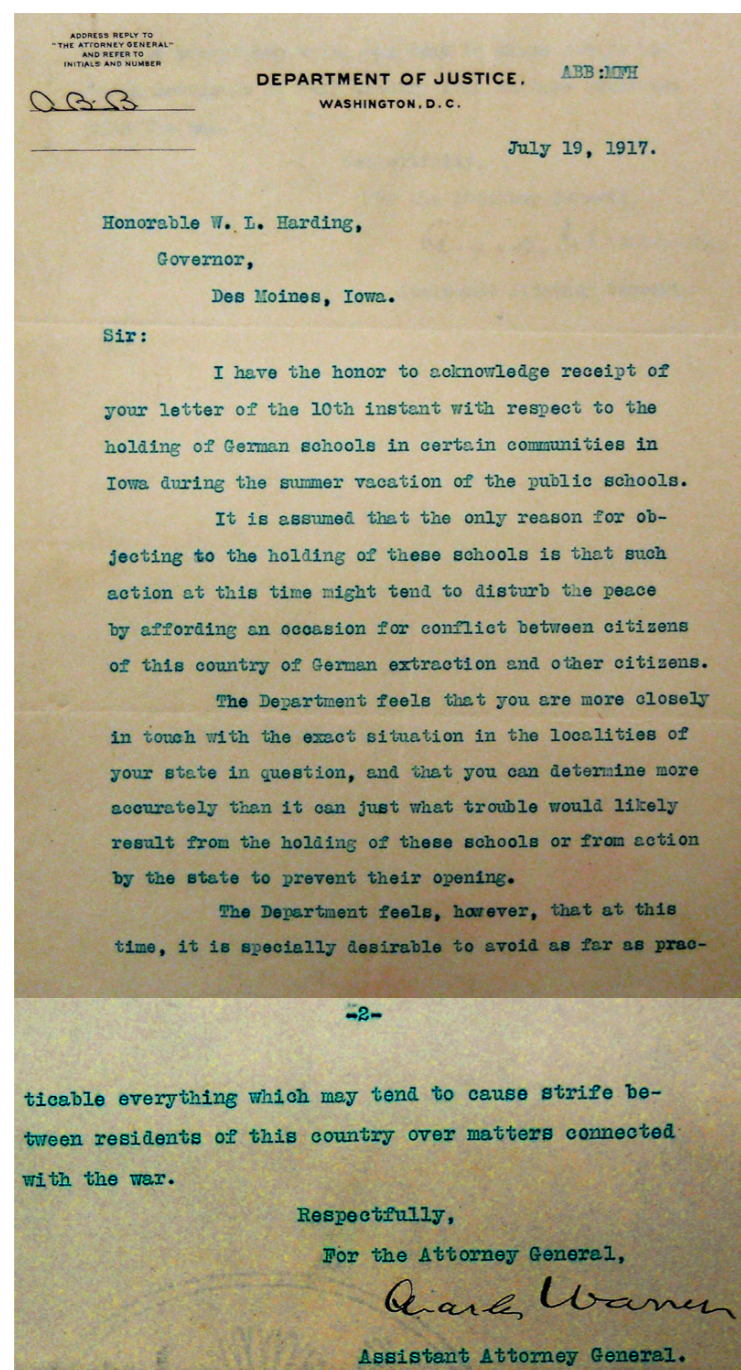


with avoidance of violence the primary goal. He put the decision back on the Governor, being closer to the situation, but "at this time, it is especially desirable to avoid as far as practicable everything which may tend to cause strife between residents of this country over matters connected with the war."

The implication is the situation should be pacified, not inflamed. This isn't what Mr. Spencer had in mind and he did not interpret the response that way.



August 22, it was reported in the Council Bluffs Nonpartiel, that Mr. Spencer led a group from the Audubon Council and a representative from the Department of Justice to confront Rev. Starck about rumors of his disloyalty. Starck declared his U.S. citizenship and denied all charges of disloyalty. He turned over a quantity of German Red Cross stamps that had been sent to him to sell. At that point he was placed under the following restrictions: No German language would be taught in the school No German language would be used in the church service or with church business

Rev. Starck was forbidden from leaving the county without permission of the Council.

Rev. Starck's church was the Trinity Lutheran Church near Gray; sometimes referred to as the "German Lutheran Church." It catered to a German immigrant community and included a school where the German language was taught.

The Lutheran Church was started in Germany and the German language has been a traditional part of the celebration of the faith. Some Lutheran Churches continue to offer services in the German language to this day.

