

THE MAIN COLLECTION

The Main Collection is a model of nineteenth-century German *Bildung*. Overall, roughly 80 percent of the holdings are in German and 20 percent are in English. A reading of the catalog reveals that all of the traditional arts and sciences are covered. If the researcher wishes to explore German-language books in any of the arts and sciences, then the library is a good place to look. Many of the entries can be found in an excellent public or university library. However, it should be noted that when the catalogers were entering the books into the Research Library Information Network (RLIN), they found many that were unique to the collection. This is due to the unique “popular” character of the library. From its inception, the library was to be a *Volksbibliothek*. Its books were to be read by the members of the association, whether young or old, male or female. As a result, the holdings reflect more the interests of the common man than of the scholar. Although scholarly titles are well represented, titles in such non-scholarly genres as popular novels, cookbooks, travel literature, biographies, devotional literature, and children’s books abound. Thus, the library serves as a window to German-American culture during the nineteenth century.

All the books of this collection that date from 1917 or earlier have been cataloged into the Research Library Information Network (RLIN). The electronic catalog can be accessed at the following web site: http://www.germansociety.org/library_catalog.html. Because of the ease with which this collection can be searched through RLIN, only a sampling of the more notable section headings and holdings is presented here.

Samples of notable Main Collection section headings:

Cb—Ch Various Travel Literature Categories:
(Approx. 1,100–1,300 books)
[Note: All of the entries are in German.]

Dg—Pädagogik (Education):
(Approx. 90 books)

Fc—Phrenologie, Magnetismus, Mimik, Geisterschen, Übersinnliches (Paranormal phenomena): [Note: This also includes such subjects as Homeopathy and Somnambulism.]

Notable entries:

Dr. Med. Anna Fischer-Dückelmann, *Die Frau als Hausärztin*
Prof. Aug. Forel, *Die Sexuelle Frage*

*Das Neue Natur-Heilverfahren
Unterleibs-Krankheiten*

Ib—Vermischtes (Miscellaneous): Includes books on keeping house and approx. 40-50 cookbooks

Ja—Jugendschriften—deutsche (Children's books—German):
(Approx. 400-450 books)

During the course of their work on the German Library Project, catalogers often wrote reports on their findings in the society's newsletter *Der Neue Pennsylvanische Staatsbote*. The following is a sampling of those findings:

Translations

"In addition to its German fiction, the Joseph Horner Memorial Library's collection has approximately 2,400 volumes of German translations of non-German fiction. Roughly half of these translations—approximately 1,100 volumes—are nineteenth-century German translations . . . Most of these are translations of English Literature (approx. 65 percent), followed by French and by Russian literary works. Other languages of origin are: Classical Greek, Latin, Hungarian, Polish, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Sanskrit, Chinese, Arabic, Serbo/Croatian, and Yiddish. This small collection of German translations reflects recreational as well as educational reading interests of early members of the German Society, but also the multicultural environment of its German readers in nineteenth-century Philadelphia."¹

German dialects

"The dialect most represented in [the] library is low German or 'Plattdeutsch.' The complete works of Fritz Reuter in the dialect of Mecklenburg and several works by Klaus Groth (*Ut min Jungspardies* and *Quickborn*) are examples of literature in Plattdeutsch available in the [collection] . . . Other dialects represented in the library are: I.F. Castelli's *Gedichte in niederösterreichischer Mundart* (Austria); Franz von Kobell's *Gedichte in pfälzischer Mundart* (Palatinate) and *Gedichte in oberbayerischer Mundart* (Bavaria); Wilhelm Fricke's *Wat möt, dat möt: ene lustige Geschichte in niedersächsischer Mundart* (Lower Saxony); Johann Peter Hebel's *Allemannische Gedichte* (Baden); and G. F. Wagner's *Die Schulmeisters Wahl zu Blindheim* (Swabia). The best-

¹ Henna Heringer, article in *Der Neue Pennsylvanische Staatsbote*, January/February 1998.

represented dialect writer is Ludwig Thoma, known for his memorable portrayals of Bavarians, rustic and otherwise. [The] library has over twenty titles . . . including the popular *Lausbubengeschichten* and the famous *Münchener im Himmel*.²

[Note: There are also various anthologies.]

