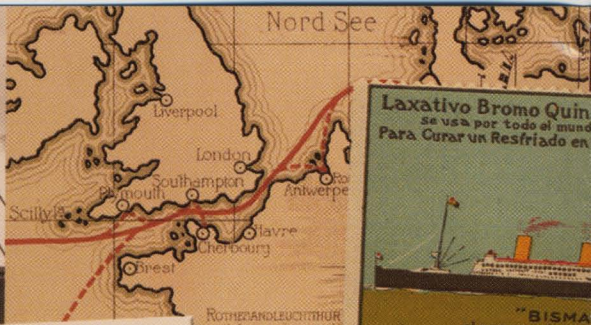
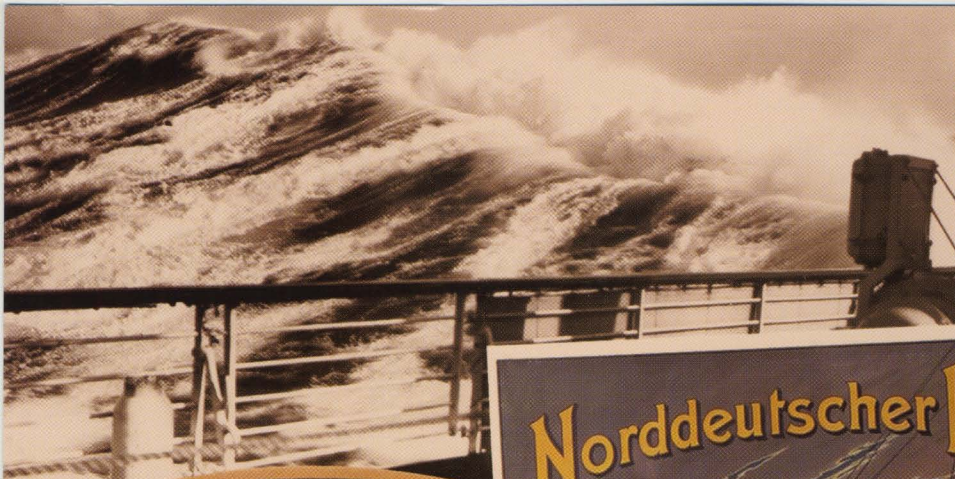


DESTINATION HOBOKEN:



