Spanish. Officer and crew visited the new Matadero Frigorifico Municipal, considered the largest and most modern slaughter facilities in the world, built with German expertise by Thyssen-Lametal. The supply officer of the *Karlsruhe* purchased several hundred tons of meat for next to nothing; unfortunately most had to be discarded by the time they reached St. Thomas because the ship experienced difficulties with the cold storage.³¹⁸ The success of the *Karlsruhe* was also evident in the port of Montevideo (September 1st -5th). The Italian dispatch ship *Alvise Da Monto* was docked there at the same time than the Germans, but Uruguayans showed only minimal interest in the aviso while the German crew shined through tidiness and discipline and the Uruguayan war minister believed that the reputation of the Germans after the war increased tremendously.

The political situation in Brazil, the cruiser's last stop in South America, had also not improved since the last visit of the *Karlsruhe* in 1930. Government forces were still fighting in the so-called Paulista war between the military police and volunteer rebels. The German Embassy in Rio de Janeiro recommended not to stop in either a south or central Brazilian state

³¹⁷ Schönberg, *Amerika Reise*, 98.

³¹⁸ Gross, *Die Reise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe*, 163. The *Karlsruhe* experienced difficulties while in tropical weather off St. Thomas and the ice machines broke down. The slaughterhouse was able to slaughter 5,000 cattle, 8,000 sheep, and 2,500 pigs in an 8-hour shift.

since the economic situation was ruinous and many families there were in mourning because loved ones died during the uprising. A visit seemed therefore inappropriate. Great Britain had dispatched warships into the port of Rio de Janeiro and the U.S. was debating to do the same but their ambassador advised against it since no American lives were in immediate danger.³¹⁹ By the time the *Karlsruhe* arrived on September 25 in Pernambuco, a port further north, the British vessel *Scarborough* was already in port and two modern Italian flotilla ships showed up the same time with the German war cruiser. Here the sailors could marvel over German technology when they had the opportunity to inspect the “Graf Zeppelin” blimp, the highlight of their stay in Pernambuco. The LZ 126 blimp was used for mail services between Germany and South America and on its way back to Germany. Schönberg called the blimp a considerable emblem of German spirit and strength and German technology at its height.³²⁰ The sailors also met famous German flier Elly Beinhorn in Pernambuco, a woman who held more lifetime records than the American Amelia Earhart.

The last two stops on the American continent were Philadelphia and New York City and both were added after the Chilean and Brazilian itinerary was adjusted.³²¹ Prittwitz suggested that the ship should not arrive on November 8th, the day of the 1932 presidential elections in the U.S. Berlin, by contrast wanted the cruiser to spend Thanksgiving in America to participate in more bicentennial celebrations honoring George Washington.³²² Both proposals did not work out as planned. In the end the ship was in port during the presidential elections, Wassner was even scheduled to meet with President Herbert Hoover on November 4, and the ship was already

³¹⁹ Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, 1932, vol V, the American Republics, Serial Set 9683-5, 419ff.

³²⁰ Schönberg, *Amerika Reise*, 108; see also Kurt Gross entry Pernambuco.

³²¹ Philadelphia was considered a “B/R” port.

³²² Memo July 31, 1932, Akten betreffend Besuch deutscher Kriegsschiffe im Auslande, Kriegsschiffauslandsreisen, Allgemeines; II F 3362; September 1930-März 1932, Bd 13/14; R 33432.

on its way home on Thanksgiving. Equally important for Germany, however, was that a German war cruiser should not be in any American port on Armistice Day, November 11th.³²³

While entering New York harbor, airplanes zoomed overhead, fireboats spurted water, and ferries whistled, while Fort Jay fired the 21-gun salute. As in so many other ports, the *Karlsruhe* was the first German war ship to visit New York since the Great War. The welcoming committee included Mayor Joseph V. McKee and other city officials. Wassner also met with Count Felix von Luckner and visited his yacht that lay in port. The *Karlsruhe* was described in the American press as “shining cleanliness and mathematical efficiency in design for which Germans are famous.”³²⁴ The soccer team played in Hoboken in front of a sold out stadium and part of the crew attended a Yale football game. A reception at the mayor’s office, a Sangerfest, a parade in Newark and a visit to a Toscanini opera, the hottest ticket in town, rounded off the visit to New York. Wassner and some officers went to Arlington National Cemetery and participated in another wreath-laying ceremony. An invitation from the American Legion in Asheville, N.C. to participate at the opening of a war memorial honoring German sailors who died in the Great War was declined.³²⁵ The high cost of a ticket, \$29 from New York to Asheville, led the AA in Berlin to turn down the invitation.

As soon as the news of the two visits to the United States was made public more cities approached von Prittwitz in Washington and requested a visit as well. Boston was advised that it was too short of a notice but that they certainly would add the city at a future trip.³²⁶ The Boston Port Authorities under Richard Parkhurst looked forward to this visit and “they shall have the

³²³ Letter von Buelow/Friedberg August 27, 1932 to Embassy; AA Auslandsreise, Feb 1932-IIF397; R 33472. While in Philadelphia the cadets and some officers visited Annapolis on November 5th.

³²⁴ Repository, *Just Visiting*, Nov 15, 1932.

³²⁵ The Vance Memorial in Asheville, NC.

³²⁶ Letter Prittwitz to AA, October 19, 1932; AA Auslandsreise, Feb 1932-IIF397; R 33472.

pleasure of seeing the *Karlsruhe* in this port.”³²⁷ This request would be fulfilled during the *Karlsruhe*’s third good-will tour in 1934. The Mobile Chamber of Commerce and Congressman McDuffie from Alabama also “desired to invite to dispense some real southern hospitality as well.”³²⁸

When the ship left Kiel in November 1931 Paul von Hindenburg was Reichspräsident and the Germany chancellor Heinrich Brüning. During the second good-will tour, three federal elections were held in Weimar. The crew was informed through telegrams, radio transmissions, and communications about the political developments in Germany. Navy personnel were considered politically neutral, and they had neither an active nor passive right to vote, but these elections and political developments were important to the sailors. Officers also did not think of themselves as political, although they too were deeply involved with politics.³²⁹ Regardless, Kurt Gross reported twice in his diary on the elections results and noted that many of the crew were happy once they heard of Hindenburg’s re-election.³³⁰ Buttmi also recorded in his writings that in August 1932 von Papen, Schleicher, and Hitler were discussing a future German government.³³¹ The officers and crew celebrated Hindenburg’s 85th birthday on October 2, 1932, at sea. For this occasion, the German Reichskriegsflagge was hoisted in his honor and a church service held by Schallehn. The ship then transmitted greetings to Hindenburg and the sailors gave a loyalty oath to the president. How fragile and unstable the Weimar government was in its last year of existence is revealed in the fact that the *Karlsruhe* returned after a one-year absence

³²⁷ Letter Boston Port Authority to Tippelskirch, Oct 3, 1932; AA Auslandsreise, Feb 1932-IIF397; R 33472.

³²⁸ Letter Nov 19, 1932; AA Auslandsreise, Feb 1932-IIF397; R 33472.

³²⁹ Johannes Steinhoff; Peter Pechel and Dennis Showalter. *Voices of the Third Reich*. Washington: Regnery Gateway, 1989. Interview with Rolf Johanneson, xxxi.

³³⁰ Buttmi, *Werben*, 238. Gross, *Die Reise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe*, 69; 90-91.

³³¹ Buttmi, *Werben*, 165. Paul v. Hindenburg (Independent, 49.6%), Adolf Hitler (NSDAP, 30.2%), Ernst Thälmann (KPD, 13.2%), Theodor Duesterberg (DNVP, 6.8%). When the ship left Kiel in November 1931, Paul von Hindenburg was still Reichspräsident and the Germany chancellor was Heinrich Brüning. While the *Karlsruhe* was absent from Germany for almost one year the country saw two more chancellors in office, Franz von Papen and Kurt von Schleicher.

to a country that had seen two more chancellors during that time, Franz von Papen and Kurt von Schleicher.

Germandom in 1932

The feelings of solidarity with the German clan, the *Stammvolk*, were strengthened through the 1932 visit and rejuvenated with the many hyphenated Germans overseas.³³² During the second good-will tour the German sailors were able to leave a deep impression with the ethnic Germans in both North and South America. Although many of the Germans they met belonged already to the second, and in some cases third generations, the diarists believed that the German-Americans were still “German” in their hearts.³³³ After immigrating to North and South America these hyphenated Germans found support and help in associations and lodges like the *Sons of Hermann* who continued over the years to foster and cultivate *Deutschtum*. The *Sons of Hermann* in Texas, for example were established already in San Antonio in July 1861, modeled after the *Sons of Hermann* lodge in New York. These clubs staged *Volksfeste*, concerts, dances, parades, and other events for the German and the community in general.³³⁴ Many immigrants joined German clubs and societies in their newly adopted homeland that were clearly associated with Germany; sports clubs and music associations often bore familiar names like *Germania*, *Teutonia*, *Badische Heimat*, *Siegfried*, *Eintracht*, or *Edelweiss*. Many of these clubs operated elaborate clubhouses and subscribed to German language newspapers so the expatriates could receive the latest news and facts from the *Heimat*. Schönberg reported that there was a strong, but fragmented Germandom in New York, more than 1,600 German societies existed in New York City alone. Yet for the visit of the war cruiser the *German-American Conference*, an

³³² Die Reichsmarine, #9, September 1932.

³³³ Schönberg, *Amerika-Reise*, 27.

³³⁴ German Texas, 14, 28.

umbrella organization, was formed to handle the visit. Weddings and baptisms took place in most all ports visited. In some cases the Germans, particularly those who lived in South America took advantage of the visit and enjoyed the Protestant church service in overwhelmingly Catholic nations. Officer Schönberg believed that the visit to South America was a great success and advanced and strengthened the prestige of the fatherland and strengthened and united Germandom in a foreign country.³³⁵ The rush to the ship was tremendous, at times the harbor police had to be deployed, and the *Karlsruhe* used the fire extinguisher to keep small boats in line.³³⁶ Although the German community in Argentina was larger than that in New York it was surprisingly also the most coherent group. They held faithfully to the old manners of the German *Heimat*. Schönberg recognized that Germans had a relatively high standing within Argentinian society in general, higher than in all in the South American continent. Buenos Aires boasted also the largest number of German associations and clubs in that country, ranging from the Club of German Engineers to the Rudder Association Teutonia. These Germans also published a number of daily newspapers, the *La Plata* being the largest. A “*Reisesege*”, a travel blessing, in that newspaper described the sailors as messenger of the “*Heimat* and proclaimer and bearer of the belief in the German future ... and the rebirth of our fatherland.”³³⁷ Particularly with this last statement the German Argentinians still had not become a coherent, independent group of Germans. They had not made a complete transition into the society of their adopted homeland.

The mission of the *Karlsruhe* was to connect Germans abroad with a piece of old *Heimat* which was evident while visiting the United States. For the first time since the war many

³³⁵ Schönberg, *Amerika Reise*, 24.

³³⁶ Ibid., 22.

³³⁷ La Plata Newspaper, Buenos Aires, August 27, 1932.

communities were able to celebrate their German heritage openly in the community. The Germans in the New York area commemorated their heritage and culture with ceremonies in the first week of November. The German Embassy, however, monitored these celebrations and the arrival of the cruiser closely. The concern was if festivities commenced and then shortly after a German war cruiser showed up, the official mood in the region could change with all this display of *Germaness*. The AA also skated on thin ice when the two east coast stops were added after the ship was already well into her second good-will tour. The visits to Philadelphia and New York had to be sincere and open and not be viewed as a simple stopgap.³³⁸ Schönberg believed that nowhere else but in the United States had Germandom merged. No other nation made it so easy to integrate immigrants and to make them feel like full-fledged citizens.³³⁹

Souvenirs can be seen as a tangible evidence that the sailors really visited foreign countries and people and these mementos ranged from records and record players to embroidered pillows.³⁴⁰ In Philadelphia Buttmi purchased a dagger-like letter opener with the engraving *Minute Man*, and he explained in detail the role of the Minute Man in American history.³⁴¹ Overall, however, he did not like the way goods were displayed in the stores, saying they were noticeable pitched (*auffällig angepriessen*).³⁴² He did detest the restless, flickering advertisement signs, whole building complexes wrapped in lights with their constant changing display of colors, which lured and seduced people.³⁴³ Kurt Gross purchased mostly inexpensive postcards and other cheap knick knacks, considering that the German sailors only received about \$20 spending money for each port. Therefore collected sea shells or free maps were always

³³⁸ Telegram September 14, 1932 to AA; AA Auslandsreise, Feb 1932-IIF397; R 33472.

³³⁹ Schönberg, *Amerika Reise*, 73.

³⁴⁰ Starting in 1934, the cruiser also brought back exotic animals for the zoo in Karlsruhe.

³⁴¹ Buttmi, *Werben*, 229.

³⁴² Ibid., 338.

³⁴³ Ibid., 233.

welcomed by the crew. The German sailors also received gifts from the locals in almost all ports. These trinkets varied from ashtrays and pictures to Native American pipes and artisan work. On the other hand the cap tallies or Mützenbänder, postcards of the *Karlsruhe*, and sailor dolls brought from Germany were welcomed gifts with the locals.

The South American leg of the journey brought the diarists to Peru, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil. Here again they were invited to German clubs, organizations, and associations. Gross reported on the grand clubhouse in Callao, Peru and the *Lawa Tennis Verein* in Mira Flores, a suburb with a large number of Germans.³⁴⁴ Private invitations revealed wonderful set tables (*herrlich gedeckte Tische*) and an exclusive *German* evening in a small, intimate group. The following day, after a parade through the streets of Lima, the German sailors were invited to the *Haus Germania*, “we were back in German hands and felt comfortable again after the long wait” (*wir waren wieder in deutschen Händen und fühlten uns nach dem langen Warten wieder wohl*).³⁴⁵ Gross further reported on former World War I veterans, now living in Peru whose “hearts trembled” when they saw the sailors marching in review through the streets of Lima. Buttmi on the other hand encountered “*heruntergekommenen Typen*” or shabby figures, who spoke a few German words. They were the second generation of German Peruvians, the descendants of German male immigrants and local women. Buttmi was shocked when he met them, and he confided to his diary that this was “how they fared when the fatherland was too cramped, this was however not how fortune looks to me” (*So kann es einem ergehen wenn das Vaterland zu eng wird, so sieht das Glück für mich nicht aus*).³⁴⁶ Yet at the same time Buttmi differentiated between the previously visited German Americans and the German *Landsleute* in

³⁴⁴ Kurt Gross, *Die Reise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe*, 144.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 146-147.

³⁴⁶ Buttmi, *Werben*, 151.

Peru. For him the German Peruvians had more pioneer spirit and were business men, engineers, and scientists. Buttmi also compared German Americans with those who lived in Brazil and concluded that people of German descent in Brazil were more self-confident, acquainted to hard work, and more realistic thinkers than their North American counterparts.³⁴⁷ Such thinking is not surprising, since in April 1932 the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* published an article titled *Ein Deutscher erobert Kuba*, in which the pioneer work of German immigrants was highlighted.³⁴⁸

Under the tones of the Deutschlandlied the cruiser returned to Germany on December 7, 1932, and was greeted by Admirals Raeder and Otto Schultze, Inspector of Navy Education (Inspecteur des Bildungswesens der Marine). With the admirals onboard, the crew and cadets showed that the military and naval training during the last year was fruitful. All maneuvers and training exercises went well under the critical eyes of the admirals. Field Marshall and Reichspräsident of the Weimar Republic Paul von Hindenburg sent a welcoming telegram to the exhausted, but happy crew. After Raeder and Schultze left, the *Karlsruhe* sailed into the Kieler Fjord with the white *Heimat* pennant raised on the mast and the crew shouted “our beloved German *Heimat* hurray, hurray, hurray.”³⁴⁹

The second tour was longer than the *Karlsruhe*’s maiden voyage and took the sailors and cadets to more places, thus a more diverse experience was sensed. However, the picture in most ports was surprisingly the same. Many enthusiastic visitors, from both the local as well as the German communities abroad greeted the ship. The political importance of the visits can be seen in the prestigious receptions and meetings that were arranged with leading politicians of the regions or nations visited.

³⁴⁷ Buttmi, *Werben*, 194. *A German conquers Cuba*. It was reported that about 40% of whites living in the southern part of Brazil were of German descent

³⁴⁸ *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*, No 14, April 1932, 423.

³⁴⁹ Schönberg, *Amerika Reise*, 132.

Reconciliation between Germany and other nations continued after the war on all levels. But sailors were also confronted with Germany's past in the ports where they stopped. The existing preconceptions, however, changed into heartfelt respect within days after the initial contacts. The visits also helped to reconcile the relationship between Germany and its former adversaries. In many places the flags of Germany and the host country decorated the streets in harmony. The crew detected a difference in North and South America regarding *Deutschtum*, which was more pronounced in the southern hemisphere. Many of the Germans overseas were also very skeptical about the new form of government, the German republic, although many lived in republics themselves. In a certain way the ship bridged the old with the new. Meanwhile, for more than a year abroad, the crew learned how to deal with emergencies of all kinds, political, medical, and mechanical.

CHAPTER 6

UNDER THE SWASTIKA

After the *Karlsruhe* arrived back in home waters in December 1932 the cadets sat for their oral exams and those who passed were promoted to midshipmen, Fähnrich, effective January 1, 1933. The rest of the crew took home leave or were assigned to other ships, but the core crew was back in Kiel in early spring 1933. In April they sailed to Hamburg for inspection by the public. There the sailors were invited to tour a cigarette factory and the Holstein Brewery, the company that supplied the beer during the last voyage. The onboard orchestra was not inactive during that time either; it conducted concerts throughout Germany in the spring of 1933, all the way to Munich, Würzburg, and Augsburg, and performed in front of large crowds. On May 5th, the ship participated in the launch of the *Gorch Fock*, the training schooner that replaced the sunken *Niobe*.

Once the *Karlsruhe* returned to Kiel an important visitor was welcomed onboard.³⁵⁰ Less than six weeks after the ship arrived in Kiel in December 1932, the political situation in Germany and eventually around the world changed forever. Robert Buttmi commented with a diary entry on these changes. He proudly proclaimed “when I left Germany a year ago we were a weak nation after losing the war, now however Germany is alive, confident, and fierce.”³⁵¹ Lieutenant Hans Fuchs, who returned on the cruiser *Köln* after a year of absence, believed that the sailors of the war cruiser returned healthy and joyful to a new fatherland and all their hearts were grateful. The new chancellor of the Third Reich, Adolf Hitler, inspected the *Karlsruhe* for the first time in the spring 1933 when he was in the city of Kiel for the annual Kiel Week regatta.

³⁵⁰ The training cruiser *Köln* was on her 1932/33 overseas voyage when the Nazis came to power and was the first cruiser that returned to a Third Reich. When the *Köln* arrived in December 1933 she was greeted and inspected by Hitler in Kiel.

³⁵¹ Buttmi, *Werben*, 256.

The sailors and certainly the naval command did not quite know what to make of the new chancellor. Hitler never fully committed to the navy. His continental ambitions clearly contributed to the limitations he set for the navy.³⁵² But Jost Dülffer also believed that Hitler was a skeptic towards naval matters and thought the build-up of the light cruiser and pocket battle ships starting in the late 1920s did not add any military value for Germany.³⁵³ The Nazis did not believe in the old Mahanian views of the relations of strong nations with strong navies. The German navy was seen by them as defending the coast and protecting ship routes in the North Sea, and that was the extent of their involvement. For this, Hitler wanted to set the German navy at one third of the strength of the British navy.³⁵⁴ A navy would also take the longest to build among military services and therefore would cost the most amount of money. Admiral Tirpitz had recognized already in his days that a navy build up was costly and time consuming. Raeder knew this as well, and it was something to which Hitler was not willing to commit.³⁵⁵ In public, Hitler talked about Germany's claim and right for world power, for which a navy certainly was needed, but he was more interested in the establishment of an air force and therefore allocated less resources towards the navy.³⁵⁶ Yet regardless of the limitations set, the number of navy personnel increased and expenditure rose from 187 million RM in 1932 to 311 million RM by the end of 1933.³⁵⁷

After the Kiel Week regatta, the vessel participated in several artillery exercises off Pillau and Flensburg where she joined the rest of the fleet. The ship was then overhauled, fitted with

³⁵² Jesko von Puttkammer, *Die Unheimliche See; Hitler und die Kriegsmarine*. Wien: Verlag Karl Kuehne, 1952, 9. After the invasion of Norway in 1940 Hitler believed that the navy had done her job for the war. The army would take care of the rest of the war.

³⁵³ Jost Dülffer, in *Handbuch zur Militärgeschichte*, 1648-1939, Bd 4, 450.

³⁵⁴ Memo Bülow, Nov 5, 1934, Documents on German Foreign Policy, series C, vol III, 573.

³⁵⁵ Salewski, *Marineleitung*, 154.