Travel literature

"The travel literature collection [which is extensive for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries] is organized by geographic region and country. Most of the books are narratives by individuals traveling to foreign lands, describing their experiences, their journey, and their observations, including political conditions, flora and fauna, and inhabitants. The collection covers every continent including Antarctica. Most of the books in the collection are narratives by German explorers, adventurers, and missionaries, while some are translations into German by travelers from other countries. Also included in this collection are travel guides to various cities and small towns in nineteenth-century Germany and Prussia."³

[Note: The travel literature housed in the collections is almost exclusively written in German. The English-language travel literature was sold by the society in the 1970s.]⁴

The classification system for the Main Collection:

The Main Library Collection is arranged in the original (and unique) classification system implemented by the society in 1879.⁵ During the cataloging process (conducted between 1994 and 1999) the decision was made to preserve this original system. Thus, the collection should be considered a preserved *Volksbibliothek*. In order to ease accessibility, it was also decided to assign every book that dated from 1917 or earlier its corresponding Library of Congress Classification Number. All such books contain an inserted piece of paper with the Library of Congress Classification Number. The catalogers chose the date of 1917 because of the great impact of the American entry into the First World War on the German-American community.⁶

² Bettina Hess, article in *Der Neue Pennsylvanische Staatsbote*, December 1996.

³ Bettina Hess, article in *Der Neue Pennsylvanische Staatsbote*, April 1995.

⁴ Frank Trommler, "The Library of the German Society of Pennsylvania."

⁵ *Ibid.* Trommler provides a brief discussion of how the classification system was developed.

⁶ *Ibid.*

- Ba Geschichte—Allgemeine (History—General)
Bb Geschichte—Alte Zeit (History—Ancient)
Bc Geschichte—Orient (History—Orient)
Bd Geschichte—Mittelalter (History—Middle Ages)
Be Geschichte—Neue Zeit (History—Modern)
Bf Geschichte—Deutschland (History—Germany)
Bfa Geschichte—Nationalsozialismus (History—National Socialism)
Bfb Geschichte—Weltkrieg II (History—World War II)
Bfc Geschichte—Bundesrepublik Deutschland (History—West
Germany, Republic of)
Bfd Geschichte—D.D.R. (History—East Germany—German
Democratic Republic)
Bg Geschichte—Europa (History—Europe)
Bh Geschichte—Aussereuropäische Länder (History—
Non-European)
Bi Literaturgeschichte—Allgemeine (Literary Criticism—General)
Bk Literaturgeschichte—einzelne Völker (Literary Criticism—
Individual Countries)
Bl Kulturgeschichte (Cultural History)
Bm Kulturgeschichte—Schriften über . . . (Cultural History—Works
about . . .)
Bn Altertümer (Antiquity)
Bo Biographien—Sammelwerke (Biography—Collections)
Bp Biographien (Biography)
Bpa Biographien—Amerikaner (Biography—Americans)
- Ca Erdbeschreibung—Geographie (Geography)
Cb Reisebeschreibungen—Erdumsegelungen (Travel)
Cc Atlanten (Atlases)
Cd Beschreibungen—Deutschland—Europa (Description—
Germany—Europe)
Ce Beschreibungen—Asien (Description—Asia)
Cf Beschreibungen—Afrika (Description—Africa)
Cg Beschreibungen—Amerika (Description—America)
Ch Beschreibungen—Australien—Polynesien (Description—
Australia—Polynesia)
- Da Volkswirtschaft—Staatliche Politik (Economics)
Db Recht (Law)
Dc Politik—Soziologie (Sociology)
De Kriminalfälle (Criminology)
Df Statistik—Kriegswissenschaft (Statistics—Military Science)
Dg Pädagogik (Education)

- Ea Theologie (Theology)
- Eb Erbauungsschriften (Ethics)
- Ec Kirchengeschichte (Church History)
- Ed Religion—Vermischtes (Religion—miscellaneous)
- Ee Bibeln (Bibles)
- Ef Nichtchristliche Religion—Mythologie (Non-Christian Religion—Mythology)
- Eg Philosophie (Philosophy)
- Eh Seelenlehre (Psychology)
- Ei Theosophie (Theosophy)