THE GREAT OCEAN LINERS OF
HAMBURG-AMERICAN & NORTH GERMAN LLOYD



Laxativo Bromo Quin
se usa por todo el mundo
Para Curar un Resfriado en

"BISMARCK"
el vapor más grande
60.000 toneladas, 281 metros

NORDDEUTSCHER LLOYD

Name _____

Dampfer
Steamer _____

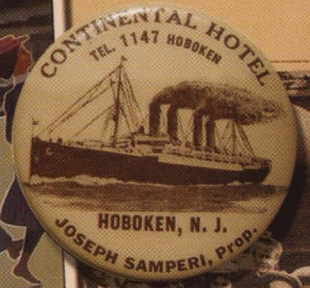
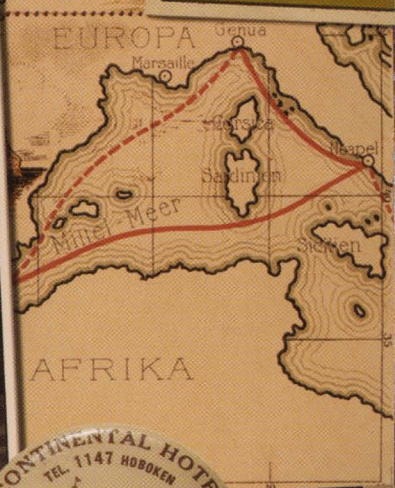
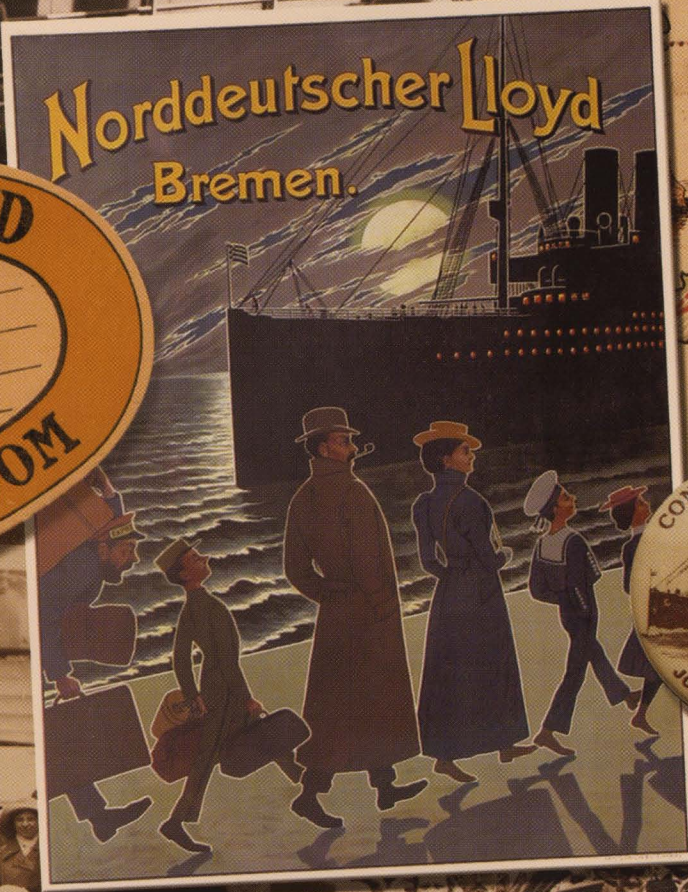
Abfahrtsdatum
Sailing date _____

Abfahrtshafen
Port of Departure _____

Bestimmungshafen
Port of Destination _____

Zimmer No.
Room No. _____

KABINEN - STATEROOM



stdampfers „Pennsylvania“.



HOBOKEN

NORDDEUTSCHER LLOYD

PASSENGER'S NAME _____

TO SAIL _____

STATEROOM No _____ BERTH _____

FOR STATE ROOM



DESTINATION HOBOKEN



JUNE 30, 1902

Ken Schmitt

Cover: Hamburg-Amerika Linie poster, ca. 1890s, courtesy Ken Schultz; Norddeutscher Lloyd poster, ca. 1900s, courtesy Gil Wechsler.

Back cover: Postcards of flags of NGL and HAPAG, ca. 1900s, courtesy of Ken Schultz.

Inside front cover, center: Norddeutscher Lloyd poster, ca. 1890s, courtesy of the Miottel Collection of San Francisco. Surrounded by photo postcards, baggage tags, and souvenir stamps from the ocean liner journey, courtesy of Ken Schultz. Button advertising a hotel in Hoboken from the collection of the Hoboken Historical Museum.

Inside back cover: images from the German shipping companies' Hoboken piers, along with souvenir liner stamps and baggage tag, courtesy of Ken Schultz.

Frontispiece: Postcard of passengers on the Barbarossa, ca. 1898, courtesy of Ken Schultz.

Below: Souvenir stamp box for the maiden voyage of the Imperator from the Hamburg-American Line, ca. 1913, courtesy of Ken Schultz.

Right: Enameled spinner pin from the Prinzess Irene, ca. 1900 and souvenir pin from the Hamburg-American Line, ca. 1915. Both courtesy of Ken Schultz.



DESTINATION HOBOKEN:

THE GREAT OCEAN LINERS OF
HAMBURG-AMERICAN & NORTH GERMAN LLOYD



An exhibition at the Hoboken Historical Museum

June 30, 2002 – October 1, 2002

Ken Schultz, Guest Curator

Acknowledgements

Destination Hoboken

Guest Curator, Ken Schultz

Hoboken Historical Museum Director,
Robert Foster

Exhibit essays by
Norman Brouwer, Holly Metz,
and Ken Schultz

Exhibit and catalog design,
McKevin Shaughnessy

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The guest curator and staff of the Hoboken Historical Museum also thank the scholars and collectors who provided vital assistance, texts, or illustrated talks to complement *Destination Hoboken*: Norman Brouwer, Dr. Maria Diedrich, Charles Dragonette, Edward Fleckenstein, John Maxtone-Graham, William H. Miller, and J.P. Spang. Our gratitude goes to the Hoboken Public Library, the Outagamie Historical Society, HAPAG-Lloyd AG, and the Hoboken Fire Department Museum for permission to use images from their collections for this important exhibit.