³⁵⁶ Jost Dülffer, in *Handbuch zur Militärgeschichte*, 1648-1939, Bd 4, 451.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 463.

new technology, and a x-ray machine for emergencies was installed. Freshly painted, the vessel was prepared for the young men of Crew 33. Meanwhile the new cadets finished up their training on the *Gorch Fock* and in the end had only two weeks to get acquainted with the *Karlsruhe* before heading out for their 1933-34 training. The new commander of the *Karlsruhe* was Captain Wilhelm Freiherr von Harsdorf von Enderndorf. Enderndorf was the youngest German naval commander at the time he received command of the war cruiser. He entered the imperial navy on April 1, 1909 and was promoted to lieutenant in 1912. During the Great War he served as an officer on several torpedo boats and became a flag lieutenant and commander of a torpedo flotilla in the early 1920s. After that time he was called to the Naval Command in Berlin, where he worked until the early 1930s in the RWeM. There, he reported directly to Captain von Trotha in the Navy Officers Personnel Division (Marine Personal Amt, MPA), subordinate to Admiral Erich Raeder.³⁵⁸

Once appointed to command the *Karlsruhe*, Enderndorf met on September 4th in Berlin with the AA and the Reichsminister. Here he received a variety of rules and instructions regarding travel. One was a new customs decree for sailors, and Enderndorf's men were expected to follow it thoroughly. Certain items like alcohol and tobacco, even matches, playing cards, sugar, salt, beer, and fats could only be brought back into Germany if they weight fifty grams or less. The commander was also familiarized with his expected partnership between him and the German embassies around the globe. All German embassies in the countries to be visited were notified by the AA ahead with a generic press release, plus pictures, and as with past visits, reminded to treat this one as unofficial as well.³⁵⁹ The German embassy in Washington, D.C., was asked again to get approval from the Americans for artillery and torpedo exercise off Hawaii. Britain, in

³⁵⁸ Ranglisten der Reichsmarine, RWeM. Berlin: Mittler & Sohn, 1931, 2.

³⁵⁹ Letter AA to German Embassies; AA IIF Auslandsreise II F 2482, R33459

particular was also informed about the third tour and the Foreign Office in London had no objections to the proposed visits of the *Karlsruhe* to Aden, Trincomali, Ceylon, Calcutta, and Australia. This courtesy call still emphasized the importance of Britain as a world power in 1933. The commander was also informed that this was the first time the ship would collect animals from countries visited for the zoo in the city of Karlsruhe.³⁶⁰

The sailors boarded the ship September 23rd, and between September 25th to October 6th, the anxious new men and one hundred three cadets were broken in by the “old timers.” As in the past, the ship anchored at the Blücher Bridges in Kiel, where she was packed with supplies for the nine-month voyage overseas. Supplies were delivered between October 9th to the 13th and products manufactured by German work were much preferred now.³⁶¹ The familiar brand of beer, Schultheiss, was replaced with another German beer, Becks, and a farewell celebration was held again in the Schlosshof hotel for families and friends. Guests included representatives of the city and navy, and for the first time several organizations from the National Socialist regime. The Sturmabteilung (S.A.), a paramilitary organization of the Nazi party sometimes referred to as the brown shirts, and the Schutzstaffel (S.S.), or Protection Squadron, were present. The Stahlhelm, or Steel Helmets, was another nationalistic, paramilitary association that was established shortly after the Great War. The Hitler Youth (HJ), sent representatives to the festivities as well. Erich Köhler’s widow was present once again, and so were Admirals Konrad Albrecht and Alfred Saalwächter.

³⁶⁰ A “zoo” included a kangaroo, monkey, bear, and a leopard. The leopard’s mother was shot by a British officer and he gave the cub to the board physician. However the leopard, named Trinco by the crew, died the day before the ship arrived back in Kiel.

³⁶¹ Marineverordnungsblatt, March 15, 1933, Heft 7, #58 and August 15, 1933, Heft 22, #149.

This was the first cruise taken under the new regime, but President Hindenburg again issued the travel orders. The ship would leave on October 14th and return June 20, 1934, an eight-and-a-half month tour around the globe. The cruiser would sail from Germany to Italy, to Suez, to the Dutch and British East Indies, to Australia, across the Pacific to the west coast of North America, the West Indies, and up the North American east coast. In all, the *Karlsruhe* would spend 121 days in a total of seventeen foreign ports. The harbors were again categorized into training ports A (Ausbildungshafen), fuel ports B (Ölhafen), and representation harbors, R (Representationshafen). The last stop on this trip was, as with the previous voyages, Spain, this time Caraminal, just north of Vigo for the three-day cadet exams. Certain things had changed by 1933 however. The participation at wreath ceremonies abroad was changed in 1933 by the naval command. Such wreath ceremonies should now only happen if the visit and reception in a city or region was sincere, smooth, and without incidents for the ship and crew. The AA agreed to these changes on September 20th. One of the other changes that happened after January 1933 was that at all official ceremonies the “Horst Wessel Song” played following the German national anthem.³⁶² The Horst Wessel Song, which was also known as “The Flags on High”, was the official song of the NSDAP from 1930 until the end of the Nazi regime. Horst Wessel had penned the lyrics shortly before his death in 1930.

During the two previous voyages the *Karlsruhe* sailed through the English Channel, but this time the ship rounded Scotland and the Orkney Islands during a terrible storm, before heading towards Gibraltar and the Mediterranean.³⁶³ This new route carried the *Karlsruhe* near Scapa Flow. The *Karlsruhe* was the first German war cruiser through these waters since the Great War.

³⁶² AA October 19, 1933, Decree II F 2482, R33459.

³⁶³ Several of the ship’s ribs (Längsspanen) broke during that storm and although they were fixed they would break again two years later.

The Treaty of Versailles and its aftermath, particularly June 21, 1919, brought up memories among the crew. It became clear in this moment to so many sailors what Germany had lost forever. The change of course was directly related to the fact that Germany planned to leave the League of Nations. Even the Nazis were unsure of the immediate consequences of this step. As a precaution, Germany did not want to give other nations the opportunity to use the sighting of a German war cruiser so close to the French coast as propaganda against the Third Reich.³⁶⁴

The vessel also flew the war flag for the “New Germany”: black, white, and red horizontal strips with an iron cross in the middle. This national emblem of Germany was officially changed in March 1933 by a decree of President Hindenburg from the black, red, and gold of the Weimar Republic. Furthermore the swastika had to be flown in conjunction with the German flag. A swastika emblem was mounted already in early October onto the ship and adorned now the stern. The Nazis believed that the swastika symbolized, connected, and represented the glorious past but also the rebirth of the German nation.³⁶⁵ The *Köln*, on her way back to Germany in November 1933 met the *Karlsruhe* in the Suda Bay, and the *Köln* sailors looked with envy at the shining swastika of the *Karlsruhe*.³⁶⁶ Commander Enderndorf outlined the goal of the 1933 mission to his crew: to train the cadets to function as a coherent unit and to lead young sailors who were willing to risk all for fatherland and honor of the flag; to carry the German spirit and will into the world, and display the new Germany overseas. The German sailors should see their service as a service to the German nation. They knew that they were conditioned for future wars because the honor of a sailor was his implicit commitment for nation and fatherland up to the

³⁶⁴ Letter Hoffmann, Oct 19, 1933. Cadet Klaus Hoffmann joined the navy in January 1932 and sailed on the third tour of the *Karlsruhe* under Freiherr von Harsdorf von Enderndorf. He asked his parents and family to keep all letters and postcards from this trip. Hartmann died in June 1944 as commander of U-441. Briefe Hartmann, Flensburg Mürwick, Inventar # XVI 431.

³⁶⁵ *Marineverordnungsblatt*, March 17, 1933, Heft 8, #65 and Sept 15, 1933, Heft 24, A.

³⁶⁶ Hans Fuchs, *Heimkehr*, 176.

sacrifice of his life.³⁶⁷ During the first two voyages the *Karlsruhe* carried a piece of *Heimat* overseas. Now under the new flag, the cruiser's mission focused instead on strengthening contacts to the Germans overseas and winning over their sympathies for the new regime. At the time of the departure no one knew how the receptions abroad would go, now that the Weimar Republic no longer existed. During the past two trips the ship was enthusiastically welcomed around the globe. Now, however, there was an uncertainty in the air, a fact that concerned even seasoned officers onboard. Therefore the commander made his crew aware of the fact that, "they might be alone out there."

Cadet Klaus Hoffmann wrote his first letter home, just a day after they left Kiel. While still in the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Kanal a radio speech by Hitler was transmitted to the crew, officially informing Germans and the world that Germany had left the League of Nations. Hoffmann thanked his parents for the many gifts he found in his locker, but then the letter's tone changed from a very personal note, discussing a cake, apples and other gifts to a more serious political character. "We just heard of the exit of Germany from the League of Nations," a decision which young Klaus supported.³⁶⁸ It was here in the canal at the Holtenau locks that the crew gave an oath to the president and, now for the first time, the new chancellor of Germany.

The 1933-34 tour also had some familiar faces: sailor and diarist Robert Buttmi, who was now promoted to petty officer, Obermechanik Maat, and part of the core crew, and Chaplain Armin Schallehn.³⁶⁹ Many of the crew took also Heimatgrüsse, greetings from home, with them overseas. It was not uncommon that family, neighbors, or friends wanted them to visit a German

³⁶⁷ Organizatorische Bestimmungen für die Reichsmarine (OB), Heft 1, 1934, decree Hindenburg May 25, 1934.

³⁶⁸ Letter Hoffmann, October 14, 1933. Germany officially resigned from the League on October 19, 1933.

³⁶⁹ Reichsmarine 33, #7, Logbuch Karlsruhe.

who had left and migrated to one of the nations visited by the cruiser. This was often impossible; Germans in the *Heimat* had often no idea about the vast stretches of land and distances overseas.

The first, but unscheduled stop, Palermo, Sicily, was reached quickly. Here fuel was added. Since the ship had used more oil than expected during the storm around the British Isles, the Naval Command was concerned that the ship would not make it to the scheduled fuel intake in Aden.³⁷⁰ The crew used the short stop to purchase cheap, fresh produce in Palermo - a feast, as they described it. Germany lacked many consumer goods, and fruits and vegetables grown in the sunny regions of the Mediterranean, were in 1933 unattainable for most there. Syracuse, next on the itinerary, greeted the crew in friendship, and they participated in a anniversary celebration of Mussolini's March on Rome. Buttmi recalled that he was happy to finally have contact with Italians, something he missed out on during his last cruise. Although the *Karlsruhe* visited communities abroad in 1932 that boasted large Italian immigrant communities like those in Argentina or New York, the crew had little to no contact with them.³⁷¹ A soccer game against the Syracuse Young Fascists ending in a 1-1 tie rounded off the visit to Sicily. From there an uneventful trip through the Mediterranean Sea followed to Port Said, Egypt.

A medical emergency made it necessary to ship out a sick sailor in Egypt, a British client state.³⁷² However, no repetition of the 1930 Lourenço Marques incident recurred. The sailor was dropped off in Port Said and admitted to the British Kitchener hospital without any incident, and the ship continued her voyage.³⁷³ While in the seaport of Aden, Yemen, an A/B port, the

³⁷⁰ During the storm sailor Wassmuth was badly injured that he was admitted to a local hospital in Palermo. Another sailor was later dropped off in a hospital in San Diego, CA.

³⁷¹ Buttmi, *Werben*, 271.

³⁷² Although Egypt formally received independence from Great Britain in 1922, they were considered a client state until 1954.

³⁷³ Die Reichsmarine #3, March 1934. Maat Fritz Dannenfelser joined the *Karlsruhe* in Java after his successful appendix operation.

Karlsruhe celebrated the forty millionth rotation of the axle screw with beer from the pantry, a welcome distraction. Few Europeans and fewer Germans called Aden their home, and not much entertainment was offered in this rather hot port. Sailors from other foreign war cruisers that lay in port came to visit the *Karlsruhe*. The German sailors, although they received a hearty welcome by the British sailors of the *Endeavour* crew, felt an uneasiness and sensible reservation by their Royal navy counterparts.³⁷⁴ The crew also experienced some unpleasant incidents. Several of the cadets were pelted with sand and stones, and called names by the locals while on shore leave in Aden. It is unclear if this happened because they were sailors from a Nazi war cruiser, or just seen as foreign sailors who generally had a bad reputation.

The ship arrived in the Dutch East Indies, first in Sumatra on February 21st, and then in Java on January 6th. At both locations the German sailors were greeted with much enthusiasm, not just by the small German communities there, but by Dutch officials, the mayors, press and navy commanders. A strong “Sieg Heil” echoed from the piers surprised but also relaxed the Germans, who had been uncertain about their reception here. The crew again was invited to tour plantations and the islands in general. Germans later reported home that they were impressed by the sailors’ discipline, and some Dutch citizens even proclaimed after they met the crew that they wanted to be “truly German” as well.³⁷⁵

Buttmi was worried and concerned when the ship made its way to Australia, however. “How will the reception be? Germany fought in the war against Australia.”³⁷⁶ His concerns were unnecessary, as the ship had a good reception in Brisbane. The pier was packed, and the sailors viewed this as a good sign for things to come. The official reception committee included the

³⁷⁴ Völkischer Beobachter, *Die Auslandsreise der Karlsruhe*, January 5, 1934.

³⁷⁵ Luv und Lee, 1934, 26.

³⁷⁶ Buttmi, *Werben*, 321. Brisbane was considered an A/B port

premier of Queensland and the mayor of Brisbane. The ship took in more oil, fresh water, and provisions. The treatment in Brisbane was described as “quite pleasant.” Yet the sailors encountered several older men on the streets who told them they had fought during the Great War in France. From there they took iron crosses from German prisoners as souvenirs, something the young cadets did not believe, because in their opinion “no one could ever take an iron cross away from a German soldier.”³⁷⁷ The crew also reported that there were certain tensions with union sympathizers in the port city who opposed the new Germany, but they had little to no interaction with them, only hearing about their activities through visitors to the ship and news media. Some newspapers reported in extra editions about the “Terrorism in Germany” and “How the Nazis Rule.”³⁷⁸ Cadet Hoffmann also enjoyed Australia, but was upset because although German music was well liked and played there, the Australians unfortunately also liked the Austrian tenor Richard Tauber, whose father was of Jewish decent. The sailors were disappointed and saddened that many Germans no longer spoke their language and they feared that in a few decades the (German) language would be completely gone from Australia. Cadet Bernd Klug met his uncle and cousin in Brisbane and spent several afternoons with his family and concluded that “many Germans here are English already.”³⁷⁹ Further upsetting was the fact that when they visited a German community, flags from around the world greeted them. The Germans in Australia no longer recognized black, white, and red as their own.³⁸⁰ January 30, 1934, was celebrated on board as a special day; it was the first anniversary of Hitler and the

³⁷⁷ Letter Hoffmann, Jan 21, 1934.

³⁷⁸ Hans Fuchs, *Heimkehr*, 67.

³⁷⁹ Logbuch Seekadet Bernd Klug, Crew 33, entry Australia.

³⁸⁰ Hans Fuchs, *Heimkehr*, 72.

Nazis in power. That evening commander Enderndorf treated his crew and officers to recorded Hitler speeches from his own personal collection.³⁸¹

Australia was described by the German sailors as a sober and hard nation, although full of German blood, no longer open for immigration. Australia, however, had no history. Therefore Australian soldiers, including immigrants, fought in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and France, because “they wanted to conquer a piece of history” for their nation as well. The sailors observed that no class system like in England existed here. Australians employed no servants or maids, no one had to leave a tip in a restaurant. Almost all owned their own houses and cars, but Australians appeared to be spiritual and imaginary barren and empty, empty as the land they live in.³⁸²

From Australia the ship made its way further into the Pacific Ocean towards the Samoan Islands. Before the war, from 1900 to 1914, four of the islands in that group belonged to the small German colonial empire. Now they were part of New Zealand and therefore part of the British Empire, and a ship visiting either Australia or a port in New Zealand had as a courtesy to show the British war flag.³⁸³ Tensions were high in Apia, the former capital city of German Samoa, when the cruiser arrived. The native population in Samoa seemed friendly towards the German visitors. They still reminiscence about the days of imperial Germany and “the proud imperial Germany of pre-war times, and the heroic time during the war still lived in their mind.”³⁸⁴ The governor, however, had not permitted any official reception out of fear of pro-sympathy rallies for Germany.³⁸⁵ Klug confided in his diary that there was limited shore leave, but that the reception by the natives was great, warm, and heartfelt. Children were throwing

³⁸¹ Buttmi, *Werben*, 328.

³⁸² Hans Fuchs, *Heimkehr*, 66-67.

³⁸³ *Marineverordnungsblatt*, Feb 15, 1933, Heft 5, #37. New Zealand administered Samoa as a League of Nations mandate since 1919, while New Zealand was itself a Dominion within the British Empire since 1907.

³⁸⁴ Hans Fuchs, *Heimkehr*, 96.

³⁸⁵ Buttmi, *Werben*, 329.

flowers during one of the few excursions into the interior of the island.³⁸⁶ The governor's decision was based on the reception British officials had received there in the past. The native Samoans were unhappy about the mandate situation and just a year prior a high-ranking British official visited the island group when internal unrest broke out. His visit was ignored by the Samoans; no traditional dances were performed, and no natives attended any reception in his honor. A few weeks after his visit, the German war cruiser *Köln* was on a scheduled, pre-approved visit to Apia, which was canceled at the last minute by the New Zealand government. Government officials feared that the natives would show too much enthusiasm towards the *Köln* and give the Germans a marvelous reception, more than the British official received. Thus the *Köln* was only allowed to anchor outside the three-mile zone, and few natives visited the ship.

Due to the narrow harbor entry at Apia and a large natural coral reef, the *Karlsruhe* had to anchor outside of it. The ship used up a great deal of its fuel during this very tricky anchoring maneuver. The engines had to be kept under full steam at all times so the vessel would not drift towards the reefs and sink. Klug also remembered the terrible weather during the stay and the large waves that made it almost impossible for the sailors to get with a smaller boat on land. The extra time not spent on the island was used by the cadets and their training officers to study for the next exams.³⁸⁷ Because of all the extra oil burned, the ship was forced to leave Apia earlier than scheduled. The crew felt that the New Zealand government was actually quite happy about the tribulation, because the less time the Germans spent on the island the less contact the crew would have with the local native population.³⁸⁸ Regardless, the natives were happy to see the Germans, and at one point a native stepped forward and sang the German national anthem and

³⁸⁶ Logbuch Seekadet Bernd Klug, Crew 33, entry Apia.

³⁸⁷ Logbuch Seekadet Bernd Klug, Crew 33, entry Apia.

³⁸⁸ Hoffmann Letters, Feb 6, 1934.

Heil dir im Siegerkranz (Hail to Thee in Victor's Crown) in German.³⁸⁹ The next scheduled stop for the cruiser after Samoa was Honolulu, Hawaii, where the ship arrived February 17, 1934. Artillery practice and a night shoot was scheduled there, but more important, this was the first American port on the trip under the new flag. The same worries and fears that many had had before arriving in Australia existed here as well. How would the reaction be in Hawaii now that Germany was under Nazi leadership? The sailors were welcomed with open arms and no hostilities of any kind were experienced. However, a new problem arose at this U.S. port. The sailors had a total of ten RM allocated for entertainment and gift purchases for each harbor; however, the exchange rate was up from \$2.50 in 1932 to \$4.20 per one RM, which left little room for souvenir purchases and entertainment on shore.

In all, the ship stayed two weeks and many, including Buttmi, met with old friends they met during the 1932 stop here. Some friendships made by some of the crew lasted a lifetime. Robert Buttmi met a German couple named Henry and Friedel Langhorst in San Diego in 1934 and the German sailor became the godfather of their first-born son in 1936 when he visited San Diego for a second time. Mrs. Langhorst visited the Buttmis several times after World War II, and so did the godson as a G.I. in the 1950s.³⁹⁰ The friendliness and openness that the sailors experienced in Hawaii receded once they reached Tacoma, Washington.

First Lieutenant Rost reported on the unpleasant conditions, the economic depression, the high unemployment, the many communists, and the corruption in Tacoma, something they did not see in Hawaii.³⁹¹ Negative propaganda also took root. While the letters and diary entries from the previous ports were mostly free of any political statements, this changed with the visit to

³⁸⁹ Hans Fuchs, *Heimkehr*, 105. The song was from 1871 to 1918 considered the unofficial national anthem.

³⁹⁰ Phone interview with Gerlinde Karl, 2010.

³⁹¹ Luv und Lee 1934, Karlsruhe Reisebericht Rost, 162ff.

Washington State. Rost believed that Americans soaked up communism like a sponge. Several hundred people demonstrated, and three were arrested when they carried saying with “Down with Bloody Hitler.” The German consul, Dr. Walter Reinhardt, again greeted the ship just as he had done in 1932, and he recommended that they should “not take official notice of communist demonstrations that took place here against officers and sailors of the *Karlsruhe*.”³⁹²

Tacoma was for several sailors, including Robert Buttmi, a familiar port, for they had visited in 1932. While their first visit was a pleasant memory, the 1934 stop turned out to be bothersome. Buttmi and some of his comrades went souvenir shopping and realized quickly that the shop owners feared the Germans as soon as they entered the stores. The negative propaganda distributed certainly had its effects.³⁹³ Before the *Karlsruhe* arrived, the mayor of Tacoma was asked to prevent the “Hitler ship” from docking. Furthermore, flyers of unknown origins arrived at local businesses that informed them that the German visitors would not purchase any oil, food, or other products and therefore would not support the local shops. These rumors were unfounded, however. The ship purchased oil and other products entirely through local firms.³⁹⁴ The American Legion planned a parade in conjunction with the onboard orchestra in honor of St. Patrick’s Day, yet Enderndorf reported to Berlin that the legion canceled the event at the last minute. He believed that Jewish groups intimidated the legion. Commander Enderndorf entertained and met with representatives from the Carnegie Foundation, the dean of the University of Washington and high-ranking U.S. military officials. The festivities in Tacoma were only interrupted for the sailors because of a three-day period of mourning after the death of sailor Karl Lischke.

³⁹² The Centralia Washington Daily Chronicle, *Communist in Demonstrations*, March 20, 1934.

³⁹³ Buttmi, *Werben*, 338.

³⁹⁴ AA Berichte June 1934, Bd 2, R 33461.