- Fa Naturwissenschaft—Allgemeine (Natural Sciences—General)
- Fb Naturwissenschaft—einzelne Fächer (Natural Sciences—individual subjects)
- Fc Phrenologie, Magnetismus, Mimik, Geisterschen, Übersinnliches (Paranormal phenomena)

- Ga Kunst—Allgemeines (Fine Arts—General)
- Gb Kunst—Geschichte—Vermischtes (Fine Arts—History—miscellaneous)
- Gc Kunst—Architektur—Baukunst (Fine Arts—Architecture)
- Gca Kunst—Möbel—Wohnhaus (Fine Arts—Furniture—Housing)
- Gd Malerei—Plastik (Painting—Sculpture)
- Ge Musik (Music)
- Gf Gewerbekunde (Industrial Arts)
- Gfa Hobbies
- Gg Technik—Chemie—Landbau (Technology—Chemistry—Agriculture)
- Gh Industrie—Weltausstellungen (Industry—International Exhibitions)

- Ha Sprachwissenschaft—Allgemeine vergleichende (Linguistics—General comparative)
- Hb Sprachwissenschaft (Linguistics)
- Hc Sprachwissenschaft—Vermischtes über Sprachen (Linguistics—miscellaneous languages)
- Hd Sprachwissenschaft—neuere germanische Sprachen (Linguistics—Germanic languages)
- He Sprachwissenschaft—romanische Sprachen (Linguistics—Romance Languages)
- Hf Sprachwissenschaft—slavische Sprachen (Linguistics—Slavic Languages)
- Hg Sprachwissenschaft—Hebräisch—Weltsprachen (Linguistics—Hebrew)

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- Hh Sprachwissenschaft—Wörterbücher (Linguistics—Dictionaries)
Hi Sprachwissenschaft—Klassische Sprachen (Linguistics—Classical Languages)
- Ia Vermischtes—Aufsätze, Reden, Beiträge zur Literaturgeschichte (Miscellaneous—essays, speeches)
Ib Vermischtes (Miscellaneous)
- Ja Jugendschriften—deutsch (Children’s books—German)
Jb Jugendschriften—englisch (Children’s books—English)
- Ka Romane—Dramen—Gedichte (deutsch) (Novels—Drama—Poetry (German))
Kb Romane—Dramen—Gedichte (englisch) (Novels—Drama—Poetry (English))
Kca Übersetzungen—verschiedene ins Deutsche (Translation, various into German)
Kcb Übersetzungen—aus dem Englischen (Translation from English)
Kcc Übersetzungen—aus dem Orient (Translation from Asian Languages)
Kcd Übersetzungen—aus dem Französischen (Translation from French)
Kce Übersetzungen—aus dem Russischen (Translation from Russian)
Kcf Übersetzungen—aus dem Schwedischen—Norwegischen—Dänischen (Translation from Scandinavian languages)
Kcg Übersetzungen—aus dem Ungarischen (Translation from Hungarian)
Kch Übersetzungen—aus dem Holländischen (Translation from Dutch)
Kci Übersetzungen—aus dem Spanischen—Portugiesischen (Translation from Spanish—Portuguese)
Kcj Übersetzungen—aus dem Italienischen (Translation from Italian)
Kck Übersetzungen—aus dem Jiddischen (Translation from Yiddish)
Kcl Übersetzungen—aus dem Rumänischen (Translation from Rumanian)
Kcm Übersetzungen—aus dem Polnischen (Translation from Polish)
Kda Übersetzungen—aus dem Klassischen (Translation from the Classical Languages)
Kdb Übersetzungen—aus dem Deutschen ins Englische (Translation from German into English)
Kdc Übersetzungen—aus dem Skandinavischen und Russischen ins Englische (Translation from Scandinavian Languages and Russian into English)

- Kdd Übersetzungen—aus dem Französischen ins Englische
(Translation from French into English)
- Kfr Französische Bücher (French books)
- Oa History
- Ob Literature
- Oc Sociology—miscellaneous
- Od Biography—collections
- Oe Biography—single
- P Travel—descriptions
- Q Sociology
- T Fine Arts, Useful Arts
- U Philology—Literature
- V Miscellaneous Works
- W Science
- X Travel—descriptions