Rev. Starck was a strict traditionalist in this respect and felt it was an important aspect of his ministry. As a United States citizen, he also was adamant about his right of self expression and freedom of speech. He was a stubborn man full of righteous indignation and not about to allow anyone to suppress his God given rights.

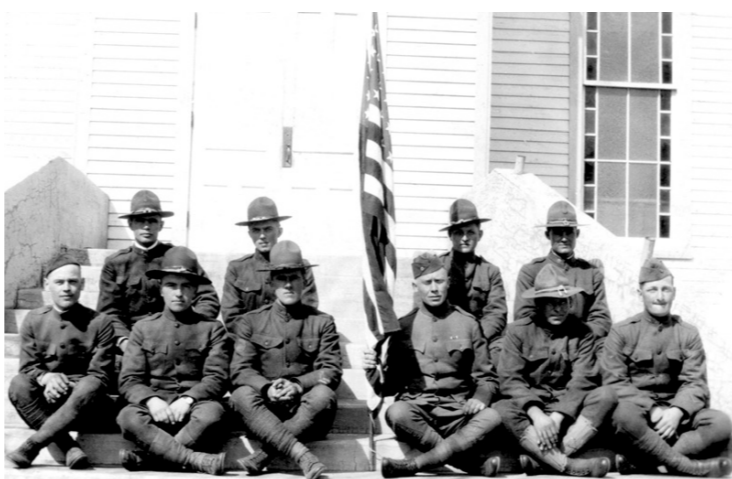


Trinity Church early 1940s - this is the twin sister of the original church building that was blown down by the 1913 tornado.

Within the next two weeks, Rev. Starck engaged legal counsel in Carroll, and filed for a hearing in the District Court in Audubon County to claim his rights as an American Citizen asking relief from the Council for Defense's dictates.

The general feeling in the area was with the Council. The pro-war/anti-German propaganda was gaining universal acceptance. Many area families were sending their sons off to war and needed to feel supportive of the war. By the autumn of 1917, things had become quite ugly and many of Starck's supporters were reluctant to speak up. R.C. Spencer was not only the head of the Audubon Council for Defense, he was also the publisher of the Audubon Advocate. His hatred for "the enemy" was exhibited boldly in most every issue. In fact, most newspapers throughout the area, the state, and probably the whole country were far from impartial in reporting and editorializing. It was proposed that no one could remain neutral in the matter and anyone who would not declare death to the "Hun" should be stripped of his possessions and banished from the United States.

Christmas 1917 was bleak. The week was cold; not really Iowa winter cold, but rather desolate. The lows were in the single digits and the highs not quite getting up to thaw. There was little if any snow on the ground, most surfaces blown bare. The depression also ran to the psyche. 65 young men had been sent off to war from Audubon County a few days before. Maybe the combination of depressing weather, the thought of those young men put in harm's way, and the post Holiday blues got things going. But whatever the reason, the citizens of Audubon were on the war path.



Back Row: ??, Edward Lehmborg, ??, ??; Front Row: ??, ??, Herman Dammann (probably), Bert Borkowski, ??, ??

Ironically, during times of "mob rule," facts that don't agree with the lawless crowd are overlooked and ignored. These ten men were members of the Trinity Congregation and served during WWI. It is not known how many other Trinity families sent their boys to fight but this photo disproves the accusations of disloyalty by those citizens who were of German ancestry.

The disloyal traitors must be brought to justice. R.C. Spencer informed Rev. Ernest J. W. Starck and Fred Tennigkeit that they must appear before the Committee for Defense on Wednesday, December 26 to answer charges. Mr. Tennigkeit, born in Germany, was a wealthy bachelor farmer who had recently bought 160 acres just east of Audubon.

The hearing took place at the Commercial Club, as it was not a judicial hearing with any official legal power. A large crowd had gathered, becoming more and more agitated as the time went on. Rev. Starck was accused of ignoring orders to refrain from speaking German and also of acts of disloyalty. He adamantly denied all accusations of disloyalty and was said to have defended himself eloquently and looking defiantly into the faces of the determined men before him, and still refused to do their bidding. He was sentenced to leave the country within three days.

Fred Tennigkeit was accused of "slackerism," failure to fully commit to the war effort. He was said to be quite wealthy and had only contributed \$1 to the YMCA and \$2 to the Red Cross. It was determined that Tennigkeit was to subscribe to \$1000 of Liberty Bonds or he would be taken to Council Bluffs by State Agent Yackey. He refused to cooperate in any manner. The meeting closed with him being escorted out in the custody of Agent Yackey.