In nearby Seattle a Bund der Freunde des Neuen Deutschland (Friends of the New Germany) had just formed the year prior. This association was a purely American organization of people of German origins and only active in the U.S.A. This pro-Nazi organization opposed the boycott of German goods. Their overall goal was to improve the relationship between the United States and Germany.³⁹⁵ Within a few months though, the NSDAP and the A.O. under Erich Bohle in Hamburg concluded that the Friends would not be supported by Nazi Germany and party members could not hold membership in the Friends as well. Party members were also not allowed to carry out any propaganda among non-German citizens abroad.³⁹⁶ A small delegation from the ship, including the commander and a few musicians traveled from Tacoma the short distance to Seattle. Here, the reception was anything but welcoming. After Enderndorf gave a brief speech at city hall, and just as the orchestra started to play, a handful of young women threw anti-German bulletins from the balcony into the crowds.³⁹⁷ The whole incident was distorted in the local press when it reported that “the musicians put down their instruments and lunged at the women and threw them out.”³⁹⁸

From Tacoma the ship sailed to California and arrived in San Diego, where she dropped anchor on March 27th. The traditional salute was replied from Fort Rosecrans and North Islands. Six U.S. destroyers, Squadrons #2 and #4, and five battle cruisers were also in port. The German sailors looked jealously and with envy at the American fleet there. For many of the younger sailors, it was another painful reminder of Versailles, especially after they saw their first aircraft carrier. Rost, as an officer, met with fellow U.S. navy officers for a courtesy call. He wrote that

³⁹⁵ Washington Staatszeitung, Feb 7 1935, 2.

³⁹⁶ Telegram Dieckhoff, February 16, 1934, #259, series C, vol II, 492.

³⁹⁷ VB, *Kreuzer Karlsruhe in Amerika*, May 16, 1934.

³⁹⁸ Buttmi, *Werben*, 340.

the Americans feared the Japanese [already in 1934] after he talked with the commander of the fleet stationed there.

Dr. Georg Gyssing, the German consul in Los Angeles, Rear Admiral William Tarrant, Commander of the 11th Naval District, John Forward, San Diego's mayor, John Fox of the chamber of commerce of Los Angeles and George Otto, chairman of the local German societies' entertainment committee, all organized the program for the cruiser. The sailors heard rumors that communist sympathizers wanted to stage demonstrations at some of the festivities, but nothing happened. Entertainment was held at the El Cortez Hotel, and a contingent of sailors visited Los Angeles. There, about one hundred communists demonstrated, but were stopped by police when they planned to storm a building where a dinner was held in honor of the *Karlsruhe*.³⁹⁹ Anti-German sentiments were also experienced when some sailors visited Hollywood. One of the largest movie theaters in town featured the anti-war movie *All Quiet on the Western Front*, which was banned in Germany.⁴⁰⁰

From California the ship was scheduled to arrive at its next major stop, Santa Barbara in the Dominican Republic, from April 25th to May 7th. In order to get there the ship had to cross the Panama Canal. The travel through the canal took almost nine hours and in Balboa, a B port, a Mr. K. Kuhn acted as the president of the small reception committee. The ship stayed only for fuel intake of 900-tons, which took a little over eight hours. That task fell on the same day as Hitler's fifty-fifth birthday, and a small celebration for the few Germans in Balboa and the crew was held. From Balboa the ship sailed across the Caribbean to the Dominican Republic, where

³⁹⁹ The sailors reported that they received on several occasions motorcycle police escorts while going to sightseeing tours, Buttmi, *Werben*, 340.

⁴⁰⁰ VB, *Kreuzer Karlsruhe in Amerika*, May 16, 1934.

the sailors enjoyed a brief break from the routine onboard a war cruiser before heading north to the U.S. east coast.⁴⁰¹

The most important harbor for the *Karlsruhe* during this 1933-34 cruise was Boston, Massachusetts. The scheduled visit to Boston also turned out to be the most bothersome for the German cruiser. Boston was specifically added to the itinerary after the AA had received numerous requests from the city starting in 1932. Once there, however, Lieutenant Rost had the feeling that no one wanted to take responsibility for inviting the *Karlsruhe* to Boston - not the state of Massachusetts, not the city, or the local German Americans. While other host cities put together a welcoming committee weeks if not months before the arrival, the city of Boston did so only the day of the arrival of the cruiser.⁴⁰² Boston was considered not only an A/B port but also an R port, the only one during this voyage. Buttmi, who had sailed on the *Karlsruhe* during the 1932 trip, recalled the overwhelming response to the ship on the American east coast, particularly Philadelphia and New York. Here in Boston, however, no planes or ships greeted them at arrival. The pier was almost empty, and Buttmi described the docking maneuver as stiff and formal.⁴⁰³ Cadet Klug only saw police and American sailors at the pier. Buttmi brushed the unfriendliness off with the observation that Bostonians were different than New Yorkers and, he was told, different from Americans in general. People in Boston valued their freedom and were described as very sensible folks.⁴⁰⁴ The cruiser docked at the Charlestown U.S. Navy Pier and was welcomed by Mayor Frederick Mansfield and Governor Joseph Ely. The “fascist cruiser,” as the ship was called in Boston, was allowed to anchor at the navy pier, and many locals saw this

⁴⁰¹ The German community there had a time to pay for all of the expenses that occurred during the thirteen days there. Although the Germans collected a total of \$316, a difference of almost two hundred fifty dollars still existed. This amount was eventually paid by the German embassy in Havana. It was a small German community, about thirty with a meager budget. AA R33461.

⁴⁰² VB, Kreuzer *Karlsruhe in heimatlichen Gewässern*, June 14, 1934.

⁴⁰³ Buttmi, *Werben*, 359.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 361.

as a provocation because they were unhappy with the visit, although the navy supported it. The crew felt simply as guests of the American navy.⁴⁰⁵ The city and local business community seemed split over the arrival of the cruiser. On one side, the city officials and businesses greeted them; yet, on the other hand many Bostonians boycotted German products and the more active groups went to the streets. This division ran through the administration of the city and the two prominent universities in the area, Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) as well.

The crew encountered many misconceptions that existed prior to their arrival. It was reported that the anchors on the uniform buttons were replaced by swastika symbols. Yet after a few days the tension receded, the press and Bostonians were surprised that the crew spoke English, were clean and courteous, something they did not expect from Nazis. Car, after car was waiting at the gate of the navy pier; everyone, Germans and Americans, alike wanted to pick up a sailor as a guest.⁴⁰⁶ Although the sailors were able to impress many locals with their immaculate appearance, confrontations happened nevertheless.

The first sign of discord happened when both the German ambassador Dr. Hans Luther and the naval attaché General Friedrich von Boetticher flew in from Washington to greet the ship.⁴⁰⁷ Friedrich von Prittwitz und Gaffron, German ambassador to the United States from 1927 to 1933 had resigned his post in Washington immediately after the Nazis seized power and was replaced by Luther. Luther was a former chancellor of the Weimar Republic, but forced to resign because

⁴⁰⁵ Rost, *Provokation und Kampfansage and das Amerikanische Judentum*, Luv und Lee, 1934, 163.

⁴⁰⁶ Luv und Lee, 1934, 162-164.

⁴⁰⁷ Von Boetticher was in the early 1920s a close advisor of Wilhelm Groener. Boetticher had also visited the United States in the fall of 1922.

of the so-called flag controversy in 1926. He was later appointed president of the Central Bank (*Reichsbank*), a position he held until March 1933.⁴⁰⁸

With this controversial background he accepted the post in Washington, D.C. One of the first official acts of Luther, as the German ambassador was to tour the United States. He met with leading U.S. politicians and businessmen, but also leaders of the German American communities and was therefore equipped to assess the German cultural policies in the United States. He believed that the sympathies linking German Americans to the Third Reich had already deepened, and would deepen further among both U.S. citizens and German Americans over time. He reported to the AA that he detected an increase and widespread understanding for the new Germany.⁴⁰⁹ Luther was confident that the approval pendulum was swinging in the direction of Nazi Germany.

The first incidents that involved Dr. Luther, the staunch supporter of Nazi Germany, happened at Germantown, Pennsylvania, during the 250th anniversary celebration of the founding of the city in October 1933. About 15,000 German Americans attended this event. Luther was scheduled as a key note speaker, but canceled his engagement with the excuse that no swastika was displayed at the festivities. After an exhausting two-hour search none was found in the city,

⁴⁰⁸ His downfall as chancellor came in 1926 when Luther was involved in the so-called *Flaggen Streit*, the flag controversy, which actually lasted until the takeover by the Nazis. German embassies and consulates overseas, particularly the one in South America, wanted to fly the flag of the Weimar Republic (black, red, gold) in conjunctions with the old colors of the Empire (black, white, red) at the same time. Chancellor Luther endorsed and backed this request although it clearly undermined the republic. When Hindenburg got elected in 1925 the conservative monarchists in the country hoisted the imperial flag in his honor, another way of undermining the hated republic. On May 5, 1926, President Hindenburg issued per Luther a decree that the merchant flag, a black, white, red horizontal strips flag with a small black, red, gold emblem in the corner could be shown abroad. This decree was viewed by the Social Democrats, the unions, and other left oriented groups in Weimar as a symbolic link between the republic and the old empire, something they were not willing to support. Thus the German Democratic Party (DDP) asked for the motion of no-confidence towards Chancellor Luther and on May 12, 1926 Luther stepped down as chancellor.

⁴⁰⁹ Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945, Series C, The Third Reich, vol IV, #155, 381.

and Luther never took the podium.⁴¹⁰ So when Luther and Boetticher arrived to greet the sailors, in Boston both anti-German and communist demonstrators assembled near the pier. On the other side, about one hundred pro-German students from Harvard University wanted to defend the German visitors. A confrontation between the two groups seemed inevitable. However, the police stepped in before it evolved into a larger confrontation and diffused the situation. The *Karlsruhe* cadets also toured MIT. But not everyone at MIT was happy about the visit to the institute. Some students demonstrated against the German war ship, were jailed, but released on bail after an anti-Nazi demonstration.⁴¹¹ Twenty students from both MIT and Harvard were later found guilty of inciting to riot, disturbing the peace, and loitering.⁴¹² The most serious disturbance came when a Harvard student was arrested onboard the *Karlsruhe*. He was caught clogging the ventilation vents with anti-Hitler propaganda and identified as a 20-year old Marxist student from Illinois.⁴¹³ The German Consul in Boston, Baron von Tippelskirch, realized the precarious nature of the situation and decided not to press the topic any further. No warrant was issued for the student's arrest.⁴¹⁴ These were the only reported disturbances during the ten-day stay. What was missing, however, were the familiar welcoming signs in American storefronts that had greeted the sailors just a year earlier to the North American shore. Regardless of the initial reception, collectors of maritime and postal memorabilia swarmed the ship and sent letters with postal stamps issued by the *Deutsche Marine Schiffspost* to friends and family.⁴¹⁵ Besides excursions and sightseeing in and around Boston, some crew members travelled nine hours in

⁴¹⁰ Trenton Evening Times, *Nazi Flag Absent, Envoy offended*, Oct 8, 1933.

⁴¹¹ The Tech, MIT, *Technology Students jailed after Parade against German Ship*, May 18, 1934. The arrested students and their counsel tried later for the ship to leave and tried to serve summons orders to Commander Endersdorf. The commander of the navy yard blocked the way to the ship and declared that no one had authority to serve summons on federal property, navy yards or German property.

⁴¹² Lowell Sun, *Anti-Nazi Group is Found Guilty*, May 29, 1934.

⁴¹³ Sandusky Star Journal, *Late news Clashes*, May 16, 1934.

⁴¹⁴ For more information and the reactions of the university administrators in Massachusetts to the visit see Stephen Norwood, *The Third Reich in the Ivory Tower*, 42-47.

⁴¹⁵ Letter to Milton Berzin, 11a Campus Pl, Brooklyn, NY, May 12, 1934, Boston MA; personal collection author.

busses to New York City where they visited the Statue of Liberty and the Empire State Building. Cadet Holt first heard back in Kiel about the possibility of a visit to New York and he “was excited ever since.” Yet once there, he was rather disappointed about the metropolis. He had previously spent time in Paris, London, and Berlin, but no other city had such parameters as New York. Here it was speed, advertisements, and cars everywhere. People were compared to ants and all in a state of hyper-nervousness. One could see the largest bridge, the largest traffic jam, but also the largest unemployment, most Jews, and largest adversity. It must have been therefore like a tranquil oasis when the busses stopped on their way back to Boston at a house of a German who invited to a “simple and heartfelt garden party.”⁴¹⁶

From Boston the Germans sailed first to Spain and then back to Germany. Admiral Albrecht as the chief of the Baltic naval station and Admiral Saalwächter came onboard at the Holtenau locks, where many families and friends greeted the sailors already. As soon as the cruiser arrived back, she participated in the Kiel Week, an annual sailing event celebrated since 1882. A welcome-home party was organized at the Schlosshof hotel and the cadets were sent to the cadet school in Flensburg. The exotic animals that the crew had received as gifts during the voyage were unloaded and shipped to the zoo in the city of Karlsruhe. Commander Freiherr von Harsdorf von Enderndorf then formally handed over his command of the *Karlsruhe*, but not before he met with Erich Raeder and Adolf Hitler on board the cruiser.⁴¹⁷

Germandom Abroad after 1933

Germans around the globe were in conflict after the Nazis took power in January 1933. On one hand German communities wanted to support the new regime of their old *Heimat*, in most

⁴¹⁶ Logbuch Seekadet Bernd Klug, Crew 33, entry Boston.

⁴¹⁷ Document 189-C, note Raeder on discussion with Hitler, June 1934, IMT, vol xxxiv, 775.

cases more so than they had supported Weimar, yet they were unsure of the developments in, and the future of Germany. Many of them remembered the Great War and the consequences they faced in their new homelands, particularly if that nation fought on the side of the Allies. Those that were clear in their sympathies took to the streets. In the spring of 1933, shortly after the Third Reich was established, protests against the new regime emerged, but were mainly confined to large cities in the United States and in many cases organized by communists or Jewish organizations who warned early on about Hitler. Most German-Americans, however, adopted a wait and see attitude. By May 1933 Jewish organizations in the U.S. and South America asked shoppers to boycott goods manufactured in Germany and to boycott travel to Germany itself.⁴¹⁸ These organizations made it clear that they were not asking anyone to boycott German American businesses in general though. Their fight was not directed against the masses of German American citizens, who refused to link themselves with the vicious principles of “der schöne Adolf.”⁴¹⁹ The *Jewish Chronicle* pointed out that being pro-Hitler was synonymous with being anti-Semitic. One cannot acclaim the Führer without condoning his barbaric policies against a race.⁴²⁰ But within a year counter-protests against these boycotts and the Jewish organizations were reported. By the spring of 1934 the League of Friends and other organizations like the German American Protective Alliance (DAWA) had organized themselves in several U.S. cities and now called for a boycott of Jewish products and businesses. They petitioned President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and wanted the Justice Department to investigate these boycotts and condemn them. Anti-German boycotts were also reported from other nations abroad. The German Ambassador in Argentina had to assure the Germans in June 1933 that boycotts in

⁴¹⁸ Germany stayed however on the travel itinerary of many Americans until the outbreak of the war. Several college students were on the *Athenia*, coming back from Europe on September 3, 1939. Because of the favorable exchange rate Americans could afford to travel to Germany.

⁴¹⁹ *Jewish Chronicle*, Editorial, October 1934.

⁴²⁰ *Jewish Chronicle*, *Hitlerism is here*, May 25, 1934.

Argentina were few. German financial institutions there had not experienced less business, although some larger contracts went to other foreign companies and not German firms. Boycotts were, however, reported from Argentina on the local level, particularly smaller Jewish family operated companies who refused to deal with Germans.⁴²¹

Discrimination against Germans existed in many parts of the world, and the sailors heard many complaints when they visited and interacted with members of the German communities overseas. In Australia such grievances were brought to the attention of the crew during the 1933-34 trip. After the war the Germans there had suffered, although in the mid-1920s the discrimination receded. Now that there was a world financial crisis and depression, many of them were among the millions unemployed. Because of their German heritage they were often the first ones who were laid off. Therefore many tried to change their last name, and in some cases whole German communities decided to blend better into Australian society by changing the name of their villages into an Anglicized names. Nevertheless, many kept up their membership in German associations.

Most of the German clubs overseas had, by the time the German cruiser arrived, a rich and long history. Few sports or social clubs were founded after 1917 by Germans overseas, and those associations founded after the war were mostly of political or military nature. Former German soldiers came together and formed the Association of German War Veterans (Bund Deutscher Kriegsteilnehmer) in several countries, but in the spring of 1935 these groups merged with the local Stahlhelm, which was also founded after the Great War in Germany.

⁴²¹ NARA, RG 242, T-120, roll 3397, letter German Embassy to AA, June 6, 1933.

After 1933 both old established associations like the Steuben Gesellschaft and the newer clubs participated in festivities honoring their heritage in the United States. Usually these celebrations ended with the Deutschlandlied, (the German national anthem), the Horst Wessel song, and the Stars and Stripes. Yet many German Americans were unhappy about the fact that they now had to hoist the swastika flag at official associations and club meetings per policy of the German Embassy in Washington. Many resisted this change as shown in the example of Luther and his speech in Pennsylvania, but many also believed that a “new Siegfried, a Hitler, was at the rudder of events and steering the new Germany.”⁴²²

Celebrations like these were also recognized in non-German circles along the west coast of the United States when American elected official participated in the German commemorations like German Days. Angelo Rossi of San Francisco for instance, showed openly his sympathies for the new Germany. Rossi, of Italian immigrant parents, was mayor of the City by the Bay from 1931 to 1944 and linked to the fascist movement in America until 1939. Rossi had visited Mussolini in Italy, and it was rumored that he had a large portrait of the Duce in his office in city hall. However, disagreements amongst the Germans was reported as well; about 100 members of the Friends of the New Germany celebrated German Days, separate from the rest of the German communities and the fear was that the Germandom in California would split over this issue.

Two organizations crystalized themselves, however, out of the thousands of German Americans clubs and associations that existed in the United States during that time. The German American League was an organization that was in opposition to all the National Socialist organizations in the U.S.A. This league saw itself as a representative body of the masses of

⁴²² Report German Consulate San Francisco to German Embassy in DC, Deutschtum in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika, R 80290.

citizens of German descent. One of the earliest rallies organized by the league against the New Germany was held in March 1933 in New York's Madison Square Garden with over 35,000 attending.⁴²³ One of the first symbolic steps the league undertook was in August 1934 when it decided to ban the swastika, a symbol of anti-Semitism, from all of its meetings. However in May 1934 the League of Friends, the largest pro-Nazi association in the country, held a gathering in the same venue, and Hitler supporters amassed a group of about twenty thousand sympathizer.

During the 1932 voyage, the last year of the Weimar Republic, Americans in general did not show much interest in the political developments in Germany. This, however, changed the following year and, as expected, the crew was under much more scrutiny after 1933. The enthusiasm of 1932 by the American press had also changed by 1933-34, although it still varied from host city to host city. Questions about the new Germany were raised everywhere the *Karlsruhe* anchored. Cadet Hoffmann wrote that in Brisbane he was asked what Hitler paid his stormtroopers, to which he replied, with idealism. The cadet stressed that the ship and crew did not sail overseas to make politics but to represent Germany, a common theme amongst the diarists.⁴²⁴ Some editorials specifically stated that the "*Karlsruhe* was welcomed, because a great majority of Germans are fine in mind and heart despite Herr Hitler and his programs."⁴²⁵ Some sailors were even invited by German Jews, and Buttmi received on the day of his departure a large package filled with goodies from the German Jews that he had met in Boston and who had shown him around town.⁴²⁶

⁴²³ *New York Times*, March 28, 1933.

⁴²⁴ Letter Hoffmann, Jan 21, 1934.

⁴²⁵ *Houston Chronicle*, April 29, 1935, "*Our guests, the German sailors*".

⁴²⁶ Buttmi, Werben, 364.

Just like the previous two voyages of the ship, the 1933-34 cruise, the first one conducted under the Nazi regime, was authorized by a decree of President Hindenburg, not Hitler, and the sailors stressed that the voyage was made by orders of the Reichspräsident and not the chancellor, and that their mission was again politically neutral.⁴²⁷ That “neutral mission” however, did not stop the commander or his officers from giving passionate pro-Nazi speeches and promoting the new Germany. In San Diego, for instance, some of the officers publicly stated that “Nazism has given Germany a new hope and new lease on life.”⁴²⁸ Throughout all of the voyages the crew stayed informed through personal correspondence but also official channels about the political developments during their absence in Germany. Large parts of the crew were delighted when they heard in June 1934 that the individual states in the Reich were dissolved. However, the crew was also not immune to the rapid changes that happened back in the Reich during their absence. In a frantic request home, Cadet Klaus Hoffmann asked for his Aryan pass which needed to be present by the time the ship reached Caraminal, where the cadets took their last exams. This presented a challenge because he served overseas on a ship and had only two months to complete the certificates. Klaus was also worried about his mother’s side because she was of Norwegian decent. Regardless his parents must have worked vigorously, all papers made it in time for his exams.⁴²⁹

The crew of the *Karlsruhe* prided herself on the fact that they were the first German war cruiser to make a training voyage entirely under the new swastika flag. One of the tasks was to introduce the new Germany to the world and to strengthen the contacts to the Germans overseas. While the first part was certainly accomplished by the crew, the second part of the mission was a

⁴²⁷ Ibid., 363-364.

⁴²⁸ The San Diego Union, *Visitors’ Hours Set For Today and Tomorrow*, March 28, 1934.