Hoboken Historical Museum

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www.hobokenmuseum.org

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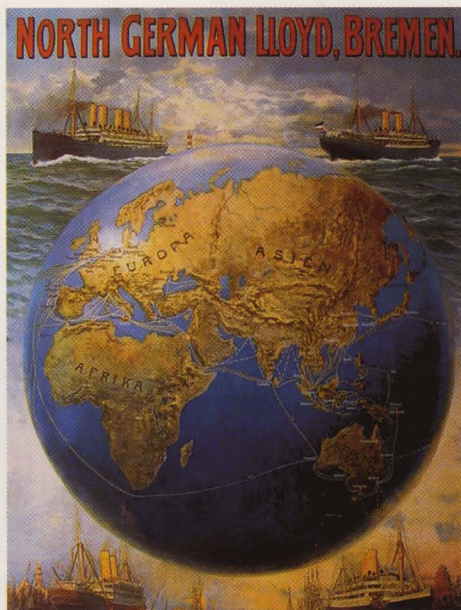


INTRODUCTION

Destination Hoboken: The Great Ocean Liners of Hamburg-American & North German Lloyd explores the history of two trans-Atlantic shipping companies that owned docks in Hoboken, New Jersey, from the mid-nineteenth century until the United States entered the First World War.

Hamburg-American (Hamburg Amerikanische Packetfahrt Actien Gesellschaft, or HAPAG, founded in 1847) and North German Lloyd (Norddeutscher Lloyd, or NGL, founded in 1858) played an important role not only in the history of Hoboken – they were established here by 1863 – but in U.S. immigration history. For as John Malcolm Brinnin noted in his 1971 social history of the North Atlantic, *The Sway of the Grand Saloon*, the two companies provided “passenger service, unbroken through the century, to endless streams of America-bound emigrants from Mittel-Europe and its more easterly neighbors.”

Destination Hoboken considers social, political, and technological changes in Europe and the United States during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that contributed to the growth of these two German ocean liner companies. What kind of life did emigrants leave? What was the crossing like and what were its dangers? What did they find on arriving in Hoboken? How did North German Lloyd, and later, Hamburg-American Line engineers accelerate the trans-Atlantic ship crossing? How



did the companies' combination of sumptuous maritime interiors (for first class travelers) and rate wars (for third class) affect immigration to the U.S.? How did steerage passengers “subsidize” the luxurious passage of first- and second-class travelers?

The exhibit also reflects upon the effect immigrants had on Hoboken, and how new arrivals were transformed by their new world. And when their adopted homeland entered into the First World War, our city's German-born residents found their relationship to native-born Americans – and to Hoboken – completely changed. Along with artifacts from the Hoboken Historical Museum, *Destination Hoboken: The Great Ocean Liners of Hamburg-American & North German Lloyd* features artifacts borrowed from private collections across the country, and from the collection of ocean liner expert and fourth generation Hobokenite Ken Schultz, a generous friend to the Museum and guest curator of this exhibit. We are indebted to these private collectors, and to Ken, for sharing their passion and knowledge, along with rare objects from their collections.

Robert Foster

Director, Hoboken Historical Museum

Above right: Hemisphere poster, ca. 1900, courtesy Gil Weschler.

Left: Hamburg-American tiara with the company initials, ca.1890, courtesy Miottel Collection of San Francisco.



TRAVELING TO "LITTLE BREMEN"

From the 1840s until the U.S. entered World War I, Hoboken's cultural, social, and physical landscape was profoundly shaped by its large German immigrant population. (Early travelers were actually from various states – such as Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, Wurtemberg – as Germany did not yet exist as a nation.) Following the failed revolution in Germany in 1848, many of its intellectuals emigrated to the United States, including Otilie Assing, who began her career as an American-based correspondent for the influential *Morgenblatt fur gebildete Leser* (Morning Paper for Educated Readers) when she sailed on the steamship *Franklin* on July 11, 1851. According to Dr. Maria Diedrich's *Love Across Color Lines: Otilie Assing & Frederick Douglass*, Assing provided *Morgenblatt* readers with a vivid account of "the conditions under which thousands of her countrywomen and –men crossed the Atlantic each year." Although the *Franklin* was owned by the New York and Havre Steam Navigation Company, Assing's article offers a clear-eyed view of the trans-Atlantic crossing that passengers on HAPAG ships would have experienced as well. Assing, who was half Jewish, provides a firsthand account of "the confined luxury of the first-class salon and the hell of the lower deck" and also describes the political strictures and anti-Semitism that many Germans

