



From Knights to Pioneers: One German Family in Westphalia and Missouri

Anita M. Mallinckrodt

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Anita M. Mallinckrodt traces the 750-year history of the Mallinckrodt family from its earliest documented beginnings in thirteenth-century Westphalia (in the Dortmund area) through immigration to Missouri in 1831 and beyond.

In part 1, Mallinckrodt tells the story of some of her family's leading personalities in order to explicate the history and society of medieval and early modern Germany: the life and times of knight Ludwig (c. 1241) and crusader Gerd (c. 1450–1504); the 1451 and 1492 adventures of the mercenary knight Hermann and his son Wilhelm; the 1594 feuding of the noble brothers Dietrich and Hermann, which led to a double murder; the liberal Dortmund publisher Arnold's struggles in the early 1800s to establish freedom of the press and to free Westphalian farmers from serfdom; and the wealthy, aristocratic Sister Pauline (b. 1817), founder of the Sisters of Charity and recently beatified for her efforts on behalf of the poor and blind children of her day.

In parts 2 and 3, Mallinckrodt focuses on the first of her forebears to immigrate to the New World—Julius and Emil in 1831, followed by Conrad, Hermann, August, Helene, Sophie, and Luise in 1838—and their immediate families and descendants in Missouri. These early pioneers cleared the forests, built schools and churches, supported German-language periodicals, and founded social and cultural organizations that would benefit later waves of immigrants. In the 1860s, they participated in their adopted country's Civil War and held strong views toward slavery and the Union. Mallinckrodt ends her family's history with the deaths of the Dortmund pioneers in the 1890s.

But *From Knights to Pioneers* is much more than a single family's history. The experiences Mallinckrodt relates reflect those of many German families who left their mark on centuries of history and of many midwestern families transplanted from the Old World. Especially interesting is the continuity between the old and new ways of life—entries on genealogical tables need not end with the comment "immigrated to the USA," for immigrants often wrote notable chapters of family history that deserve recognition in their old homelands. Similarly, knowledge of pre-immigration history is essential for those Americans whose traditions surely did not begin, as oral history often suggests, with the fact that "great-grandfather arrived in the Midwest from Germany in 1831." Thus the purpose of this book is to set a family's immigration chapter against its European background, without passing judgment on the cultural influence of outstanding individuals in the United States or of German immigration per se.

Drawing on her extensive research in both Europe and the United States, Mallinckrodt presents an exceptionally detailed picture of the social and political contexts of each of her subjects. The richness of her exposition of both the Old World background and the lives of the immigrants to the New World offers important insights into aspects of European and American history.

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