⁴²⁹ Hoffmann’s father was physician in Plön, Schleswig Holstein, his maternal great-grandmother born and raised in Norway.

more difficult undertaking. As in the past, numerous baptisms, weddings, and confirmations took place around the globe onboard the war cruiser, which certainly aided in intensifying the ties to Germany. Other gestures included invitations for all German bachelors in Padang, Indonesia to the ship to celebrate a “*heimatliche*” Christmas.⁴³⁰ Wherever Germans celebrated Christmas, *Heimat* was within them and it was their utmost joy to celebrate a German Christmas, a belief shared by the Nazis.⁴³¹

Opposition to the ship overseas, particularly in North America, seemed to come from two different sources, communists and Jewish organizations. While communist demonstrations were reported from Australia too, no Jewish protests took place there. The largest communist demonstrations were reported from the U.S. west coast, while Jewish opposition seemed more prominent in New England. Some sailors seemed upset about the information about Nazi Germany which they perceived as false and called them Hetzkampanien (agitation campaigns) of the American press. The sailors also experienced a certain reluctance by the public in some ports, but in the end, the sailors impressed with discipline wherever they dropped anchor, and after a few days the local population apologized to the crew about any disturbances or misconceptions. When the *Karlsruhe* left these places, many sailors left with greetings to Germany, and again such visits highlighted a sense of understanding between nations and fostered friendships.

⁴³⁰ Buttmi, *Werben* 309.

⁴³¹ *Wir Deutsche in der Welt, 1935*. Berlin: Otto Stollberg, 1935. *Die deutsche Auferstehung*.

CHAPTER 7

CREW 1934

In August 1934 the Reichsmarine announced that the cruiser *Karlsruhe* was under the command of Captain Günther Lütjens and would leave on her fourth good-will tour, this time in a westward direction, to North and South America in October. The 1934-35 voyage would cover 31,000 nautical miles and the ship was expected to return in June 1935 to Germany.⁴³² From Kiel, the ship sailed to the Azores, Trinidad, Brazil, and then to Uruguay, where the crew celebrated Christmas. They rounded Tierra de Fuego and made their way up the west coast of the Americas with stops in Chile, Peru, the United States, and Canada. The Germans then made their way back south to Mexico, through the Panama Canal and into the Gulf of Mexico. Texas was once again selected as a destination, fulfilling a promise made to the city of Houston in 1933.⁴³³ The last stop on the North American continent was Charleston, South Carolina. As with the past three voyages, ports were classified into representation, training, and fuel ports. This time, however, refueling was handled differently than before. The vessel now was accompanied by the German oil tanker *Hansa* in order to avoid purchasing costly foreign fuel but also to train the crew in refueling on the open sea, essential during an armed conflict.⁴³⁴ On the 22nd of October with part of the naval class of 1934 (Crew 34), a total of 490 men, the ship left Kiel.⁴³⁵ The 1934-35 cruise also marked two milestones. For the first time since the Great War the

⁴³² Reichsmarine #8, August 1934. See also Erich Topp, *Odyssey*, 25.

⁴³³ The State Department had notified government officials that Houston would be the Texas port at which the *Karlsruhe* would put in. Chamber of Commerce, Houston 1934-1935, Main Library of Houston, RG-E1, March 1935.

⁴³⁴ The *Hansa* was built in 1929 and described as a modern technical advanced ship that looked impressive. The *Hansa* was in 1935 under the command of Captain Prahm and he and his crew participated in some of the *Karlsruhe* festivities as well. The last refueling stop on this trip was in Vigo where the *Karlsruhe* received 746 tons of oil and the cruiser *Emden* 543 tons. After that last refueling the *Hansa* was dismissed by Lütjens and sailed back to Germany.

⁴³⁵ On this trip the ship carried 119 cadets. The rest of the crew 34 received orders for the *Emden*. Topp, *Odyssey*, 25. The navy had switched back to Schultheiss beer in 1934.

Karlsruhe started her good-will tour with more sailors who had joined the navy after 1933, and this time the ship did not use the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Kanal to cross to the North Sea, but sailed from Kiel around Denmark into the Skagerrak and then into the North Sea and English Channel.⁴³⁶

Commander Günther Lütjens, born in Wiesbaden, Hessen-Nassau in 1889, and described by his men as an earnest person, was a career navy officer who attended the naval artillery school before World War I. His assignments during that war were on a minesweeper and later a torpedo boat.⁴³⁷ He stayed in the reduced Weimar navy and was promoted to different leading positions. Before lifting anchor for the fourth cruise Lütjens instructed his crew that the *Karlsruhe* was a German warship sailing under a war flag.⁴³⁸ The familiar tunes were replaced with nationalistic music. The orchestra played now the Adolf Hitler Fanfare and the song “Volk ans Gewehr” (Nation to Arms).⁴³⁹ It was reported that Hitler was not only informed of the trip but also showed great enthusiasm, and he expected the ship to represent the honor of Germany abroad. He wished a “bon voyage” and a safe return to the ship, its commanding officers, and its crew.⁴⁴⁰ The Nazis also took more and more advantage of the popularity of the cruiser. Ever since the ship flew the national emblem, the swastika, on her bow, eleven so-called Reiseberichte or travel accounts, and photos were published over the course of these trips in the *Völkische Beobachter*, the official party newspaper.⁴⁴¹

⁴³⁶ Interview by Hans Schiffer, *The Vancouver Daily Province*, *Karlsruhe welcomed to Harbor*.

⁴³⁷ Lütjens was promoted to Admiral with the outbreak of World War II and involved in *Operation Rheinübung* in May 1941 commanding the battleships *Bismarck* and *Prince Eugen*. He perished on May 27, 1941 in the North Atlantic on the *Bismarck*. The *Prince Eugen* was eventually used by the United States during nuclear testing in the Bikini Atoll. In 1967 a West-German guided-missile destroyer was christened *Lütjens*. Officer von Rechberg also served on the *Karlsruhe* with Lütjens and later served under him on the *Bismarck*. He survived.

⁴³⁸ The 1934/35 itinerary of the *Karlsruhe* was called by the fellow *Emden* cadets a “salon and parquet” cruise.

⁴³⁹ Not all German communities abroad however followed this. When the ship arrived in Colon, Panama Canal, they were greeted with the Hohenfriedberger march.

⁴⁴⁰ Erich Topp, *Odyssey*, 26.

⁴⁴¹ *Völkischer Beobachter*, June 15, 1934 “*Kreuzer Karlsruhe in heimatliche Gewässer*”.

Before the nations of Trinidad and Brazil were reached, the crew hoisted the old imperial flag on November 14th at exactly the same place where twenty years prior the first *Karlsruhe* sank in 1914. In honor of the dead, the crew deposited an iron cross into the ocean. Christmas was celebrated with the German community in Uruguay. For this occasion, the German sailors carried their own Christmas trees in potted soil with them. These trees were a gift from the Führer.⁴⁴²

Bringing trees, potted in German soil was a symbolic gesture. Germans tried in many parts of the world to recreate their *Heimat* by recreating a German landscape abroad. In order to further visualize this *Heimat*, gardens of German clubhouses were often planted with oak, chestnut, and basswood trees as a further reminder of Germany.⁴⁴³ Oak trees, especially, were seen as symbols of strength, endurance, and longevity, but also of the unity of the German nation. In other places German associations decorated their clubhouses with pictures of German landscapes.⁴⁴⁴ German flower seeds could be purchased abroad and their sale advertised in newspapers, so immigrants could pattern and reconstruct German nature and *Heimat* anywhere in the world.⁴⁴⁵ An artificial German manicured landscape awaited the sailors in many parts around the globe. In South Africa, the German communities created for themselves German gems with forests, meadows, farms, creeks, and houses over which the green leaves of the German oaks arched.⁴⁴⁶ In Puerto Varas, a city in the south of Chile, the sailors were happy to stroll through the German gardens there and ate the fresh fruits available just like at home.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴² See also *Deutsche Marine Zeitung*, front page, Dec 1, 1936.

⁴⁴³ Buttmi, *Werben*, 176. Eichen, Kastanien, und Lindenbäume. The sailors visited the Siegfriedwerk clubhouse in Buenos Aires with its German landscape.

⁴⁴⁴ Erich Topp, *Odyssey*, 35.

⁴⁴⁵ Official Welcome Program, Montevideo, Uruguay, Sep 1-5, 1932.

⁴⁴⁶ *32,000 Meilen. Die Weltreise der Karlsruhe Crew 1935*. Kiel: A.C. Ehlers, 22.

⁴⁴⁷ *Kiel-Flensburg über Amerika, Crew 34, Kreuzer Karlsruhe*. Kiel: A.C. Ehlers, 1935, 38.

The importance of German shrubs and flowers was even extended to the dead. The graves of German sailors who were buried in a cemetery in Vigo, Spain, become overgrown and run down, the crew of *Karlsruhe* noticed when they first visited the cemetery. By 1935, the German consul had grapevines and rosebushes imported from Germany, which were planted on these graves.⁴⁴⁸ The grave of a sailor from the *Emden* who was buried in Santa Cruz, Tenerife, was visited by the *Karlsruhe* chaplain. He reported that the grave had a “German character” with a simple, but dignified cross, made from German oak.⁴⁴⁹

The *Karlsruhe* had visited Uruguay once before, in 1932. This visit was, as all visits, declared to be “unofficial,” a directive the Uruguayan government took literally, ignoring the ship completely. This attitude had changed slightly but not much by 1935. Ceremonies such as a wreath ceremony at the Arigas monument were kept very simple with no music played and only two officers present. But regardless of the rather cool official reception, the German ambassador in Montevideo reported to the AA that the visit was harmonious, in friendship, and evaluated as a lasting and effective success. The Germans in the country showed heartfelt enthusiasm and the German community buried their differences for the time of the visit. Cadet Erich Topp mentioned that the 6,000 Germans in Uruguay were divided into two factions: those for and those against the new Germany, but the Nazi sympathizers were further split into two elements and often feuded with each other.⁴⁵⁰ A garden party was attended by 1,500 people and during the celebrations a radio message from Rudolf Hess was transmitted via CX26 Radio Uruguay. A few days later more propaganda followed when the movie *SA Mann Brand* was shown in a local theater.⁴⁵¹

⁴⁴⁸ Report Chaplain Schlueter to AA June 8, 1935; IIF, Berichte 1934/35, Bd 2, R33481.

⁴⁴⁹ Report Chaplain Schlueter, Nov 10, 1935; R33485.

⁴⁵⁰ Erich Topp, *Odyssey*, 29.

⁴⁵¹ Report Ambassador Montevideo to AA; R 33481.

In 1932 the planned visit to Chile was adjusted several times and in the end deferred altogether for political reasons. This all had changed two years later and the new president of Chile, Arturo Alessandri Palma, went above and beyond to accommodate the German sailors. A military parade planned for Valparaíso was changed by suggestion of the Chilean president to the capital city of Santiago, a more prestigious place, where the crew marched in front of the government palace with the president and other high-ranking officials viewing the spectacle from the balconies.⁴⁵² The arrangements for this visit were handled by the local NSDAP groups in Chile, and this time thank you letters regarding the visit were exchanged on the highest level.⁴⁵³ The commander of the Chilean fleet, Olegario Reyes del Reyes, wrote directly to Admiral Raeder. He regarded the visit a sign of a close friendship between Chile and the great nation of Germany.⁴⁵⁴ Political news from home reached the sailors in Valparaíso. The Saarland had just held its plebiscite and decided to stay within the Third Reich. In honor of that day, the band played the Saar song, and the otherwise reserved Lütjens celebrated with his crew.⁴⁵⁵ Cadet Opitz was so relieved when he heard the news that he recorded the exact number, 477,119, who voted in favor of Nazi Germany and who “wanted to come back to the fatherland.”⁴⁵⁶ But the Germans in Chile also lived in the past; they still showed enthusiasm for the imperial navy of 1914, and told stories about commander Graf Spee during the visit.⁴⁵⁷

Although the various stops and layovers on the 1935 trip were all planned in advanced, as in the past, ad hoc changes and decisions nevertheless occurred. But these unexpected alterations also honed the skills of the cadets as future German naval leaders. It prepared them to deal with a

⁴⁵² Sailors departed Valparaíso and drove via rail to Santiago.

⁴⁵³ Report Consul to AA Jan 24, 1935; AA IIF, Berichte 1934/35, Bd 2, R33481.

⁴⁵⁴ Letter Reyes del Rio to Raeder, April 24, 1935; AA IIF, Berichte 1934/35, Bd 2, R33481.

⁴⁵⁵ Erich Topp, *Odyssey*, 31.

⁴⁵⁶ Logbook Opitz, entry Valparaíso, 1935.

⁴⁵⁷ Jahrbuch Kadetten 1934, 14.

variety of situations and groomed them for the unexpected. For instance, the *Karlsruhe* represented the German military in the 400th anniversary celebration of Peru unexpectedly, and arrangements and adjustments had to be made to the itinerary, fuel, food, and supplies.⁴⁵⁸ The sailors left a profound mark in Peru. An unsigned three-page report found in the files of the 1935 trip shows a very enthusiastic account from a German who lived in Peru at the time of the visit. He wrote about the “fresh breeze from the Heimat,” the nostalgia and pride, all of which left a deep impression. According to the report, the visit, opened up an inner key in all Germans and made them want to be part of the new Germany.⁴⁵⁹ Here, too, had by 1935, the idea of the new Germany taken root. The anniversary of the Nazi takeover was celebrated on January 30th in Lima in the largest theater in the city. Hitler Youth recited poems and the movies *Der Führer spricht* and *Hitlerjunge Quex*, a 1932 propaganda movie that glorified death and sacrifices for the movement, were shown. Afterwards the crew participated in an opening of a HJ youth hostel.⁴⁶⁰

The cruiser arrived as scheduled in the United States at San Pedro, California, on February 26th and stayed until March 1, 1935. There the cruiser docked at pier #58 and Fort MacArthur and the flagship *U.S.S. Pennsylvania*, with Admiral Joseph Mason Reeves in command, fired the salute. Commander Lütjens observed that twelve U.S. war ships, two aircraft carriers, five cruisers of the *U.S.S. Pensacola* class, nine destroyers, and several auxiliary vessels, including the tug boat *Bobolink* lay in the port of San Pedro. The hearts of the cadets became “quite melancholic” when they thought of the small (German) fleet.⁴⁶¹ Opitz inserted a whole page into his logbook with technical details about each American warship he saw that day

⁴⁵⁸ Völkischer Beobachter, December 1934, “Änderung des Reiseplanes”.

⁴⁵⁹ Report from Lima to AA, Feb 8, 1935; R33435.

⁴⁶⁰ One of the sailors, Klingen, died while in Peru and was buried with honors in Lima. Opitz recalled that the British *Exeter* was in port at the time and flew her flags half-mast in honor of the “German warrior.”

⁴⁶¹ *Kiel-Flensburg über Amerika, Crew 34, Kreuzer Karlsruhe*. Kiel: A.C. Ehlers, 1935, 51.

in port. The welcoming committee in San Pedro included Robert Witthoeft, the German military attaché; communication officers from the U.S. Navy and Army, Captain James George Atkins and Captain Douglas Griggs; and the commander of the *U.S.S. Oklahoma*, Captain Milbur Rice van Auken; but few enthusiastic civilians.⁴⁶² Later, the head of the port authority and the collector of customs joined the welcoming crowd. San Pedro was also a fuel port, and the *Hansa* added more oil the first day the ship lay in port because at 6:00 am the following day, the *Karlsruhe* was to leave for target practice. For the third time, the United States Navy assisted with the torpedo exercises held near San Pedro off San Clemente Island. The U.S. Navy built the target rafts, provided the tug boats, and this time assisted further with two airplanes that took reconnaissance pictures during and after the shooting exercises, which they handed promptly over to the commander.⁴⁶³ Lütjens recommended to Berlin not to continue using the U.S. Navy for building the targets and furnishing the tug boats. He perceived it as rather embarrassing to utilize these costly items free of charge on a yearly basis. From San Pedro the Germans left for San Francisco where they were welcomed on March 2nd by a 21-gun salute from Fort Scott. The selection of the port of San Francisco was probably done under the consideration of the critiques the AA received in 1932. The city had then requested a visit and was “bluntly refused” and overlooked.⁴⁶⁴

Lütjens assessed in his report to Berlin the reception by U.S. officials and locals in San Francisco as follows. The navy was accommodating, and Mayor Angelo Rossi and other city officials welcomed the sailors to San Francisco, a representation port on the itinerary. The

⁴⁶² The crew was alter told that the stop of the *Karlsruhe* was not made public until the last minute. *Kiel-Flensburg über Amerika*, 57.

⁴⁶³ Letter Raeder to Admiral Reeves, AA IIF, Berichte 1934/35, Bd 2, R33481. Los Angeles Times saw this gesture as a rare and extraordinary example of international courtesy. LAT, *Fleet to aid German ship*, Feb 26, 1935. Some of the cadets undertook trips to Hollywood where they met Fred Perry, the English Wimbledon player.

⁴⁶⁴ California Journal, *San Fransisko und Los Angeles schroff abgewiesen*, April 15, 1932. The ship dropped anchor at pier 37 near Kearney Street.

German vice consul, Dr. Ponschab, several communications officers from the U.S. Marine Corps and the III Naval District Commander Ralph Henkle and Major Peter Charles Geyer were also there. XII U.S. Naval District Rear Admiral Thomas J. Senn, gave a positive speech on the history of the German navy and Admiral Maximilian Graf Spee. Furthermore Lütjens met with the commander of a Spanish cadet training ship, Captain Salvador Moreno y Fernandez, along with U.S. Fleet Chief Admiral Joseph M. Reeves and Brigadier General Charles O. Dunbar.

Yet, things were different here. A 250 men delegation from the ship, including the board orchestra, drove from the port into the city under a police escort. Although in most other cities the crew was welcomed to flagged piers and streets, Market Street, the main street to city hall in San Francisco, was not decorated at all. The excuse given was that the city of San Francisco wanted to save the eight hundred dollars for the flags needed, but Commander Lütjens suspected that elements hostile to Germany would tear them down and defile them.⁴⁶⁵ The German honorary consul, Dr. Gustav Heuser, blamed the fact that three Jews served on the five men welcoming committee for the non-decorated streets. In contrast, the streets in Oakland, a city just across the bay from San Francisco, welcomed one hundred sailors on March 8th with an ocean of German and American flags, including swastikas.⁴⁶⁶ Many of the cars that picked up the cadets and drove them to an official reception at Oakland's city hall had all three flags on their hoods – the American, the Reichsflag, and the swastika.⁴⁶⁷ The only “minor” incident reported, and according to the embassy “not worth mentioning” (*kaum einer Erwaehnung wert*), happened when communist dockworkers conducted a thirty-minute protest strike before the ship arrived. A leading member of the American communist party, Samuel Darcy, recalled that he “launched an

⁴⁶⁵ Inside San Francisco City Hall all three flags however were displayed.

⁴⁶⁶ Report Lütjens, March 18, 1935, AA IIF, Berichte 1934/35, Bd 2, R33481.

⁴⁶⁷ Erich Topp, *Odyssey*, 36. The *Freunde des Neuen Deutschlands* accompanied the crew on their march in Oakland.

energetic campaign in 1935 against the *Karlsruhe* and her good-will, meaning Nazi propaganda.” He remembered the radio addresses, leaflets, mass meetings, and all day picketing and the large cars, flying the Weimar and swastika flags on the hood. The swastika, so Darcy claimed, was torn off, the other flag not.⁴⁶⁸ This is very unlikely because in 1935 no one would display both flags at the same time. More inconsistencies can be found in Darcy’s report. The sailors did not march up Market Street as he recalled, they arrived in a motorcade. He also believed that he and his fellow communists spoiled the reception with Rossi and no such thing was reported.

Lütjens sensed that Mayor Rossi’s friendliness was real, but did not equate to a pro-German sympathy from his side. An election was upcoming, and Angelo Rossi wanted to win again. In order to do that he needed the votes of the 60,000-plus German American community.⁴⁶⁹ The municipality of San Francisco paid half of the \$4,000 cost of this visit, while the other half was paid by donations by German Americans and German American organizations. It turned out that San Francisco was also a rather expensive stop for the sailors. Few excursion opportunities were free, and the exchange rate was still not favorable towards Germany. Lütjens further recommended to Berlin not to approve any attendance of cabaret performances in North America. These performances only appealed, according to the commander, to the population of metropolitan areas, while German sailors viewed them as being

⁴⁶⁸ www.revolutionarydemocracy.org/rdv9n1/darcy; accessed Dec 16, 2010. This is a good example of fading memories. Neither Seelheim nor Lütjens remembered anything about mass meetings or all day picketing.

⁴⁶⁹ Report Lütjens AA IIF, Berichte 1934/35, Bd 2, R33481; Erich Topp, *Odyssey*, 37.

“in bad taste.”⁴⁷⁰ Opitz participated in one of these gatherings and was rather shocked when a girl “not older than five years old played in the orchestra.”⁴⁷¹

Lütjens was candid and open in his report to Berlin. He recommended that Count Luckner, who was well liked in the United States, should be used to spread positive propaganda for the new Germany. Regarding the local press in California, he stated that the visit was kept hushed and mostly in silence. The reason could be seen in the fact that the cruiser and the crew were invited guests of the United States and any anti-German propaganda would have been seen as embarrassing.⁴⁷² The lack of press coverage was excused by the German Embassy because so many foreign warships visited San Francisco on a regular basis, so the *Karlsruhe* was not anything special and noteworthy. The *Vancouver Evening Post* kept its readers updated before the *Karlsruhe*'s arrival in Canada on the ship's incidents and events in other ports. The *Post*'s report claimed that because of the unfriendly reception in San Francisco, the planned visits to Portland and Seattle by the cruiser were canceled. This was untrue, because neither port was ever on the 1935 itinerary.