As he exited the building, a man in the crowd hit him, knocking him to the ground. Others jumped in brutally taking out their frustrations on Mr. Tennigkeit. He made his way to the nearest bank where he would oblige the order and buy the Bond. The crowd grew outside of the bank, both in size and temperament. By this time, the Sheriff Frank Wilson had become involved. Tennigkeit had called for his protection. After an hour or more being trapped by the crowd, the Sheriff lost his patience. They left the building. Despite the Sheriff, or some said by the Sheriff's own hand, men grabbed Tennigkeit and threw him into the street. A rope was put around his neck and he was dragged across the pavement into the town square. Arriving at the square, the rope was loosened, thinking he was close to death. He was assumed dying for about an hour, finally partially reviving. A check for \$1000 made out to the Red Cross was found in his pocket. He was compelled to sign it. Only after confirming that the bank would honor the feeble signature, the crowd released him. Sheriff Wilson took him to his home where he secured a fresh team of horses and left the area.

During all this excitement, Rev. Starck and his family slipped out of town, back to their home about eleven miles north of town.



Some of the group of vigilantes were not satisfied with having let Tennigkeit off so easy and turned their rage back to Starck. About forty men jumped in cars and wagons and headed north to the parsonage to find Rev. Starck. They knew he had some strong supporters and fearing resistance, went fully armed. By this time it was well after dark and the approach of this parade of headlights and torches was obvious across the bare winter prairie. Rev. Starck retreated into hiding in the cellar. The mob surrounded the house and demanded the Starcks give up their father and husband. "He's not here," came the answer. Not satisfied, men broke into the house to search. Realizing he would be found, Rev. Starck slipped out a window and ran into the field behind the house. He was soon spotted running across the corn stubble. Three shotgun blasts rang out. He surrendered. A young man ran out to grab him, assuring his return (This man was later reported to have been a possible draft dodger, having been exempted for being lame). The mob descended upon Starck still trying to verbally defend himself, denying disloyalty. They would hear nothing of it. A noose was put around his neck. One of the Starck boys rose to defend his father only to be beaten mercilessly. It might have been Ernest G. a twenty year old student at the Lutheran Teachers College. It might have been Adolph, a year younger, or it might have been seventeen year old Walter. It could have even been Arthur, fifteen. The whole family was out in the mess by this time. The sight of her husband being taken to a tree drove Elizabeth to run after him, screaming. She fell, fainting in the road. She was known to be sickly and some in the crowd felt some sympathy for the situation. This caused a pause in the proceedings. Reverend Van Dran took the opportunity to address the crowd. He made no apologies for Starck's behavior. He had been one of his condemners earlier, but he did argue for moderation. This degree of violence was over the line. He offered to guarantee that the Starcks be removed from the county immediately. The crowd seems to have been satisfied with this option and allowed Rev. Starck to attend to his wife. The family left in the dead of the night, forced to leave most of their worldly possessions behind.

It is not known where the family went that night, but less than 60 hours later, Reverend Starck performed the marriage ceremony of his eldest son, Ernest G. Starck and Marie Meyer at the Zion Lutheran Church in nearby Manning. Apparently, Rev. Starck and Pastor Johann Ansgore were good friends. Ansgore, pastor of Zion Lutheran, was a fairly tough person and a fire and brimstone pastor. He would not have allowed Starck to perform this ceremony if they were not very close friends. The Starcks had many friends in Manning and probably fled there for temporary shelter.