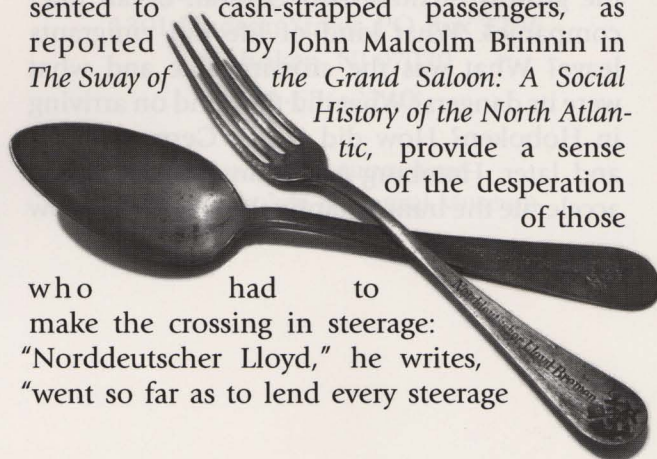
were escaping. She noted their hopes for a better and freer life in America, as well as their tendency to hold fast to their German culture in the New World.

After receiving a medical examination and "escaping the typical emigrant's victimization at the hands of the notorious New York hotel runner system," Otilie Assing would, at first, stay at a boardinghouse. But soon she would join a community of German intellectuals in Hoboken and make it her home for 23 years. She would later become the intimate friend of abolitionist Frederick Douglass, who visited her often in Hoboken.

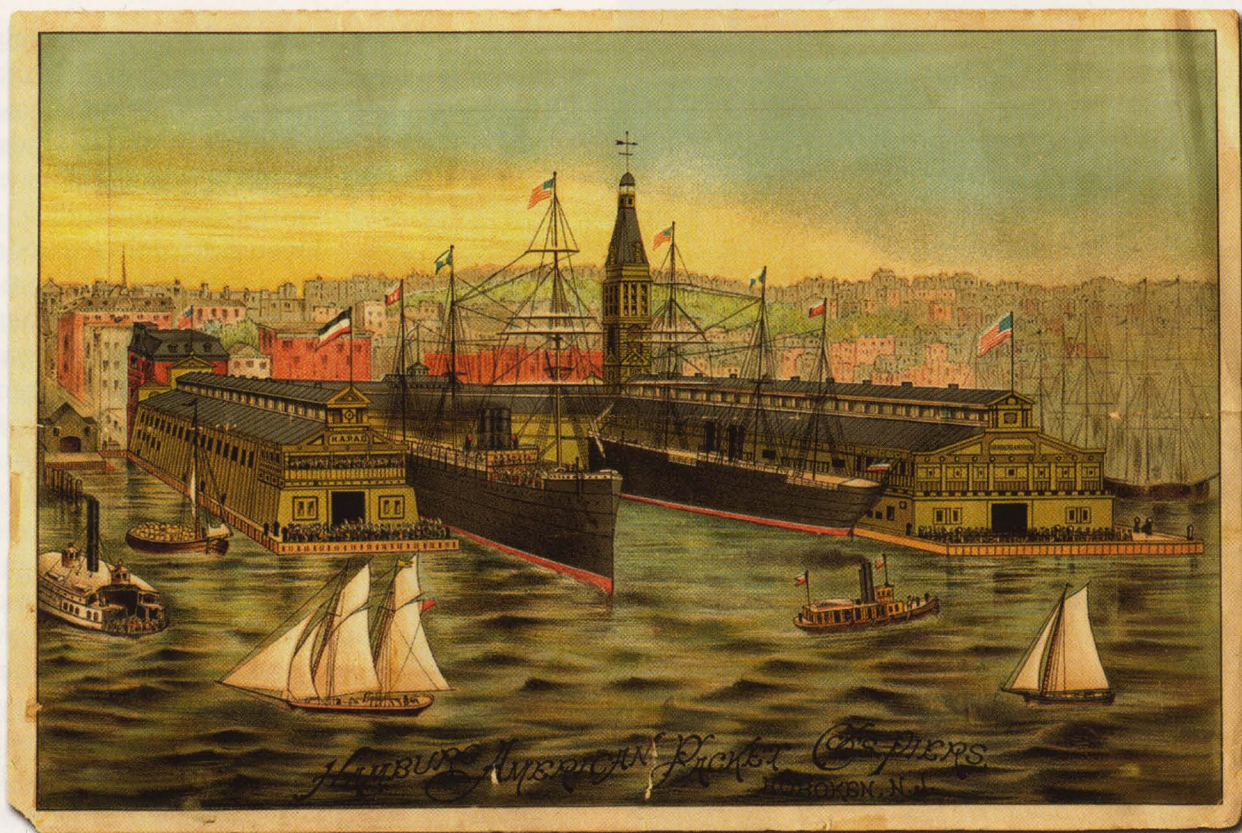
By the mid-1850s, more than 1,500 of Hoboken's 7,000 inhabitants were German, encouraged to make the crossing, in part, because of the advances in technology that made a trans-Atlantic voyage twelve days or fewer, rather than the two-to-four month journey on "all sail" ships.