In all, the reception in California can only be described as lukewarm. During the four days the ship was open to the public only a total of 10,000 visitors came for inspection. One of the visitors on these opening days was Helene Mayer, the German Jewish fencing champion.⁴⁷³ Entertainment and excursions included visits to the University of California-Berkeley, and the commander welcomed a delegation from the university a few days later on board. Contingents of

⁴⁷⁰ Cadet Opitz agreed with his Commander's assessment; when some cadets visited an American show in Houston, he wrote about the spiritlessness and character of the public. However Robert Buttmi and some of his fellow sailors visited a cabaret show with nude performer in San Diego in 1936 and according to his diary entry “much enjoyed the show” but commented that it would be only possible in “the free America”. Buttmi, *Werben*, 466, and *32,000 Meilen*, 65-66.

⁴⁷¹ Entry logbook Opitz, California, 1935.

⁴⁷² Report Lütjens to AA, March 18, 1935, AA IIF, Berichte 1934/35, Bd 2, R33481

⁴⁷³ Entry logbook Opitz, entry San Francisco; The cadets also complained after these visits that they had to scrape off lots of chewing gum. *Kiel-Flensburg über Amerika*, 54.

sailors visited the Golden Gate Bridge, still under construction in 1935, Alcatraz, and Yosemite National Park.⁴⁷⁴ Lütjens also carried a crate of German school books with him in behalf of the League of Germandom Abroad, Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland (VdA), which he presented to the German school in San Francisco. It seemed the locals felt unease around the Nazi sailors. In no other port were they greeted with as many awkward menu choices as here. The cadet yearbook listed mixed salad appetizers in the colors black, white, and red for lunch, swastika-decorated cakes and a new drink, an “orange-surprise *Captain Lütjens*.”⁴⁷⁵ Although few saw the ship off when she left for Canada, a U.S. navy plane, a J4, painted the colors of the new Germany, black, white, red, and flew as a last goodbye over the war cruiser.

In Vancouver, the *Karlsruhe* docked at Ballantyne Immigration Pier #37. Because of the narrow-mindedness of the harbor master and his ongoing feud with the Canadian Pacific Railway, the *Karlsruhe* was not allowed to anchor at the more accessible and larger East Asia Pier, which was operated by the railroad. The other option for the ship would have been to drop anchor in the middle of Vancouver Harbor itself. In order to get to the Ballantyne pier from the city, a shabby and less desirable neighborhood had to be crossed by both visitors and sailors alike. The crew was only allowed on shore in groups of four or five.⁴⁷⁶ Regardless, the pier provided the ship with immediate access to fresh water and telephone connections.⁴⁷⁷ Cadet Erich Topp recalled the pier full of people but nobody waved, and it seemed the Canadians did not know what to make of the war cruiser.⁴⁷⁸ Vancouver impressed the cadets with its natural beauty, the snow-covered mountains contrasting with the skyscrapers of the city. But the cadets

⁴⁷⁴ See also the movie *Auf grosser Fahrt* for further information about the visit in California.

⁴⁷⁵ Jahrbuch Kadetten, 1934.

⁴⁷⁶ Jahrbuch Kadetten 1934.

⁴⁷⁷ The ship stayed from March 15th to the 21st in Canada.

⁴⁷⁸ Erich Topp, *Odyssey*, 37.

also recalled Vancouver as a stronghold of anti-German and therefore anti-Nazi agitation.⁴⁷⁹ In some diaries and letters this agitation was called as the most heated (*schärfste*) badgering during the entire voyage.⁴⁸⁰ The diarists also recalled the broken out windows at the Moose Hall where a small reception was held. The first visitors to the *Karlsruhe* included the German consul to Western Canada, Dr. Heinrich Seelheim, and his wife Irmgard; the harbor commissioner, R. W. Brock; Lieutenant H. R. Wade, the public relations officer of the Royal Canadian Navy, Colonel A. D. Wilson from the 23rd Infantry Brigade; and A. B. Shearer, Squad Leader of the 4th Flying Boat Squadron Royal Canadian Air Force. Furthermore Charles Tindale, Deputy Mayor, J. S. Dixon, President of the Board of Trade; and H. W. Mahler, representative of the firm German Hapag-Lloyd, also attended a welcoming reception onboard. Seelheim and his wife arrived in Vancouver five days prior to pave the way for the arrival of the ship. During that time he gave several interviews and emphasized that the ship came on an invitation from the city with the full consent of the Canadian and British governments.⁴⁸¹

Some communist agitation was mentioned in the report to Berlin but only during the first day in Canada. The Canadian Workers Union and the League against War and Fascism waited for the crew on their first shore leave. Seelheim anticipated these communist protests. “The communists hate us, and I suppose they have reasons to, because in Germany we crush them. We hate the Communists too but for Canada and every other country we have the most cordial feelings.”⁴⁸² Slogans like “Down with Mussolini” and “Free Thälmann” were shouted when the ship arrived and few called out to kill those “Nazi dogs,” the German sailors.⁴⁸³ Lütjens had the feeling that most Canadians were rather embarrassed about that, something Cadet Opitz repeated

⁴⁷⁹ Jahrbuch Kadetten 1934.

⁴⁸⁰ *Kiel-Flensburg über Amerika*, 58.

⁴⁸¹ Vancouver Daily Province, *German Consul here to greet the Karlsruhe*, March 11, 1935.

⁴⁸² Ibid., March 11, 1935.

⁴⁸³ Jahrbuch Kadetten 1934.

in his diary entry. He received a private invitations to the home of a Canadian lawyer, and it appeared to him that “the educated classes were not quite happy about the conduct of the people vis-à-vis the crew.”⁴⁸⁴ The German commander received also several letters and notes, requesting the release of Ernst Thälmann.⁴⁸⁵ Lütjens, Seelheim, local Police Chief Colonel Foster, and a Colonel W. S. Buell, as the representative of the Canadian Legion, laid down a wreath at the cenotaph in town. The night before the *Karlsruhe* left for Acapulco, the wreath was stolen and the decoration around the monument destroyed by about one hundred communists.⁴⁸⁶ One was arrested.

Besides this rather humiliating incident for the city, the Canadian welcome for the war cruiser was demonstratively amiable, and Canadians officials talked about strengthening the friendship between the two related nations. Nothing was mentioned in Lütjens’s report about the negative propaganda in the press. The Canadian press did not like Hitler, but the ship was invited, and according to international courtesy, the ship and crew should be received appropriately. Dr. Seelheim’s report to the AA in Berlin left some important facts out. He did not mention any rocks flying or any broken glass at the Moose Hall. It appeared that he white-washed some of the facts for Berlin; maybe he wanted the visit to appear smoother than what it actually was.

While the ship laid in port at Vancouver, Hitler made news around the world. Ever since the Nazis came to power, they dismantled the Treaty of Versailles piece by piece, and on March

⁴⁸⁴ Herbert Opitz, diary entry Vancouver

⁴⁸⁵ Thälmann was the communist leader in the Weimar Republic and incarcerated since 1933 in concentration camps and shot in 1944. None of these letters was found with the material in the archives, it is therefore unknown if the commander discarded them immediately.

⁴⁸⁶ The wreath ceremony was a suggestion by the Canadian War Veteran association because the French commander of the *Jeanne d’Arc* did in January the same thing.

16th, Hitler announced officially that Germany would rearm herself and implement a draft.⁴⁸⁷

This news was “the best and most uplifting” for the cadets, and they felt that now, and only now, Germany was free from the shackles of 1919. The cadets were proud of their fatherland and their Führer. More than ever they felt united and happy, and they could present a cohesive stand against the protests they faced.⁴⁸⁸ Yet there were also many rumors about the Great War and the atrocities the Germans supposedly committed in it. One of the rumors said that the “Huns crucified poor Canadians,” but after the first initial contact with the crew, the local population was surprised and stated that they “were just like us.”⁴⁸⁹ The Canadians were also surprised that so many of the crew and not just officers spoke English. It was rumored that some officers disguised themselves as enlisted men because these sailors were so clean cut, courteous, and immaculate in their behavior.

In all, the visit to Vancouver was viewed as a great success by Berlin and received a positive echo, which can be seen in the fact that over 25,000 visitors tried to storm the ship on opening day, with police needed for crowd control. One of the reasons for these large numbers of visitors was the negative press; Canadians became interested in the German visitors and had to see them for themselves.⁴⁹⁰ A remarkable incident occurred on that day. One of the visitors approached Lütjens. He was a Canadian war veteran, Arthur Byatt, who served in France during WWI as “supper” in the 11th Field Company English Australian Imperial Forces. Byatt claimed to possess Count Manfred von Richthofen’s felt hat that he took from the Red Baron’s head after he was shoot down. The story appeared to be genuine. Lütjens examined old newspaper clippings, pictures, and a few documents that mentioned Byatt as a soldier in the France. This

⁴⁸⁷ On March 11, 1935 the Luftwaffe was also created.

⁴⁸⁸ *Kiel-Flensburg über Amerika*, 58-59.

⁴⁸⁹ Report Lütjens to AA, March 30, 1935, AA IIF, Berichte 1934/35, Bd 2, R33481. The crew could use during their stay the Canadian Railway for free.

⁴⁹⁰ *Kiel-Flensburg über Amerika*, 58.

relic was handed over during a ceremony to the captain of the *Karlsruhe*.⁴⁹¹ Lütjens highlighted the many clubs and organizations, not just German Canadians, who helped make this a success. The visit was seen as harmonious and had in his opinion a strong illuminating effect, and he recommended that more German war cruisers should visit Vancouver in the future.⁴⁹² More oil was delivered by the *Hansa*, almost 900 tons of fuel oil and 733 kilogram of machine oil, so the cruiser could sail without delay south to Mexico.

The officers and crew were greeted in Acapulco, Mexico, the next stop, by the commander of the city and the Secretary of War and Navy. Once there, half of the crew, including seventeen officers traveled fourteen hours to Mexico City. Two years before, during the 1932 voyage under Erwin Wassner, the capital city was not visited. Since then the German community there asked for a delegation of a German war cruiser. The visit to Mexico had also other motives for the Germans. Lütjens assessed the future possibilities to using Mexico as a training ground for the development of German weapons. He pointed to the fact that in the German manufactured MAN engines were already installed on Mexican canon boats.⁴⁹³ Visits to the war academy and a cadet school in town rounded off the stay in Acapulco, and they left on April 4th and sailed towards Texas.

Just as the *Karlsruhe* entered the Gulf of Mexico, the commander recalled that he also “had visited these waters before” on a training cruiser prior to 1914.⁴⁹⁴ This time the destination

⁴⁹¹ Lütjens special report to AA March 30, 1935, Mar.B.nr. 367, A, 1c, geh. R33481. It was planned to handover the hat to Richthofen’s mother in the presence of Hermann Goering who served with the Red Baron in the same 1st Ulanen Regiment.

⁴⁹² Report Lütjens to AA, March 30, 1935, AA IIF, Berichte 1934/35, Bd 2, R33481. Several crew member, including the chaplain travelled to Tacoma and laid down two wreaths at the grave of sailor Lischke who died there during the 1933 cruise. The grave was so Lütjens maintained by the Disabled American Veterans of WWI in good conditions and decorated with fresh flowers.

⁴⁹³ The MAN company started in the Ruhr region in 1758 as an ironwork. By 1934 the company developed exhaust-gas turbochargers for diesel engines. Today, MAN Truck & Bus company is one of Europe’s leading manufacturers of commercial vehicles.

⁴⁹⁴ The training cruiser *Hansa*. Houston Post, *Karlsruhe commander tells of torpedo fighting*, April 27, 1935, 6.

port was not Galveston, but Houston. Wharf number three was ready on the afternoon of April 26, 1935, when the *Karlsruhe* arrived in Houston for an eight-day stay. Rain flooded the streets of Houston and the mercury dropped to the low-60s but an enthusiastic few welcomed the ship. The sailors of the *U.S.S. Schenck* helped to moor the ship despite the pouring rain.⁴⁹⁵ Among the assembly was the official welcoming committee led by Houston Mayor Oscar Holcombe as the honorary general chairman and the Naval Attaché of the German Embassy in Washington, D.C., Captain Robert Witthoeft, who flew from San Francisco to Houston.⁴⁹⁶ Oilman and local attorney Captain George A. Hill was the chairman of the military affairs committee and acted as the chairman for official visit.⁴⁹⁷ The German Americans of Harris County also sent their representatives, and some local organizations took advantage of the opportunity to promote their own cause.⁴⁹⁸ Several months before the ship arrived in American ports, the former chancellor and current German ambassador to the U.S., Dr. Hans Luther, toured several of the port cities and approved the agenda set by the visiting committees.⁴⁹⁹ Germany was very much interested in good relations with Texas. At one point Germany was the largest importer of Texas cotton and a trade delegation visited Houston to improve German American trade relations at that time.⁵⁰⁰ Welcoming the *Karlsruhe* for the second time in Texas was Consul Julius von Jockusch and the

⁴⁹⁵ Houston Chronicle, April 27, 1935.

⁴⁴ Witthoeft was a lieutenant on the *Emden* stationed in China at the outbreak of WWI. The vessel went to sea and preyed upon commercial vessels, playing a game of hide-and-seek with the Allies for over a year. *News & Courier*, South Carolina, May 11, 1935, 3. He was the marine attaché from November 1933 to December 1941 in Washington, DC at the German embassy, then he became vice admiral, commanding ships in the Black Sea. For the reception in Houston see also Topp, *Odyssey*, 39. Cadets Topp and von der Esch were assigned as guard to Lütjens' quarters. See picture of Topp and v.d. Esch, Houston Chronicle, April 27, 1935

⁴⁹⁷ William Bernrieder was the executive secretary and George D. Wilson was in charge of port business. Furthermore several subcommittees were formed including: transportation, athletic, ball, religious services, crew dances, publicity. Chamber of Commerce, Houston 1934-1935, Main Library of Houston, RG-E1, March 1935.

⁴⁹⁸ Houston Chronicle, April 26, 1935, *Esperantists hold exhibition at Library*.

⁴⁹⁹ Chamber of Commerce, City of Houston, 22-24, Feb 2, 1935, RGE1, vol1.

⁵⁰⁰ Chamber of Commerce, City of Houston, Dec 14, 1930, 145, RGE1, vol 1; Chamber of Commerce, City of Houston, 106, RGE1, vol 21.

new German consul in New Orleans Dr. Ernst Wendler.⁵⁰¹ Wendler's report to the AA detailed the program in Texas as extraordinarily rich and the receptions as "unadorned heartfelt and strongly successful" for Germany. When questioned by a *Houston Chronicle* reporter, Wendler elaborated on news from Germany. He was proud of the progress Germany was making and claimed the nation was anxious to build up world trade despite the many tariffs in place.⁵⁰² The official guestbook of the commander reflected a who's who in Houston ranging from the mayor, the port commissioner, the superintendent of schools, to the commander of the *U.S.S. Schenk*. The most puzzling entry came from Harris County Judge William Henry Ward, who greeted Lütjens with "mizpah."⁵⁰³ Ward was the lawyer husband of Hortense Ward, a well-known woman's right activist in Texas. Since the ship was on a tight, revised schedule, little free time for officers and crew was available. Although a planned rodeo and barbeque was canceled because of rainy weather, a local wrestling promoter, Morris Sigel, of Jewish-Russian immigrant parents, invited the crew to a wrestling match at the City Auditorium without incident.⁵⁰⁴ Saturday evening was booked with a semi-formal ball for the officers at the Houston Turnverein. The invitations for this dance were distributed to the public through the Germanic societies of Houston, including the Stahlhelm.⁵⁰⁵ Harry Hughes and his orchestra played familiar tunes in a carnival atmosphere. Although friendly relations between the United States and Germany were strengthened during the festivities, the *Houston Post* warned of the strict marriage guidelines of

⁵⁰¹ Dr Ernst Wendler, was born 24.4.1890 into a prominent weaver and industrialist family and worked in the German Foreign Office in Australia, USA and Bolivia representing Nazi Germany. He preceded von Baron Spiegel as consul general at New Orleans. After the war he joined his families weaving enterprise.

⁵⁰² *Houston Chronicle*, April 26, 1935, "*German Naval Attache and Consul at New Orleans here to welcome cruiser*".

⁵⁰³ Gästebuch des Kommandanten des Kreuzers „Karlsruhe“. Marineschule Flensburg-Mürwik and Archiv of the Wehrgeschichtliches Ausbildungszentrum WGAZ Mürwik, Mizpah is the Hebrew word for an emotional bond between separated people, but it could also be the misspelled Yiddish word „family“ – mispocha.

⁵⁰⁴ A small Jewish community existed in Galveston and Harris counties since the 1880s and synagogues could be found in Houston, Galveston, San Antonio, and El Paso.

⁵⁰⁵ *Houston Post*, April 26, 1935.

the German navy. A cadet had to be in service for at least eight years or having reached his twenty-seventh birthday before he was permitted to marry.

Large crowds paid visits to the vessel on the scheduled days. Many were people of German descent who came from the interior of Texas and the *Houston Post* reported on thousands who took advantage and inspected the ship from top to bottom. Captain Günther Lütjens accompanied by several of his officers and crew members, left for Austin on April 29th. Their plane, provided free of charge by Bowen Airlines, touched down on time, and the captain made his way immediately to the state Capitol for an official reception with Governor James A. Allred. The two joked for a while about their good looks before Lütjens briefly addressed a joint session of the Texas Senate where he commented on economic developments between the two countries. This was the first time that he “spoke before parliament,” and he considered it an honor and privilege since in his opinion the United States and Germany had the same ideals, honor, freedom, and unity.⁵⁰⁶ Ambassador Luther’s February visit to Allred was also discussed between the two men.⁵⁰⁷ This was not, however, the first time a German war cruiser commander addressed the Texas legislature in Austin. Erwin Wassner had done just that with little fanfare in 1932. From Austin Lütjens flew to San Antonio with his American aide, William Bernreider, of the U.S. Navy Reserve, to pay an official call on the commander of Fort Sam Houston and Randolph Field, Colonel H. W. Harms. Here Lütjens “expressed honest concern” when he learned that there was no visit planned to the Alamo. Despite the little time left to catch his plane, Lütjens and his entourage stopped at the “city’s famous shrine.” Escorted to the Alamo the commander, baring his head, bowed in silent tribute to Texas’s heroes while his men gave the

⁵⁰⁶ *Houston Post*, April 27, 1935, 6; April 29, 1935; April 30, 1935, 2; *Karlsruhe set to celebrate Nazi holiday*, May 1, 1935. *Houston Chronicle*, May 1, 1935.

⁵⁰⁷ *Austin Statesmen*, April 29, 1935, “*German Naval Official Fete*”.

Nazi salute for the Alamo dead.⁵⁰⁸ The following day another group of sailors arrived by rail in San Antonio and also paid tribute at the Alamo.⁵⁰⁹ Much has been made of the visit in recent publications concerning these tributes; one must simply understand that these icons such as Texas, the Wild West, and cowboys, played an important part in the German youth literature of Karl May. The sailors were certainly familiar with these leitmotifs.⁵¹⁰

The last evening in Houston was spent at a *Kommers* or drinking party, sponsored by the Houston Sängerbund in honor of the crew. To offset costs for this event, money was donated by local companies and organizations, and the local Stahlhelmbund sent its regards and a check for more than sixteen dollars through their local representative Paul Otto Bottler, thanking the choir members for their efforts and hard work. With this donation the Stahlhelmbund also gained official access to the *Kommers* and Bottler was among the officials who welcomed the *Karlsruhe* crew that evening. This evening was an almost overwhelming task for the Sängerbund and for practical reasons the board of directors decided to serve pre-made potato salad and deli platters. Behind the scene the *Sängerbund* struggled financially with the festivities; the free beer for the crew especially put a big dent into their annual budget.⁵¹¹ The Sängerbund also decided to invest in a five dollar swastika flag for decoration purposes.⁵¹² Since this decision was made on April 23rd, just a few days before the *Karlsruhe* was to arrive, such flags must have been readily available in Texas as well.

⁵⁰⁸ The San Antonio Light, May 2, 1935.

⁵⁰⁹ Houston Chronicle, May 1, 1935, Officers pay tribute to Heroes at Alamo.

⁵¹⁰ For works on Karl May see: Marlies Bugmann, *Savage To Saint, The Karl May Story*. BookSurge Publishing, 2008 and Hans Wollschläger. *Karl May. Grundriß eines gebrochenen Lebens*. Wallstein: Göttingen, 2004. See also John M. Gonzalez. *Border Renaissance*. University of Texas Press: Austin, 2009, 29-31 on his interpretation of the Alamo visit in 1935. The *Karlsruhe* was conducting good-will tours already under Weimar.

⁵¹¹ Houston Sängerbund Records, 1874-1985, *Jahresbericht 1934-1935*, July 1935, University of Houston, Houston, Texas.

⁵¹² Houston Sängerbund Records, 1874-1985, *Jahresbericht 1934-1935*, July 1935. University of Houston, Houston, Texas.

The Sangerbund and most of its members tried to stay as neutral as possible in regards to their feeling towards Nazi Germany; they rejected, however, the boycott of German products. Yet, they felt embarrassed by Paul Bottler because he promoted the Stahlhelm at every opportunity.⁵¹³ Lutjens also highlighted the *Sangerbund* in his report and how they were able to act as a link between the ship, the city, and the wider community. However his recommendation to Berlin was that ports in Texas should not be visited for the next three to four years, in part because of the above mentioned concerns, but also because Houston was not suitable as a training port; it had no beaches or attractions existed for the visitors. As soon as the ship had arrived in Texas other port cities in that state requested future visits of a German war cruiser as well. Among these cities was Port Arthur, whose “sincere hope was to find it possible to accede our request.”⁵¹⁴

The eight days in Houston went by fast, and on Saturday May 4, 1935, the *Karlsruhe* departed for Charleston, South Carolina, where she was expected six days later. There the ship moored at the Columbus Street pier at 10:00 a.m. As with all other ports, regional dignitaries, both government and military, welcomed the ship and crew. Fort Moultrie shot the 21-gun salute, and here the streets were decorated with German and U.S. flags. However, most of the U.S. flags flew at half-mast because the *Karlsruhe* arrived at a time when Charleston remembered the anniversary of the end of the Civil War.⁵¹⁵ Lutjens sensed that the city and region lived very much in the past; when a war was mentioned people here meant the Civil War, not the Great War as was customary in Europe. He described the city as an atypical U.S. city with European character. Although the conduct of the population was friendly and hospitably,

⁵¹³ Houston Sangerbund Records, 1874-1985, Meeting Memorandum, June 18, 1940. University of Houston, Houston, Texas. Bottler was an honorary member but by the 1930s his enthusiasm shifted to the *Stahlhelm*.