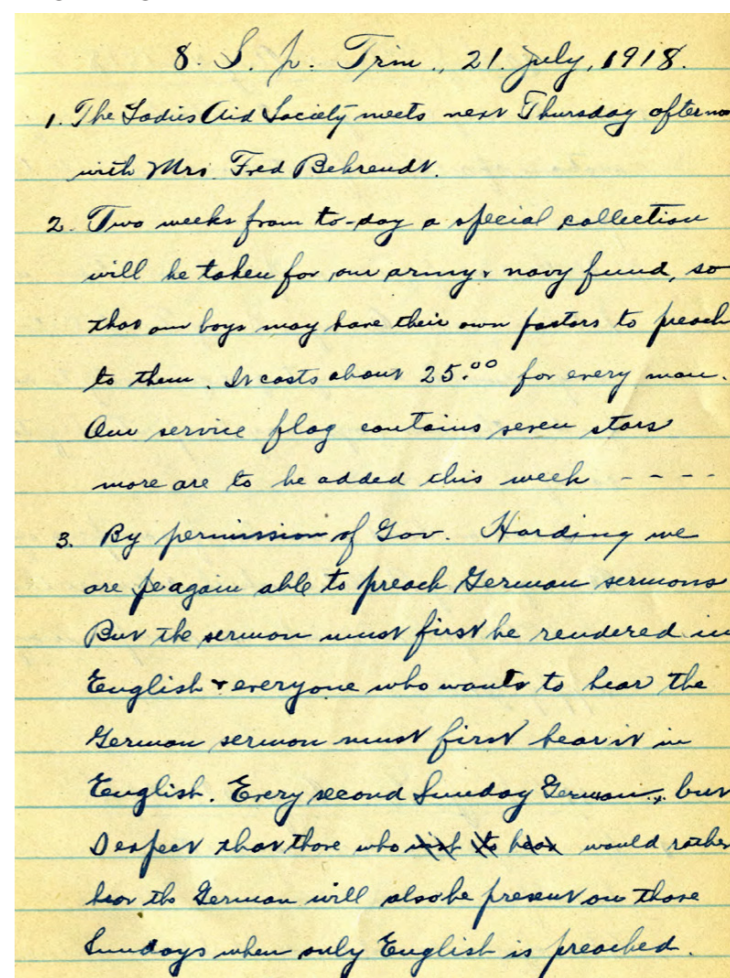
The organizers of the mob from Audubon caught wind of this and a group soon rode to Manning to finish what they started a few nights before. They surrounded the house where Starck was supposed to have been harbored. The group was confronted by the town's mayor and marshal who challenged their authority. The mob left; having been told that Rev. Starck had left earlier on the Great Northern Train. It is interesting to

note that Manning was primarily a German community, while Audubon was primarily Danish. A cultural rivalry existed that went back to the German-Danish war that ended in 1864 with Denmark seceding Schleswig, Holstein, and Niedersachsen at the Treaty of Vienna.



Gertrude (Heinke) and Johann Ansgore

Services were spoken in German at the Zion Lutheran Church in Manning, just like at Trinity prior to WWI. Pastor Ansgore recorded on July 21, 1918, that they were given official permission by Gov. Harding to again preach in German as long as English was also offered.



Here is the official recording about receiving permission. July 21, 1918: 3. By permission of Governor Harding we are again able to preach German sermons. But the sermon must first be rendered in English and everyone who wants to hear the German sermon must first hear it in English. Every second Sunday German, but depends that those who would rather hear the German will also be present on those Sundays when only English is preached.

This followed the Babel Proclamation by Harding: The anti-German sentiment during World War I reached a point where people speaking German on the street were attacked and rebuked. Iowa Governor William L. Harding legitimized such expressions of prejudice and war-time fanaticism when he issued "The Babel Proclamation" on May 23, 1918. Only English was legal in public or private schools, in public conversations, on trains, over the telephone, at all meetings, and in all religious services.

Antagonism toward Germans and their language escalated nationwide, but Harding became the only governor in the United States to outlaw the public use of all foreign languages. Harding understood the connection between communication and assimilation. He was convinced that destroying the vital bond of language within ethnic communities would force assimilation of minorities into the dominant culture and heighten a sense of patriotism in a time of war. Historically, Governor Harding's Babel Proclamation, which was repealed on December 4, 1918, demonstrates the extreme measures citizens and governments are willing to employ to achieve peace and tranquility at the expense of liberty during a time of national crisis.

Patriotism proven by actions not words

While US citizens of non-German ancestry were faced with the fears and horrors of two World Wars, Manning citizens of German ancestry faced an even higher degree of stark reality... they would be going to Europe to fight their relatives.

Many immigrants left Germany and Europe because of the continual wars on that continent. Most of the immigrants from Germany who came to Manning also did not want to serve under Kings who forced the citizens into military conscription.

There is still one person living in Manning (Gerhardt Theodore Voge at 95) who had one uncle, Gerhardt Lamp, serve for the US and one uncle, Theodore Voge, who served for Germany during WWI.

Despite the deep connections Manning citizens had to Germany during WWI, Manning had a higher rate of enlistment with its German population than other communities of non-German ancestry.

The German descendants in Manning proved their loyalty to the US in many other ways. Several businesses with German names were changed to English names.

Der Manning Herold (German print newspaper) was combined with the Manning Monitor by the Peter Rix family and all German print was discontinued.

Der Manning Liederkrantz disbanded during WWI & WWII. Kinderfest was not held during WWI & WWII - mostly because of limited resources and so many individuals volunteering for military service and everyone working for the war effort.

The Manning community led the nation in the Victory Clothing Drive with 17 items of clothing donated per person vs. the next highest town in the US with 11.