Speed was the primary focus during the early years of both North German Lloyd and Hamburg-American, and travelers in the upper tiers of their steamships' first or second class might find modest, hotel-style interiors – though all were mindful of the lowest portions of the ship, which was alternately used for passengers to America, then livestock to Europe.

The two German firms competed with one another for emigrants in all corners of Europe, with agents offering to transport travelers by rail to their ports. The lures presented to cash-strapped passengers, as reported by John Malcolm Brinnin in *The Sway of the Grand Saloon: A Social History of the North Atlantic*, provide a sense of the desperation of those



who had to make the crossing in steerage: "Norddeutscher Lloyd," he writes, "went so far as to lend every steerage



passenger an enameled dinner service, a spoon and a fork, and to present him or her with a blanket which might be taken away at the end of the voyage."

Artifacts displayed in *Destination Hoboken* reveal the tangible difference between first- and second-class passage and steerage (later termed "third class"). Decorative menus provided to upper deck passengers were handwritten and gold-leafed; finely dressed first-class passengers

might commission photographs or receive an engraved invitation to inspect a vessel docked in Hoboken. Fewer artifacts of life in steerage are on display, as the offerings were limited to begin with. In the early years, passengers slept alongside the ship's steering controls and engines, in numbered, metal berths topped by burlap mattresses stuffed with hay or seaweed.

The spectacular rise in European immigration

Above left: Photograph of emigrants on board a transatlantic liner, ca.1890s, courtesy of Ken Schultz.

Left: Utensils for steerage passengers from NGL and HAPAG lines, ca.1890s, courtesy of Ken Schultz.

Above right: HAPAG passenger list showing Hoboken piers, 1888, courtesy of Ken Schultz.

Right: NGL souvenir board game, ca. 1890s, courtesy of Miottel Collection of San Francisco.