⁵¹⁴ Letter Chamber of Commerce Port Arthur to German Embassy and AA; R33435.

⁵¹⁵ The American Civil War ended officially on May 9, 1865.

the (white) society was very exclusive and still lived in past memories. Blacks were not allowed to come on board, not because the Germans frowned on them, but because the local Charleston police kept them from entering the pier in the first place. Cadets toured the Citadel and described the blue uniforms of the military cadets as rather sober, and visits to Forts Sumter and Moultrie rounded off the stay. From Charleston, the ship sailed to Vigo, Spain, where she arrived on June 1, 1935. Besides the usual welcoming committees and salutes, Lütjens also met with fellow *Emden* commander Karl Dönitz.⁵¹⁶ Vigo again was the port selected to be where the cadets wrote their last exams. After the war cruiser arrived back in Kiel, Crew 1934 was dismissed, and the ship was made ready for her next trip, which would be her last as a training cruiser.

Germandom

The largest group of Germans outside the Reich resided at the American east coast. The Friends of the New Germany existed from 1933 to 1936 and boasted a total membership of about 6,000, but had at times many more sympathizers. In March 1936 the Friends changed their name and emerged as the German American Bund, which existed until 1941 in the United States and was headquartered in Buffalo, New York. This openly pro-Nazi organization promoted anti-Semitism and was against communism. The Friends purchased 45 acres of land, including a hotel and smaller cabins near Yaphank, New York, in 1935. The camp, eventually called “Camp Siegfried” was open to German American youth from far away as Chicago, and 5,000 people participated in the opening weekend.⁵¹⁷ The camp closed that first summer on September 22nd with three guest speakers, including the former leader of the Free Society of Teutonia, Mr. Fritz

⁵¹⁶ Gästebuch des Kommandanten des Kreuzers „Karlsruhe“. Marineschule Flensburg-Mürwik and Archiv of the Wehrgeschichtliches Ausbildungszentrum WGAZ Mürwik, entry Vigo Spain.

⁵¹⁷ *The Mid Island Mail*, July 13, 1935.

Gissible.⁵¹⁸ The overall goal of the camp was to “combat Communism by installing the principles of Germany in the youth.” Yet most members of the Friends were either citizens of the Reich or Germans who just recently became naturalized U.S. citizens, thus not many second or third generation German Americans could be found in their midst.⁵¹⁹ It is unknown how much communication the commander had with the Friends or its representatives in New York while the *Karlsruhe* visited the United States in 1935. Lütjens considered going to New York to meet with representative of the Friends while in Charleston, but decided that it was too long of a trip. But the United States also saw another German American association emerge in 1935. Many German associations and clubs merged into the Deutsch-Amerikanische Konferenz, or German American Conference, which acted as an umbrella organization. Their goal was towards a more united appearance of all German organizations and reports to the AA stated that about 50,000 members would be linked under this umbrella organization.⁵²⁰

Overall, Commander Lütjens’s evaluation of the Germans in North and South America differed, and it is echoed by Erich Topp and his diary entries. Germans in South America explained that they preferred to stay to themselves because they were afraid to lose their autonomy, independence, and originality, as had happened so often in North America.⁵²¹ They believed that they differed from the dominant Mediterranean race and must retain their unique

⁵¹⁸ The Free Society of Teutonia was formed in the early 1920s in the United States but dissolved in March 1933 when the group merged into the Friends of the New Germany. The brothers Peter, Fritz, and Andrew Gissible were very active in the Teutonia and later the Bund.

⁵¹⁹ A Deutsch-Amerikanischer Bund existed in Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio in the 1930s, but in 1937 the Dallas group decided to dissolve the organization because of the similarities with the German American Bund which they did not want to be affiliated. *Dallas Morning News*, September 14, 1937.

⁵²⁰ Letter Dr. Borchert to AA March 20, 1935, *Deutschtum in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika*, Januar 1930-September 1935, R80290.

⁵²¹ Buttmi, *Werben*, 176. Wir wollen die Eigenständigkeit nicht verlieren wie es in Nordamerika leider so häufig geschieht, wir pflegen Sitten und Gebräuche der Heimat, Sprache und Kultur.

way of northern European life.⁵²² This view was echoed in a 1936 article published in the *American-German Review*, which stated “the mode of living and social demands differed in North and South America due to climate, racial groups, manner of living and rhythm of work.”⁵²³ Even in Mexico, the *Karlsruhe* commander perceived a stronger German community than just to the north in Los Angeles.⁵²⁴ In Chile the cadets found a second *Heimat* with the German community there and were more than happy to talk and report about the Third Reich and the new spirit of Germany. No one in Chile believed the atrocity tales that were spread elsewhere.⁵²⁵ In California, Lütjens sensed a certain indifference, although at the end of the visit, every sailor had met a German family that invited him home. He could not detect a German colony per se; it was hard to distinguish between who was American and who was German or of German descent. The general consul in San Francisco evaluated the visit as a positive one. Many weeks before the arrival the German communities came together under the leadership of a German American, Mr. B. O. Selbach, and no fragmentation within the community occurred. In his public speeches the consul tried to arouse in the German Americans the sympathy and appreciation for the new Germany, but he concluded that the “New Germany could not expect anything from these shallow people here.” Cadet Opitz praised Americans as liberals and therefore skeptical of National Socialism. They valued comfort and a good dinner instead, although no cozy restaurant could be found in America.⁵²⁶

In San Francisco, the Germandom was split into seventy-five organizations and clubs, none of them with any political or *völkische* significance. Lütjens was surprised that few actually

⁵²² Erich Topp, *Odyssey*, 35.

⁵²³ E. Fausel. *American-German Review*, September 1936, 8.

⁵²⁴ They just recently founded a *Deutsche Volksgemeinschafts Club* in Mexico.

⁵²⁵ *Kiel-Flensburg über Amerika*, 46.

⁵²⁶ Herbert Opitz, diary entry San Francisco.

spoke German, even those that just left after the war. He concluded that the German Americans had great joy seeing the cruiser but less because the ship was a connection to the old *Heimat*. Here they wanted to explore the ship and crew, which “naturally strongly contrasted” from American sailors.⁵²⁷ Therefore he perceived the Germans there as impersonal. Yet on the other hand, San Francisco was the only port city that welcomed the sailors and ship in newspaper advertisements. Although these advertisements were limited to the *California Journal*, several local businesses like the Regal Amber Brewing Company, the Palm Garden, Wieland Brothers, and Grapevine Buffet were among them.

Lütjens’s assessment of German Canadians was not much different than that of their American counterparts further south. About 17,000 Germans lived in British Columbia, 1,200 of them in Vancouver, but again they were not organized per se.⁵²⁸ A Deutsch Bund tried to organize on a local basis but they failed, no suitable leader could be found. The German consul in Canada, Seelheim, in his twenty-one page report to the AA believed that real problems and obstacles were only present within the German community in Vancouver, not in the whole province. The communists within that community held back during the visit, but several members of the right-wing Deutschen Bundes Kanada actually endangered the visit and the standing of the German community in general. The consul here referred to the group around the anonymous letter writer regarding Mahler and himself, mentioned in the second chapter. Seelheim reported that there were weeks of useless debates and personal attacks by the members of the local NSDAP group Vancouver and Vancouver South. The situation became so bad that the Canadian Landesleiter of the party and ombudsman, a professor Karl Gerhard from Montreal, had to be involved. He finally released several members of their responsibilities,

⁵²⁷ Report Lütjens to AA, Karlsruhe 1934/35, Berichte R 33481.

⁵²⁸ Merkblatt für Kanada und Vanvouver, 1935.

which finally made the welcoming committee in Vancouver functional again three days before the arrival of the vessel.⁵²⁹

Lütjens was told about several German Canadian communities in the interior that struggled to maintain their German identity. Many of them were ethnic German Mennonites who recently emigrated from Russia to North America. In Russia, these people were able to foster and cultivate their Germandom, but in Canada they had difficulties to keep their uniqueness and identities. Their Canadian neighbors tried to win them over to a more Anglicized lifestyle. They used several methods; one was distributing English-language children's literature to the German communities. Furthermore those who came from Russia lost contact with their families who stayed behind, creating another disruption within their community and a loss of their heritage and roots. This rather large group could be a potential asset for Germany in the future; Lütjens recommended to the AA that Germany should essentially focus on these German Mennonites.

Acceptance in Houston was purely heartfelt (*ungeschminkt herzlich*) and a great success for Germany, but the commander was disappointed that more contact to German American in the Texas interior could not be established. The Auslandsinstitut recommended a visit to rural German communities in the interior of Texas, including New Braunfels, Fredericksburg, and Brenham. However none of the towns extended an invitation to the commander and Lütjens believed it was because of the stinginess of the German farmers there.⁵³⁰ Consul Wendler felt that the German Americans, particularly in Houston, had reoriented themselves back to their heritage roots. The various clubs and organizations were in the process of forming an umbrella organization called Deutsch-Amerikanischer Bund under the leadership of Rice Professor Max

⁵²⁹ Seelheim report to AA, April 18, 1935; R 33435.

⁵³⁰ Report Lütjens to AA, R33481.

Freund. Wendler, however, pointed out that Freund had just applied for U.S. citizenship and therefore might avoid any doubts about his loyalty to his adoptive country.⁵³¹ No true German community could be detected in South Carolina. All organizations, although still bearing German names, were described as convivial clubs. The local rifle organization held their annual shooting competition in May and the local champion marksman spoke no German at all. Cadet Erich Topp wrote along the same lines when he recognized that “the young ones do not even know what part of Germany their grandparents lived in.”⁵³² South Carolina was not recommended for future visits, and the ethnic German Americans there could not be won over for the cause of the Third Reich, thought Lütjens.⁵³³

A closer examination of Lütjens’s guestbook, the only surviving one from all five voyages, does not reveal any political statements made by guests. Only three of the hundreds of people who signed it, identified themselves as being affiliated with the NSDAP. These entries were made in Brazil, Mexico, and Cristobal, Panama. Most guests just signed the book, few left messages which ranged from “it was a joy to experience the visit of the cruiser Karlsruhe” to “in memory of a good time”, and “thank you very much, merry Christmas, 1,000 greetings to the Heimat.” Even Paul Bottler, the active Stahlhelmbund president from Houston refrained from any statements and simply wrote “in memory of the visit in Houston, Tex, Paul O. Bottler.”⁵³⁴

Conclusion

⁵³¹ Dr. Freund was also involved in the court case of Dr. Heinrich Meyer, faculty member of Rice who was arrested in 1943 when his US citizenship was revoked. He testified in his behalf. For more information see The Handbook of Texas, *Heinrich Meyer*. Wendler also took the opportunity and visited Rice where he passed out books to the German language classes.

⁵³² Erich Topp, *Odyssey*, 35.

⁵³³ Report Lütjens to AA, May 22, 1935. IIF, Berichte 1934/35, Bd 2, R33481.

⁵³⁴ Guestbook Günther Lütjens, 1935.

Not much anti-German sentiment could be detected during the 1934-35 voyage. Communist agitation was localized and only reported in California and Vancouver, but it did not directly affect the visits or crew and it was limited to either a short strike or some verbal harassment. The crew itself, however, became more politicized in 1935. It was the first tour with a significantly younger crew than before, and many had joined the navy after 1933. One of Commander Lütjens's goals was to reach as many Germans overseas as possible and win them over for the new cause. Thus, he recommended skipping smaller cities altogether and in the future concentrate on large centers on the east and west coasts where higher concentrations of Germans could be found. Lütjens still sensed the pressure of a depressed economy and the bleak situation in most nations. Once again, the ship was sent out to reduce bias and preconception towards the new Germany, and the sailors again were able in their well-mannered and self-reliant behavior to do so in many cases. In all, the second voyage conducted under the Third Reich was uneventful.

CHAPTER 8

THE LAST TRAINING CRUISE, THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR, AND THE INVASION OF NORWAY

As soon as the war cruiser reached home waters, planning for another good-will tour started, yet the next and as it turned out, last voyage of the *Karlsruhe* was much in jeopardy from the start, in large parts because of the poor foreign exchange rate of the Reich.⁵³⁵ Germany had neither the raw material nor foreign exchange in 1935 to conduct a costly overseas voyage.⁵³⁶ Should the *Karlsruhe* sail on another training cruise the course would be in an eastern direction and would include mostly nations in Asia. The last commander who guided the *Karlsruhe* on her yearly training cruise was Captain Leopold Siemens. He entered the imperial navy on April 1, 1910, served on the heavy cruiser *Victoria Louise*, and was promoted in September 1913 to lieutenant. Before the war broke out he was stationed on the *Rheinland* and later participated in the Battle of Skagerrak. During the Weimar Republic he worked in a variety of positions, including adjutant to the station commander in Kiel.⁵³⁷ Siemens, described as a silent but cheerful man, had also gained experience on a training cruiser when he was assigned as first officer on the *Emden*.

The vessel was to leave Kiel on October 21, 1935, and as the first overseas port Valencia, Spain, was selected. From there, she would sail through the Mediterranean to Haifa, then cross into the Red Sea and set sail toward Bombay. Next came China with stops at Nanking and Shanghai, followed by Yokohama and Nagasaki in Japan, and then back to China and Hong

⁵³⁵ Letter German Embassy Shanghai to AA, March 27, 1935; AA Besuch deutscher Kriegsschiffe im Ausland, April 1935, Allgemeines, R33435.

⁵³⁶ Series C; Letter Luther to AA, June 18, 1935, American Attitude to political events in Europe, #155

⁵³⁷ Leopold Siemens was born in 1889 and died in 1979 in Cologne. After his time as commander of the *Karlsruhe* he became Naval Attache in London. During the war he served in various positions in the naval command and was promoted to vice admiral in 1942.

Kong, followed by Ilo Ilo in the Philippines. The last two planned stops in Asia were Batavia and Singapore. From there the war cruiser would sail back to Aden and eventually Spain before arriving back in Kiel on June 13, 1936.⁵³⁸ The yearly artillery training exercises were scheduled for Nagasaki, and all visits were again to be treated as “unofficial.”

Yet before this travel plan was finalized and made public, large adjustments had to be made. At first these changes involved only modifications to the calendar. Hong Kong was moved up and a planned visit to Itsukushima, Japan was canceled. By September 27, the naval command adjusted the plans further and this time more extensively. Instead of sailing from the Philippines back to Aden, Berlin decided to sail to Dutch Harbor on the Aleutian Islands, then south to San Diego, through the Panama Canal, and to St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.⁵³⁹ At one point Berlin considered adding Montreal, Canada, as the last stop on this voyage. The Vancouver layover during the previously year was evaluated as a full success for Germany by the AA, and a new German organization, the Deutsche Bund under Karl Gerhard, had just formed in Montreal. Gerhard, who saw himself as the only true representative of the new Germany in Canada, very much wanted a visit, and to be in charge of such a visit. He pleaded his case for such a visit under his leadership, guidance, and planning to the AA. Before it decided on who would head such a committee, however, the naval command and the AA decided to eliminate Montreal altogether. This had nothing to do with any political or economic developments but was based on the weather during the winter in that region. The St. Lawrence River regularly and unpredictably freezes over by late fall and often stays this way into the following spring, making the city impossible and impracticable for a visit.

⁵³⁸ AA Kriegsschiffe Auslandsreise Karlsruhe 1935/36, Januar 1935, Bd 1. A total of 119 days would be spent in ports. No specific port was designated as fuel port.

⁵³⁹ Memo Frohwein, AA Auslandsreise, Berichte 1935/36; R33485.

But by mid-October 1935 more changes were necessary, this time to the first ports on the schedule: Valencia, Haifa, Singapore, Bombay, Nanking, and Shanghai. Political developments in the eastern Mediterranean and Suez region made these changes necessary. An unavoidable clash seemed to develop in central and the eastern part of the Mediterranean with the Second Italo-Abyssinian War.⁵⁴⁰ The naval command decided first to send the war cruiser along the western African coast and around the Cape of Good Hope. Berlin debated if it was politically correct and wise at that time to also add a stop at Walvis Bay in Namibia, the former Swakopmund, German South-West Africa. The AA was against such a stop because the South African government was in the process of incorporating the five provinces in the area and saw it as unwise to conduct a visit of a German war ship during such a time, which might cause tension between Nazi Germany and Great Britain, something Hitler wanted to avoid.

Finally, a viable plan was presented, and the Reichsminister and Supreme High Commander of the Military (Oberbefehlshaber der Wehrmacht) announced that the Naval Command issued the order that the cruiser *Karlsruhe* would leave from October 21, 1935, to June 13, the following year on her yearly training cruise with 635 crew members including eighteen officers and 120 cadets. This time, the war cruiser *Karlsruhe* was accompanied by the German oil tanker *Mittelmeer* and two artillery torpedo exercises were scheduled, one in Africa, the other off the waters of Japan.⁵⁴¹ From Kiel the cruiser sailed around Denmark into the Atlantic and to Tenerife, then to São Tomé and Lobito. The former South-West Africa was skipped. An artillery exercise took place in open waters, so did refueling, before the next port Durban was reached. From there the ship crossed into the Pacific to Batavia (Java), the

⁵⁴⁰ Letter Oberbefehlshaber der Wehrmacht to AA, Berlin October 5, 1935; AA Kriegsschiffe Ausbildungsreisen Januar 1935.

⁵⁴¹ The *Mittelmeer* was a tanker in the fleet of the shipping company Esberger. The tanker carried this time the in Germany pre-fabricated torpedo targets. The *Hansa* which had accompanied the *Karlsruhe* the previous year sailed during this time with the training cruiser *Emden*.

Philippines, Hong Kong, and Japan. The last stops were Dutch Harbor, Unalaska, San Diego, St. Thomas, and Vigo, Spain, where traditionally the last written exams for the cadets were held.⁵⁴²

The economic situation around the world, particularly for many German colonies overseas, had not much improved over the past few years, and the AA insisted again that the visits of German war cruisers should all be conducted with the simplest execution, without ceremonies, and without substantial burden for the German colonies. Elaborate, costly festivities could tarnish and cloud the joy of a visit for the Germans. Department III within the AA was also concerned with how many host gifts a commander of a German war cruiser should receive, and present to a city. It was customary to give a picture of the visiting ship, and Germany did not wanted to come across as giving more presents than other nations.⁵⁴³ As was customary by now, a farewell party was held in Kiel and when it was time to say good-bye friends and family waved from the Blücher Bridges.

The leg from Kiel to Tenerife passed without incident, but shortly after the ship left Tenerife, Commander Siemens called his crew up on deck and read a letter from the Führer to the sailors. The black, white, and red German flag was hauled down from the mast and retired. By decree of Hitler a new German flag was hoisted. Starting September 15, 1935, the swastika became the only valid national flag of the German Reich. The Nazis saw the swastika as a representative of the unity and purity of the German people. On November 7, a new war flag was also introduced for Germany, which looked similar in design to the old imperial flag. The cadets felt proud and honored that they were carrying the *new* war flag of Germany into the world.⁵⁴⁴

⁵⁴² After a year of hiatus, sailor Robert Buttmi was once again serving on the Karlsruhe. This was his third voyage. Buttmi in that year went to weapons artillery courses and worked with Krupp, Polte, Zeiss, and Siemens. Buttmi, Werben, 371.

⁵⁴³ Memo Frohwein AA, Abt III to Abt II and RWeM, May 11, 1935; R33435.

⁵⁴⁴ Jahrbuch Kadetten, 1935.

They wrote of the moment when the new flag was hoisted for the first time onboard as creating an indescribable feeling. In their mind the flag was an indication for the future and a challenge of the past.⁵⁴⁵ These flag changes were later blamed on the so-called *Bremen* incident, a German ocean liner that ran under the Norddeutsche Lloyd. The ship anchored on July 26, 1935, in New York harbor and was stormed by communists and Jews who tore down the swastika, but not the black, white, and red German flag. Germany complained and the United States government conducted an investigation, but concluded that because the swastika was not the official flag of the Reich, and only a party symbol, no harm was done.⁵⁴⁶

The port of Durban in South Africa was reached after short stops in the Portuguese colonies of São Tomè and Lobito. But in South Africa the first of several tragedies happened, when one of the sailors was involved in a deadly motorcycle accident in Durban. He was cremated with the cooperation of the British authorities and the German community, and his ashes were shipped back to Germany. Durban was described as an emerging modern city with good infrastructure but also a region with lots of different races: blacks, whites, Chinese, Indian, and many more. The cadets were astonished to find Germandom all the way in South Africa; towns and settlements with pure German names like Wartburg and Herrmannsburg. These villages and towns were described as tidy places with friendly homes, clean streets, and cupolas of oak trees.⁵⁴⁷ How could these people retain their Germandom in Africa, so far away from the *Heimat*? This question puzzled the cadets, but they believed that the Germandom in South Africa was built on three pillars: the German heart, language, and religion. These immigrants molded a

⁵⁴⁵ Jahrbuch Kadetten, 1935

⁵⁴⁶ The State department in the end blamed the Hapag Lloyd of failure to cooperate to prevent a disturbance. Morning Bulletin, August 3, 1935. See also report and photo of the Bremen; *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*, #50, 1935.

⁵⁴⁷ 32.000 Meilen, *Weltreise der Karlsruhe*, 22-23.

piece of *Heimat* and more important, kept their race clean.⁵⁴⁸ Siemens laid down a wreath at a cemetery where Germans who died during World War I in the Pietermaritzburg concentration camp were buried. The sailors also met Germans who traveled all the way from the former South-West Africa to Durban and who recalled having met the ship once before in 1930. The German Embassy in Pretoria called the visit to Durban a complete success. They based their observation on the fact that the British administrator of the Natal province made the ninety kilometer trip three times from Pietermaritzburg to Durban to meet the crew and commander.⁵⁴⁹

No problems were reported from Dutch Batavia or Java, the next two steps. To the official reception representatives of the Dutch fleet, Admiral van Dulm, the governor, mayor, and about 800 locals showed up in the harbor. However, no heads of state were honored during that reception. A few days later during a “private” dinner, to which Siemens invited forty guests, a toast was exchanged for Queen Wilhelmina and Führer. This dinner turned very animated and “out of hand”, perhaps due to the alcohol served.⁵⁵⁰ The sailors were busy conducting sightseeing tours to botanical gardens and the interior and getting the cruiser ready for open days, to which about 1,000 people showed up, one third of them Dutch nationals. The crew and cadets could visit during their off time the two largest movie theaters free of charge. They were operated by a German Jew who also had served in World War I. Siemens however reported a certain reluctance from local officials. The governor only participated in the reception and the dinner onboard, but in none of the other festivities and celebrations. This was certainly not customary,

⁵⁴⁸ 32.000 Meilen, Weltreise der Karlsruhe, 23.

⁵⁴⁹ Report Pretoria to AA, Dec 20, 1935, AA 35/36 Berichte; R33485.

⁵⁵⁰ Report Siemens to AA, Jan 20, 1935, Berichte R33485. The crew took in 800 tons of oil and provisions in Batavia as well.

and the commander believed that there was a “fear of the swastika and the Horst Wessel song” from the side of the Dutch.⁵⁵¹

Although the crew was warned before they reached Southeast Asia about the danger of drinking unboiled water, the ship had to deal with two major and very serious outbreaks of dysentery and typhus on board. One of the cadets, Gerhard Müller, died within a few hours of getting sick from dysentery, and per order of the commander he was buried at sea.⁵⁵² The *Karlsruhe* stopped in the middle of the ocean, and his flag draped coffin lay on deck so his fellow cadets could say a last good bye. He was eventually committed to the sea. Despite strict hygiene measures, the ship was disinfected from top to bottom- more outbreaks were reported. The board physician Dr. Paul Kubitzki, out of fear of quarantine, falsified the official diagnosis of Müller’s death; he attested that he died of enterogastritis and a weak heart. Otherwise the ship could not leave the Philippines, their next stop after Java, and the continuation of the good-will tour was at risk. Siemens therefore issued an information ban for his crew.⁵⁵³ However, more sailors fell ill with contagious infections and were shipped out to local hospitals in Ilo Ilo, Philippines.⁵⁵⁴ Sailor Jahn complained about appendicitis and was also transferred to a local hospital. After a successful operation, he developed complications and died two days later, and was buried in Ilo Ilo. Despite the draconic hygiene measures more sailors became sick, and rumors circulated amongst the crew that the Naval Command in Berlin gave Commander Siemens the option that he could shorten their stay in the Philippines and cut the 1935 voyage

⁵⁵¹ Report Siemens to AA, Jan 20, 1935, Berichte R33485.

⁵⁵² Müller was 20 years old and described as a happy young man. Logbuch #3 Adolf Oelrich, entry Begräbnis auf See.

⁵⁵³ Buttmi, *Werben*, 430.

⁵⁵⁴ Walter Essig and Dieter Kaiser stayed at St. Paul’s hospital with typhoid fever and Günter Dangschat, Friedrich Wilcke, Adolf Oelrich, and Alfred Nietrug with dysentery. Oelrich was also one of the diarists on the 1935-36 tour. He was also operated on his appendix in Ilo Ilo and stayed in the Philippines but eventually rejoined the *Karlsruhe* in California. Oelrich sailed on the *President Coolidge* first to Kobe, Hawaii and then San Francisco before he rejoined the rest of the crew.

short. Eventually four more Germans fell ill while in Hong Kong and were also admitted to local hospitals. These four sailors traveled after their release to Japan to meet up with their comrades. Transportation and treatment for the sailors were provided free of charge by the British authorities.⁵⁵⁵ Worried parents and family members bombarded the AA in Berlin with requests about their sick sons or husbands. Yet in typical German bureaucratic fashion these families later received a bill for administrative costs and cable fees.⁵⁵⁶

A new obstacle arose when the ship was already on her way to Asia. King George V of England died on January 20, 1936, just a few days before the *Karlsruhe* was to arrive in a British port. The German Embassy in China immediately raised concerns about the visit in Hong Kong, since England was in mourning and a visit might be inappropriate. Regardless, the Germans visited the British crown colony on February 2, 1936, and anchored at Queens's pier in Hong Kong, the most beautiful port in East Asia.⁵⁵⁷ The *Karlsruhe* was the first German war cruiser in twenty-two years that came to Hong Kong. The only unpleasantness reported from Hong Kong was a publication of an account of the sinking of the German fleet at Scapa Flow in the *Hong Kong Telegraph* on February 10, 1936. This report even upset the British Colonial Secretary in Hong Kong, Sir Thomas Southorn, who profusely apologized for the "deplorable lapse of good taste at a time when the *Karlsruhe* is visiting this port."⁵⁵⁸ Nevertheless, Siemens visited with British Governor Sir Andrew Caldecott, and he described the reception as heartfelt and friendly. Because of the king's death all official receptions were canceled, but the sailors were able to visit with fellow British sailors on the cruiser *Dorsetshire*. Germans and British subjects alike picked the crew up in private cars at the pier and showed them around the town and countryside. The

⁵⁵⁵ Memo Consul Gipperich to AA, February 29, 1936, R33485.

⁵⁵⁶ AA Kriegsschiffe, Auslandsreisen Karlsruhe, microfiche; R30.026.

⁵⁵⁷ Merkblatt, Hong Kong and Süd China, Karlsruhe 1936.

⁵⁵⁸ Letter Southorn to German Consul Gipperich, Berichte 35/36, R33485. The *South China Morning Post* on Feb 12 also approved of the publications by the *Hong Kong Telegraph*.

Merkblatt for Hong Kong reminded the crew that they were not permitted to display or wear any weapons while on shore leave. Furthermore taking photos from warships and military installations was not allowed, and several of the hotels and bars were off limits for the Germans as well. Two groups of cadets and crew made trips to Canton, where they stayed with German families and the mayor invited them to an exotic tea ceremony. The visit to Canton was arranged through Dr. Hellmann, the NSDAP representative of the party there. He had extended in 1934 an invitation for a German cruiser to China while he was at the yearly Nuremberg rally.⁵⁵⁹ Regardless of the restrictions the sailors faced in Hong Kong, the crew felt that here they fulfilled their mission of a good-will tour. The song “*Holdrie jetzt geht’s zur Heimat*” (Holdrie now back to the *Heimat*) was played after leaving Hong Kong; the *Karlsruhe* just finished the first part of her world voyage. Two Japanese war cruisers, the *Ashigara* and *Haguro* were in the port of Nagasaki when the *Karlsruhe* arrived. The planned artillery and torpedo exercise was cut short there because of bad weather. The crew passed the Mitsubishi wharf, where Japan built their modern warships. But just like in China, the sailors were not allowed to take any photos.⁵⁶⁰ The second Japanese port on the itinerary was Kobe, and here too the Germans deeply impressed the locals with their behavior.

The *Karlsruhe* left Kobe in the late afternoon on March 12. Shortly after, the weather turned dangerous. A storm and wind speed exceeding ninety kilometers an hour rocked the ship back and forth, and many of the crew attested that this was the worst storm they ever encountered. The following day the weather cleared when the ship passed Yokohama and took course towards the Aleutian Islands. On Wednesday the wind picked up again and this time the

⁵⁵⁹ The Canton Daily, *German Officers and Crew of cruiser Karlsruhe*, Feb 11, 1936; Memo AA, March 27, 1935; R34435.

⁵⁶⁰ *32.000 Meilen*, Crew 1935, 47.

storm exceeded wind speed of more than 115 kilometers an hour. The ship rolled from side to side, the ocean turned into dense foam, and the reduced visibility made it impossible to walk across the deck. Several *Spanten* or ribs, snapped in half and this caused immediate structural damages to the vessel.⁵⁶¹ These ribs were bolted to the hull and ran perpendicular to the keel. Across the width of the cruiser, a break of about 20 millimeters appeared. This crack ran all the way through Commander Siemens' quarters. Wind and sea water seeped through the cracks, and the insides of the rooms were soaked. It appeared that the ship would break apart any minute.⁵⁶² The storm was so vicious that heavy metal lockers broke away from the floors and were tossed around the rooms like toys. To make matters worse, a pipe in the laundry broke, and the hot steam scalded several of the Chinese workers. One of them later died of his injuries and was buried at sea, his coffin draped in the Chinese flag. Furthermore, the *Karlsruhe* ran dangerously low on fuel, and no one knew where the *Mittelmeer* was. The ship, tilted in a 39-degree angle, made it to Unalaska, however, in one piece. There, the damage was fixed as best as possible with the equipment at hand. In order to prevent the crack from further running and causing more damage to the ship, two circles, about 15 centimeters in diameter were drilled at the end of each crack into the hull. Siemens requested a navy engineer from Germany to fly directly to California and inspect and assess the damage to the *Karlsruhe*. Unfortunately the wind did not ease up, and after a few days in Dutch Harbor the cruiser sailed towards San Diego hoping that nothing more would happen.

The ship arrived in San Diego as scheduled despite the cracks and holes. Here the cruiser moored at the U.S. Navy pier, and the first visitors onboard were the German consul and officers of the 11th U.S. Naval District. In the afternoon Siemens visited the admiral of the U.S. Navy, the

⁵⁶¹ Buttmi, *Werben* 459.

⁵⁶² 32,000 *Meilen*, Crew 1935, 57.

mayor, and other city officials. The welcoming committee in San Diego included members of the various German American associations, clubs, and lodges, and the Freunde des Neuen Deutschlands under Wilhelm Bauer and Hans Lutz. The overall leadership of the welcoming committee in California was given to Mr. George F. Otto, who spoke, to the amazement of the cadets, only broken German. The first short report to the AA on April 24, 1936, revealed that the crew received heartfelt acceptance from the administration, navy, and population.⁵⁶³ As soon as news was made public that a German war cruiser anchored in San Diego, other U.S. port cities along the west coast contacted Germany and also requested a visit. These requests could not be fulfilled, however.⁵⁶⁴ Rear Admiral Robert Witthoeft, German naval attaché in Washington, D.C., was again in California to greet the ship. Witthoeft hoped that the visit “would strengthen the ties of friendship between the U.S. and Germany.”⁵⁶⁵

Entertainment in California included soccer matches, dances, and a BBQ cookout at a ranch in San Pasqual, and Siemens with forty of his cadets participated in a dress parade and review of the U.S. Naval training station in San Diego. The ship was open on three days for inspection. Local newspapers reminded its readers about the Horst Wessel Song and its origins. This was certainly necessary because most German Americans were unfamiliar with the melody because they had immigrated to the United States before 1933. The text, therefore, was printed in both German and English in the American press. By now the Nazis viewed the Horst Wessel Song as the second national anthem of Germany. The *Deutsche Zeitung* in San Diego devoted its front page to the arrival of the ship with a peculiar mix of kitschy images of historic California sites and swastikas flanked by lion-and eagle-like animals. Although no more contagious

⁵⁶³ Memo to AA, April 24, 1936; R 33485.

⁵⁶⁴ Letter Chamber of Commerce Seward Alaska to Consul Seattle, Jan 15, 1936; AA Kriegsschiffe, Auslandsreisen Karlsruhe, microfiche; R30.026

⁵⁶⁵ *San Diego Union*, April 7, 1936.

outbreaks were reported, the captain had to deal with a new problem. Two sailors, one from the *Karlsruhe*, the other from the tanker *Mittelmeer*, decided to stay in California and not to return with their fellow sailors to Nazi Germany.

The U.S. Navy welded the damage to the ship at one of its piers, but because the work was more extensive than previously assessed, took longer as expected. The ship and crew then had to stay some extra days in California. This time was used by the crew to do more sightseeing, and to visit vineyards and fruit plantations in the surrounding area. Admiral Raeder later personally thanked Secretary of the Navy, Claude A. Swanson in a letter about the unselfish help in San Diego, the exceptional cooperation and accommodations, and the generous assistance.⁵⁶⁶ Raeder also thanked the Japanese Imperial Admiral Chuichi Nagumo in a letter for his navy's heartfelt and accommodating welcome the *Karlsruhe* received in Nagasaki and Kobe. Raeder also believed that the visit of the war cruiser boosted and deepened the friendship between the imperial Japanese navy and the German *Kriegsmarine*.⁵⁶⁷ In the past Raeder had not written such letters, correspondence like this was exchanged only on a lower level.

At the Panama Canal Zone members of the crew visited the grave of sailor Ernst Hoffmann, who died there during the 1932 cruise under Commander Erwin Wassner and reported that the grave was well kept in "German fashion". From there the cruiser sailed to St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands, where the ship was greeted without any incident by Acting Governor Morris de Castro, who was of Jewish descent.⁵⁶⁸ The ship and crew spent ten days in the Virgin Islands, and there the sailors faced the last tragedy of the 1935-36 voyage, when cadet

⁵⁶⁶ Letter Raeder to Swanson, April 24, 1936, R30.026.

⁵⁶⁷ Letter Raeder to Nagumo, April 30, 1936, R30.026. Rumors about the deep friendship between Japan and Germany circulated among the crew. For once Hitler was the first head of state that congratulated the Japanese Emperor when after three daughters his heir was born in 1933. But Nazi Germany also gave a precious Buddha statue back to Japan which was much appreciated by the Japanese people.

⁵⁶⁸ Seattle Daily Times, *Jew Given Salute by Nazi Cruiser*, June 6, 1936.

Steinbart disappeared in the Caribbean Sea. Although Siemens decided to turn the ship around, and although the crew searched for five hours, he was presumed dead.

By early May 1936, just weeks before the *Karlsruhe* was expected in Vigo, political conditions in Spain deteriorated rapidly. The German Embassy in Madrid suggested eliminating Vigo as the last stop. If the *Karlsruhe* kept Vigo on the travel plan, shore leave for the German sailors was not recommended.⁵⁶⁹ Thus, Pontevedra, and the small village of San Marin were substituted for Vigo at the last minute. Just before the *Karlsruhe* arrived in Spain, they met the *Emden* and together the crews of both ships spent several days in Spain. From there they sailed towards the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Kanal. Admiral Saalwächter went onboard in Wilhelmshaven for inspection and once the *Karlsruhe* was back in Kiel, Admirals Albrecht and Raeder, Gauleiter Lohse, and the mayor of Kiel, Behrens surveyed the ship. Then a rumor amongst the crew, Hitler was onboard as well. It was the second time he visited the war cruiser. As soon as the ship returned, she was for obvious reasons decommissioned after her fifth overseas training voyage, brought into dry dock, and received a major overhaul. The damages from the storm in the Pacific were repaired further and the old anti-aircraft guns were replaced with three twin-mounts. Fire control directors were also installed at the time and after the work was completed the cruiser was mostly confined to the Baltic. Her time as a training cruiser had come to an end.

The last training voyage of the German war cruiser *Karlsruhe* started under an unlucky star. First it was unclear if they would leave at all, then Berlin had to make numerous adjustments, followed by death and an epidemic onboard. In all, the voyage was overshadowed by four deaths, numerous illnesses, accidents, two deserters, and one cadet presumed dead.

⁵⁶⁹ Argentinian training ship *Presidente Saraiante* which arrived at the same time cancelled shore leave for their cadets.

Assessment of Germandom During the Last Cruise

One of the assignments of a commander of a training cruiser was to determine the situation of the Germandom abroad. Siemens assessed in a secret report to the AA truthfully the situation in Tenerife, the first stop. The community looked united, but in reality was not. Some associations like the Deutsche Auslands Institut (DAI) and the Schulverein showed a united front, but the NSDAP did not. Few party members participated in any festivities given in honor of the cruiser, and the members of the Ortsgruppe were hopelessly at odds with each other and much divided. Yet in other parts of the world he encountered cohesive and united Germans. In Natal, South Africa, Siemens congratulated the German community for retaining their Deutschtum, despite the many challenges they faces since World War I there. A similar picture presented itself in Java. The Germandom stood united behind the visit to Dutch Java: there were neither inconsistencies nor a foul peace detected. The German consul, Dr. Vallette, conceded that particularly the German men who married local women could not besides all efforts, be won over for the movement, or the German Bund, and they stayed strangers to the movement in Dutch Java.

Siemens observed that the Germans in Batavia appeared united, but some of the party members seemed embittered and complained to him. The NSDAP had set certain rules and regulation for all Germans abroad and it was not always feasible to follow these rules because of climatic conditions and other circumstances.⁵⁷⁰ In addition the new race laws passed in the Reich affected many Germans citizens overseas negatively. Just a few weeks prior to the arrival of the war cruiser a German wanted to marry a local woman. The German consul in Batavia tried to prevent that union and wanted to expel him from the German community. Many Dutch who live

⁵⁷⁰ Report Siemens to Kriegsmarine, Jan 22, 1936; R33485.

in mixed marriages perceived the German race laws as an attack against themselves, and the local population felt hurt as well.⁵⁷¹ Yet in a certain way the Germans were impressed by the Dutch racial policies because it seemed that the Dutch had solved their problems of mixed marriages. If a Dutch soldier had children with a local woman, the Dutch state would take care of these children even after he went back to the Netherlands. But if he married a local woman, it was his responsibility to take care of his offspring, and he was further not allowed to return home with his family.

The same Vereinsmeierei that Commander Lütjens had already reported on the previous voyage in the United States, particularly Texas, was also found by Siemens in California. The Germandom was fragmented, and the German sailors were astonished when they were addressed in broken German and one “would believe they came over on the Mayflower, but then they proudly stated that they were already more than two years in America.”⁵⁷² They also reported on the tasteless attractions at the California Pacific Exposition, the largest draw in town.⁵⁷³ For Americans, so the sailors thought, kitsch and art went hand in hand, when they visited a papier mâché structure that housed an exhibit of old masters from Rubens, Dürer, and Rembrandt.⁵⁷⁴ And then there were the obligatory questions by Americans like “do you drink beer for breakfast?”, and many of crew and cadets were asked to give autographs like Hollywood celebrities.⁵⁷⁵ The Germans in North America were “a disappointment” for the sailors, they reported over and over again, in their fissured Germandom. For the North Americans, Germany was symbolized in a membership in a *Sängerbund* or bowling club. The cadets were slightly

⁵⁷¹ Report Siemens to Kriegsmarine, Jan 22, 1936; R33485.

⁵⁷² *32.000 Miles*, 65.

⁵⁷³ The Exposition was held from May to November 1935 and again from February to September 1936 in Balboa Park in San Diego.

⁵⁷⁴ *32.000 Miles*, 65.

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 66.

irritated because they grew up during their formative years with the meanings of the Winterhilfswerk (Winter Aid, WHW), or the Kraft durch Freude (Strength through Joy, KdF) programs, but no one abroad asked them about them. What people abroad wanted to confirm were the rumors like the persecution of Christians in Germany.⁵⁷⁶ The cadets did their own assessment of Germandom in the United States. They had no answer why Germans in America were different, but speculations included missing race awareness, or guilt because they turned their back on their *Heimat* Germany.⁵⁷⁷

Maybe for all of these reasons, the bickering and backstabbing, the jealousy and the uneasiness, a set of Ten Commandments for a German was published in American newspapers. According to these rules, a German American should show and admit that he is German, even though it might not be convenient. He should speak and write German, read German newspapers and books, and instruct his children in his mother tongue. He should further not change anything about his Germanic name, because his name is his personal flag, and he should participate in German functions, and join a German organization.⁵⁷⁸ What kind of organization was not mention in these commandments, but they clearly should be representing the *völkische* idea.

Operation during the Spanish Civil War

After the much needed overhaul in the docks in Wilhelmshaven, the light cruiser was assigned to a non-intervention patrol at the Spanish coast in January and February 1937 and again in June 1937 during the Spanish Civil War.⁵⁷⁹ This was an uneventful time for the cruiser

⁵⁷⁶ Kadetten Jahrbuch 1935.

⁵⁷⁷ Kadetten Jahrbuch 1935.

⁵⁷⁸ California Journal, *10 Gebote für Deutsch Amerikaner*, February 21, 1935.

⁵⁷⁹ For more information on the Spanish Civil War see Axel Schimpf, *Der Einsatz von Kriegsmarineeinheiten im Rahmen der Verwicklungen des spanischen Bürgerkrieges, 1936 bis 1939*, in *Der Einsatz von Seestrekräften im*

and crew. Erich Förste became at the end of September 1937 the ship's new commander. Born in 1892, he joined the imperial navy in 1910 as a cadet and served on several submarines during the Great War and continued his career in the Weimar Republic and Nazi Germany.⁵⁸⁰ More repairs and adjustments were undertaken in Wilhelmshaven the end of May 1938. A second outer shell for stabilization purposes was installed. This increased the width size of the ship to 16.6 meters, but it also slowed the ship down to a maximum speed of thirty knots. When war broke out in September 1939 these renovations and alterations were not all finished, and it would take two more months until the light war cruiser was able to join the rest of the German fleet.

World War II and Norway

On 13 November 1939, the cruiser was placed under the command of Captain Friedrich Rieve.⁵⁸¹ Rieve was assigned as Commander of Group 4 of the invasion fleet of Norway on the cruiser *Karlsruhe*. This invasion group consisted of nine groups of submarines and eleven groups of surface ships that carried much of the ground forces needed for the invasion. The surface ships carried out double duty because they were also assigned to protect not only the entire invasion troops, but carried these troops at the same time. Five (groups 7-11) of these groups were also destined for the invasion of Denmark.

Operation Weserübung was the first campaign where German forces of land, sea, and the air force joint together to invade Denmark and Norway in April 1940. The Scandinavian states in the fall of 1939 declared quickly their neutrality and initially both the Allies and Germans accepted and respected that neutrality. Yet shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, Winston

Dienst der Auswärtigen Politik. Mittler: Herford, 1983; Ian Westwell. *Condor Legion: The Wehrmacht's Training Ground*. Hersham, UK: Allan Publishing, 2004.

⁵⁸⁰ Förste was promoted to admiral in March 1943 and he died in Kiel in 1963.

⁵⁸¹ Rieve was born in 1896 and entered the navy shortly before the outbreak of World War I; He was promoted to vice admiral in October 1943 and died in February 1981.

Churchill introduced the idea of a mine field along the Norwegian coast, which would make it difficult and dangerous for the Germans to reach the ice-free port of Narvik and much needed Swedish iron ore. As soon as Russia invaded Finland, Great Britain drew up plans to aid the Finns by occupying neutral Norway, but the last straw for the Germans towards violating Norway's neutrality was the *Altmark* incident. The tanker *Altmark* sailed back to Germany with 299 British POWs onboard through neutral Norwegian water when the British *HMS Cossack* stopped her and freed the prisoners. This was seen by the Germans as a violation of Norwegian neutrality by England.⁵⁸² Shortly after, Admiral Raeder started planning for the invasion of Norway and Denmark with the major objective in mind of occupying Scandinavia before the British, and eventually using ports in Norway to attack England.

In April 1940 the cruiser left with 1,100 sailors onboard towards Kristiansand, Norway, to participate in the Weserübung. Kristiansand is located on Odderoy Island and was heavily fortified with a 150 millimeter and a 210 millimeter gun, and a howitzer battery. The Norwegian destroyers *Gyller* and *Odin* were also in port at the time of the invasion. In the morning of April 9, 1940, as a member of Task Force 4, the *Karlsruhe* fired at defensive positions at Kristiansand while carrying invasion troops and soldiers of the 214th Infantry Division. The *Karlsruhe* left during a clear, dark night with the *Luchs* and *Seeadler* as U-boat security.⁵⁸³ Throughout the day the weather went from clear and sunny to hazy and foggy, a condition that would remain for the next several days. It would take three hours to ship out all of the soldiers. That day the crew rushed to leave Kristiansand and head home to Germany and pass Skagen, the northern point of the Jutland peninsula, before dark. At 19:58 the ship got hit, by what was later determined to be

⁵⁸² Technically Germany had violated Norwegian neutrality as well when they sailed with the British prisoners through neutral waters.

⁵⁸³ The *Luchs* was a Type 1924 torpedo boat, launched March 1928, the *Seeadler* and *Greif*, both Type 1923, launched in July 1926.

the British submarine *Truant*.⁵⁸⁴ Both engines and the rudder failed, the ship was no longer movable and the fog machines did not function either. Captain Rieve reported that conditions were grave. Within the next three hours the young and inexperienced crew was transferred over to the *Luchs*.⁵⁸⁵ Rieve himself first went onto the *Luchs* then moved to the *Greif*. In the meantime the *Karlsruhe* sank further and at 22:45 Rieve gave the order to scuttle the ship. Two torpedoes from the *Greif* hit the light cruiser and the ship sank within a few minutes.⁵⁸⁶ Lütjens, the former commander during the fourth good-will tour of the *Karlsruhe* and by now fleet commander and admiral in the German navy, delivered later a devastating condemnation of Rieve and the crew for their actions surrounding the events of the night of April 9th. In his opinion the situation was not as hopeless as believed. The cruiser was not ultimately doomed and still afloat two hours after being torpedoed and could have been saved.

⁵⁸⁴ British submarines were already sighted in the Fjord on the morning of April 9. Kriegstagebuch K, April 6-9th April, Weserübung Nord, 4; Flensburg Archives CH5322a.

⁵⁸⁵ The 665 strong crew had less than two months of training on the ship.

⁵⁸⁶ Kriegstagebuch 6-9, April 1940, Weserübung Nord, Flensburg Archives CH5322a

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

After the Treaty of Versailles was signed and the many restrictions regarding the military went into effect, the navy in Weimar had limited duties and responsibilities. At the same time the German nation felt emasculated and stunted by the outcome of the war. German communities overseas were cut off from their former fatherland, many since 1914, particularly if their adopted homelands entered the war on the sides of the Allies. As soon as circumstances permitted and internal problems were largely solved, the Weimar Republic started slowly to overcome the challenges and established contacts with other nations as well as with Germans overseas. The voyages of the newly built *Karlsruhe* and the other training cruisers therefore fit into the overall mission of good-will, introducing a democratic Germany to the world, and showing the new German flag, black, red, and gold. Once the Nazis were in power, the voyages were continued in those cases to introduce the new Germany, under a different flag.

This dissertation deals with the question of whether a significant change can be detected between the first two trips under the Weimar Republic and the last three under the Third Reich. When examining the selection process of nations and ports visited, no major deviation in the selection could be found between the two governments. The selections under the Weimar Republic and Nazi Germany were made under a variety of premises, guidelines, and reasons that changed from year to year. The Nazis took over existing structures and networks and took advantage of the *Karlsruhe*'s popularity overseas and at home. Regardless of the planning, last minute changes had to be made on several trips and for different reasons. Economic considerations affected the itineraries as well. All five voyages were undertaken during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Ports or places were selected equally by the naval command and the German Foreign Office, AA, in Berlin. These two entities were either contacted directly by

different chambers of commerce, trade associations, mayors or municipalities, or local and state politicians who extended the invitations. In some cases German communities and associations overseas petitioned the German embassies, who then conveyed the requests to Berlin.

All stops and visits during all five cruises were conducted unofficially. During such a visit no official entertainment by the host nation was expected. Although the Weimar Republic was financially broke and the navy operated on a shoe-string budget, it was important for the German government to undertake these voyages abroad. Before all five tours, the AA reminded its embassies about the financial hardship that existed during the Great Depression and declared that it would not reimburse them for costs incurred during the visits.⁵⁸⁷ The expenses at each port were estimated to be about \$4,000, a large sum in those Depression-era days. Nevertheless this expense was supplemented by donations from local organizations or the host city.⁵⁸⁸ The commander and his officers were reminded by the naval command that although *geselliger Verkehr*, or convivial contact, with other navies was a vital aspect of their mission, they should remember the modest assets available and to make sure they would not become a burden to the other navies.⁵⁸⁹

One of the tasks of the commanders of the cruiser was not only to assess the economic and political situation in a country or region visited, but also to assess the ports and cities visited for future stops. How suitable and how much entertainment and recreation opportunities existed and how was the accessibility of resources in a port? These recommendations were taken into consideration when planning itineraries in the future. Only during the last two cruises, conducted under Lütjens and Siemens, did political considerations move into the decision process. Smaller

⁵⁸⁷ Several German exchange officers had left open bills in August 1929 in hotels and restaurants in New Jersey which the German embassy in D.C. eventually had to pay; Michael Wala. *Weimar und Amerika*, 202.

⁵⁸⁸ Politisches Archiv, AA IIF Auslandsreise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe, 1934/1935, Berichte, R 33481.

⁵⁸⁹ Dienstkenntnis, Leitfaden für den Unterricht an der Marineschule, 1929, 69.

ports were skipped for cities with a higher concentration of German communities. This was seen as necessary to reach as many Germans as possible to convey the message of the new Germany to them. It was still hoped by the last cruise in 1935-36 that party offshoots abroad such as the Friends of the New Germany or the German American Bund could make a difference in the relationship with the movement and those that left. Although in the earlier diary entries and letters the sailors vehemently denied that they were politically interested, but by 1935 the crew knew that they could no longer consider themselves neutral.

There were many firsts for the ship. In several ports the *Karlsruhe* was the first German war cruiser after World War I that visited nations abroad. Since the initial planning phase of the ship in 1926, it sailed under six German chancellors and under two different governments, the democratic Weimar Republic and totalitarian Nazi Germany. Yet she also sailed under three different national flags, that of the Republic 1933, the old imperial flag, implemented after the take-over by the National Socialists from 1933 until 1935, and finally the swastika after 1935. The cruiser hoisted four different German war flags in addition to the so-called Skagerrak flag on its mast. The sailors also gave two different oaths when they left on their yearly training, Weimar and after August 3, 1934 to the Führer.

What changed over the course of the five voyages was the age of the sailors. The numbers of cadets not only increased after 1933 (from 69 in 1932 to 120 in 1935) but the cadets and crew also become younger, so young in fact, that many had no memories of the Great War or the following revolution.⁵⁹⁰ Yet they were informed and knowledgeable about Germany's past, the Battle of Jutland, Scapa Flow, and the Treaty of Versailles. The training the cadets received

⁵⁹⁰ Because of the *Niobe* accident most cadets of the crew 33 were killed, but the navy recuperated quickly from this tragedy.

was fruitful and paid off for Germany. Many of the cadets who participated in the good-will tours conducted between 1930 and 1936 commanded later their own ships or submarines. They climbed the career ladder quickly during that time, and the war certainly aided in this. Lindau (1930) was promoted to admiral at the beginning of the war, Lütjens (1934) became admiral and commander of the *Bismarck*, and Förste (Spanish Civil War) and Rieve (World War II) also were promoted to admirals. Officers that served on the ship like Bruno Machens, navigation officer under Wassner, and Wilhelm Tackenberg who served under Enderndorf, also reached the rank of admirals during the Third Reich. Karl Dönitz, who commanded the 1935 training cruise of the *Emden*, became commander of submarines and eventually grand admiral. He was also Hitler's successor and leader of the short lived Flensburg government. Many cadets and officers who survived World War II, helped after 1955 with the rebuilding of the West German navy. Cadet Bernd-Georg Klug, Crew 33 and one of the diarists, reached the rank of lieutenant commander during the war, and after 1955 was the naval attaché in France and the commander of the Cadet Training school in Flensburg-Mürwick. Cadet Erich Topp (Crew 35, Lütjens), retired as Rear Admiral and Chief of Staff at the NATO Military Committee in D.C. Bernhard Rogge (First Officer under Siemens) and Karl E. Smidt (officer under both Enderndorf and Lütjens) served after 1955 in the German navy. Rogge became rear admiral and Smidt admiral and NATO commander of the German fleet, Baltic and North Seas.

Just as the ship was torn between flags and leaders so were the Germans abroad. During the 1930 and 1932 cruise the Germans overseas longed for the glory of times gone by of imperial Germany and the Kaiser. Many felt indifferent to Weimar, some even hated the republic. But artificial German landscapes, symbolized a longing for the old, and showed that they could not let go of the past and wanted to hang onto the *Heimat*. Once the republic was replaced with the

Third Reich, they still had an uneasy relationship with the new Germany. They did not unconditionally embrace the Third Reich as expected. In fact, some German communities were disappointed that the ship came during difficult times to their new homelands, potentially bringing difficulties and problems for those German communities in the future. Just as the Germans abroad re-created their physical *Heimat* so did the few among the millions accept Nazism. They re-created a political *Heimat* overseas. Since only Reich Germans, those who still were German by citizenship, could join the NSDAP, many of those overseas felt left out. So they re-created, at least what they thought, a copy of the party, in the form of organizations like the Friends of Germany.

The good-will voyages could have been in jeopardy from the start if the 1930 Tanga incident had been magnified and created a ripple effect. A possible outcome could have been the fear of German militarism overseas and that foreign ports would not trust Weimar Germany and no longer extend invitations, but nothing serious developed. There were many firsts for the ship. In several ports the *Karlsruhe* was the first German war cruiser after the Great War that visited nations abroad. Many relationships were made between the cruiser and the ports visited on the local level, they much fostered the international understanding between nations. Mishaps, if one can talk of any, could be attributed to the missing diplomatic intuition of a commander or simple miscommunication as was the case at Tanga.

The cadets and crew left positive marks behind even after 1933. They impressed with their dapper appearance and discipline, obeyed the local laws, and made friendships that lasted a lifetime. The cadets of a 1920s and '30s Germany saw the training voyages the as "highlight of their lives." They experienced other nations, people, form of living, climates, collected new impressions, and were confronted with unfamiliar situations. But the yearly training cruises also

strengthened the ties the cadets and crew had with their *Heimat*. They were able to see the *Heimat* from the outside in, and they realized and recognized for themselves that their home was in Germany. Even after all they experienced and lived through “their hearts belonged to the fatherland.”⁵⁹¹

The sailors detected a difference among the Germandom abroad, particularly in the Western hemisphere. Close knit German communities were found in South and Central America, while the Germans in North America seemed fragmented. But even here the sailors detected a difference between the east and west coast communities. The west coast, particularly cities north of California were described as “almost homey and jovial, middleclass and comfortable.”⁵⁹² Spiteful, cold, and without joy were the words used for the Germans on the American east coast.

The good-will training of the *Karlsruhe* ceased after 1936, and no further insights into other nations and communities abroad from German sailors on training, especially in the late 1930s, is available. People of German descent are no longer the large immigrant communities that they once were: nevertheless those of German descent proudly display their heritage today.

⁵⁹¹ Kadeten Jahrbuch 1935.

⁵⁹² Kadeten Jahrbuch 1935

APPENDIX A

ROUTES

Cruiser Karlsruhe

1. Voyage May 24, 1930 – December 12, 1931

Commander Eugen Lindau

Cagliari, Italy	June 2 – June 10
Suda Bay	June 13 – June 21
Port Said	June 23
Aden	July 1 – July 2
Port Victoria, Seychelles	July 7 – July 21
Mombassa	July 25
Tanga	July 26 – July 27
Zanzibar	July 28 – August 4
Laurenco Marques	August 9 – August 15
Durban, South Africa	August 16 – August 22
Kapstadt	August 25 – September 2
Luderitz	September 4 – September 9
Walis Bay, Namibia	September 10 – September 16
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	October 7 – October 18
Bahia, Brazil	October 24 – November 3
Pernambuco, Brazil	November 4 – November 7
St. Vincent	November 12 – November 13
Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain	November 17 – November 20
Vigo, Spain	November 26 – December 6

2. Voyage November 30, 1931 - December 8, 1932

Commander Erwin Wassner

Pontevedra, Spain	December 5- December 14
Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain	December 18- December 31
Hamilton, Bermuda, British	January 9- January 21
Havana, Cuba	January 25-February 6
Galveston, USA	February 9- February 23
Veracruz, Mexico	February 26-March 7
La Guaira, Venezuela	March 14-March 19
Dominica, British	March 22- March 31
Colon, Panama Canal	April 6- April 9
Honolulu, USA	April 27-May 9
Juneau, USA	May 19- May 30
Sitka, USA	June 1- June 6
Seattle, USA	June 9- June 20
Portland, USA	June 22- June 27
San Pedro, USA	June 30

Balboa, Panama Canal, USA	July 9- July 18
Callao, Peru	July 22-28
Coquimbo, Magallanes, Chile	August 8
Puerto Belgrano, Argentina	August 11- August 18
Buenos Aires, Argentina	August 20- August 26
Rosario, Argentina	August 27- August 31
Montevideo, Uruguay	September 1- September 6
Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil	September 8- September 18
Pernambuco, Brazil	September 25- September 29
Port of Spain, Trinidad, British	October 7- October 18
St. Thomas, USA	October 20- October 29
Philadelphia, USA	November 3- November 10
New York, USA	November 12-November 17
Vigo, Spain	November 28-December 3

3. Voyage October 14, 1933 - June 16, 1934

Commander Wilhelm Freiherr Harsdorf von Enderndorf

Palermo, Italy	October 24 – October 25
Syracus, Italy	October 25 – October 31
Port Said, Egypt	November 4 – November 7
Aden, British port	November 12 – November 14
Tincomali, Ceylon, British	November 24 – December 2
Calcutta, India, British	December 6 – December 14
Padang, Sumatra, Dutch	December 21 – December 28
Sorobaja, Java, Dutch	December 31 – January 6
Brisbane, Australia	January 18 – January 25
Apia, Samoa, British port	February 1 – February 7
Honolulu, USA	February 17 – March 3
Tacoma, USA	March 15 – March 22
San Diego, USA	March 27 – April 3
Amapala, Honduras	April 12 – April 17
Balboa, Panama	April 20 – April 21
Santa Barbara, Dominican Republic	April 25 – May 7
Boston, USA	May 12 – May 22
Caraminal, Spain	June 2 – June 12

4. Voyage 1934 June 20th 1935
Commander Günther Lütjens

Azores	October 31 – November 6
Trinidad	November 16 – November 20
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	December 1 – December 4
San Francisco do Sul, Brazil	December 6 – December 14
Montevideo, Uruguay	December 26 – December 28
Puerto Montt	January 7
Valparaiso, Chile	January 12 – January 21
Lima, Peru	January 24 – February 6
Buena Ventura, Columbia	February 11 – February 16
San Pedro, USA	February 26 – March 1
San Francisco, USA	March 2 – March 12
Vancouver, Canada	March 15 – March 21
Acapulco	April 8 – April 8
Panama Canal	April 15 – April 20
Houston, USA	April 26 – May 4
Charleston, USA	May 10 – May 18
Vigo, Spain	June 1 – June 7

5. Voyage October 21, 1935 – June 13, 1936
Commander Leopold Siemens

Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain	October 30 – November 7
Sao Thome, Portugese	November 18 – November 21
Lobito, Angola, Portuguse	November 23 – November 27
Durban, South Africa,	December 6 - December 12
Port Victoria, Seychelle, British	December 19 – January 1
Batavia, Java, Dutch	January 10 – January 16
Ilo Ilo, Philipines	January 23 – February 3
Hong Kong, China, British	February 7 – February 17
Nagasaki, Japan	February 21 – March 2
Kobe, Japan	March 4 – March 12
Dutch Harbor, USA	March 23 – March 28
San Diego, USA	April 7 – April 17
Balboa, Panama, USA	April 27 – May 2
Christobal, Panama, USA	May 2
St. Thomas, USA	May 6 – May 16
Pontevedra, Spain	May 29 – June 4

APPENDIX B

ILLUSTRATIONS/FLAGS

1. Flag of the Weimar Republic, 1919 – 1933, National Flag



2. Reichskriegsflagge, 1921 – 1933, War Flag



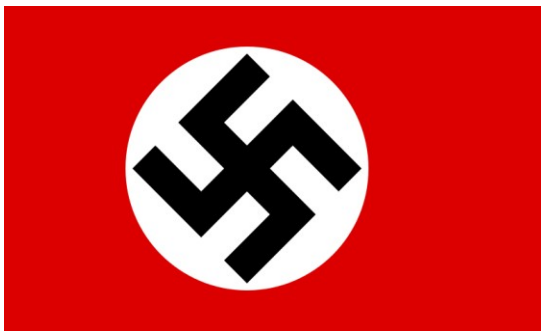
3. Flag of the Third Reich, 1933 – 1935, National Flag



4. Reichskriegsflagge, 1933 – 1935, War Flag



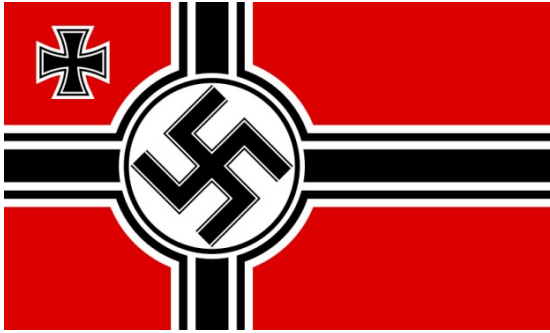
5. Flag of Third Reich, 1935 – 1945, National Flag



6. Reichskriegsflagge, 1935 – 1938, War Flag



7. Reichskriegsflagge, 1938 – 1945, War Flag



8. Skagerrak Flag, hoisted only during the Skagerrak Celebration



APPENDIX C
NAMES/RANDS/POSITIONS

All dates and identifications are for time period after World War I

Reichswehrminister

Minister of Defense

Gustav Noske 1919-1920

Otto Gessler 1920-1928

Wilhelm Groener 1928-1932

Kurt von Schleicher 1932-1933

Werner von Blomberg 1933-1935

Minister of War

Abolished after 1938

Werner von Blomberg 1935-1938

Wilhelm Keitel 1938-1945

Chef der Admiralität

Chief of Admiralty

Adolf von Trotha 1919-1920

Chef der Marineleitung

Chief of Supreme Naval Command

William Otto Michaelis 1920

Paul Behncke 1920-1924

Hans Zenker 1924-1928

Erich Raeder 1928-1935

Oberbefehlshaber der Kriegsmarine
Naval High Command

Erich Raeder	1935-1943
Karl Dönitz	1943-1945
Hans-Georg von Friedeburg	1945
Walter Warzecha	1945

Chef des Stabes der Seekriegsleitung
Chief of General Naval Office

Günther Guse	1937-1938
Otto Schniewind	1938-1941
Kurt Fricke	1941-1943
Wilhelm Meisel	1943-1945

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Akten betreffend Auslandsreise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe III; II-F 2452. Berichte, August 1933-Juni 1934; Bd. 3, R 33459

Akten betreffend Auslandsreise des Kreuzers Karlsruhe 1934/1935, II-F M Militär und Marine. Berichte, Mai 1935-November 1935 Bd. 2, R 33481

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Handel, 14-15, 28-30, 64
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Schiffahrtswesen, Länder, 14-15, 99-104, 143
Länderabteilung, 16-17, 2-4, 66, 1920-1936
Handel, 16-17, 35-83, 1276
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