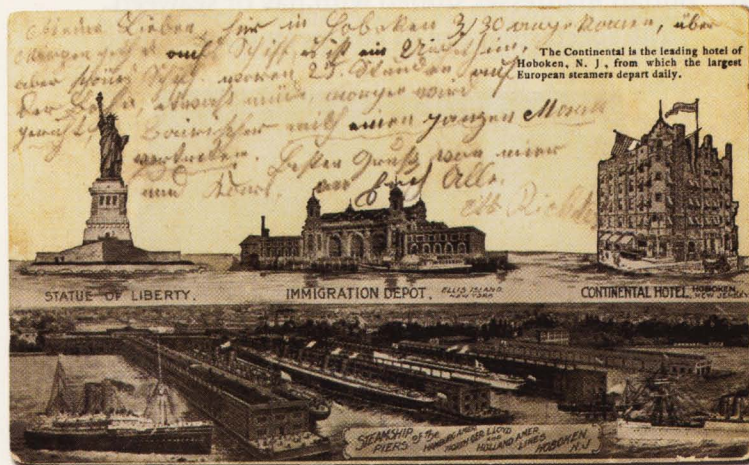


from the 1870s on, boosted the fortunes of both NGL and HAPAG. According to estimates provided by the American Family Immigration History Center at Ellis Island, larger ships could hold from 1,500 to 2,000 passengers in steerage. With an average steerage ticket at \$30, HAPAG and NGL could net a profit of \$45,000 to \$60,000 for a single one-way voyage. And in just one decade, HAPAG alone had carried half a million passengers across the Atlantic. Though "companies might publicize the splendor of their swimming pools and restaurants," notes historian John Maxtone-Graham in *The Only Way to Cross*, "their most profitable clients never used them." By the last decade before the First World War, when emigration reached its peak, the horrors of steerage passage had been revealed in many newspaper accounts, and conditions for the poorest passengers had improved, but only by degree. HAPAG's director, Albert Ballin, who had contributed much to the style of first and second-class travel, began to improve the lot of HAPAG's most profitable passengers, realizing that satisfied steerage pas-

sengers would recommend the carrier to relatives and landsmen. Larger vessels had "third class" dining rooms and stewards, and segregated the sexes, though most travelers still provided their own bedding and eating utensils.

Inequities continued upon arrival at Hoboken's "immigrant slip." By 1892, when the Ellis Island facility was built, steerage passengers would debark at a pier in Hoboken for transfer to a ferryboat to the Island. A landing card, with the name of the passenger's ship, manifest number (on which information was detailed about the traveler), and passenger number, was pinned on the traveler's lapel and a medical inspection card was handed to him or her. If they passed medical exams and responded appropriately to inquiries about their manifest, they would be cleared for residency, and some would return to Hoboken via barge. First and second-class passengers, by contrast, were processed on board ship at the Hoboken pier; but they also faced perils in the form of unscrupulous railroad ticket agents and baggage handlers.

Once they chose Hoboken as their new home, German residents established their own newspapers and a German-American school, the Hoboken Academy. As early as 1880, the influx of German immigrants to Hoboken was so great, the mile-square city was known as "Little Bremen." German immigrants established a commercial district on River Street, close to the docks and ocean liners owned by NGL and HAPAG and including hotels for new arrivals. In



addition to piers lined with the German ocean liners, Hoboken boasted German beer gardens, halls, and public houses; German-language theaters; and numerous athletic clubs devoted to boating, rowing, and marksmanship. Prestigious societies set up their own headquarters, including the Hudson Street Deutscher Club, which historian John Heany described as "all prominent citizens of German origins." Directories of this period list three-dozen German societies, including several established solely for German women.

Then came the conflict in Europe. As early as 1914, "the sorrow of war made itself felt" in Hudson County's German community, according to a *Jersey Journal* report. Although historian Howard B. Furer notes in his Autumn 1974 *New Jersey History* essay, "Heaven, Hell Or Hoboken" that Hoboken's marine and rail terminals, docks, and piers were booming because of the war needs of European allied forces, fierce anti-German sentiment began to erupt in the city. And when the U.S. declared war against Germany, ostracism of German-born residents intensified. Federal agents and armed soldiers seized the Hoboken docks and ocean liners and designated River Street as a military zone. German workers were fired; hundreds were arrested, including the pastor of St. Matthew's German Lutheran Church who, the *Hudson Observer* reported, was "actively in sympathy to the German cause from the day of the outbreak of the war." Many were deported. Armed with a federal law that prevented enemy aliens from living within a half-mile of a military zone, government officials evicted hundreds of German families and closed their shops. They were confined to another section of the city, patrolled by soldiers. Violation of their civil liberties was deemed necessary by the declaration of war.

Hoboken's German-born residents — many with children born in this country — found themselves in a city stripped of the trappings of German culture and community that had once



invigorated it — even to the extent, as reported in the *Hudson Observer* in April 1917, of experiencing the removal of German dishes from local menus. Restaurants, theaters, and clubs were closed, never to reopen; and those that remained obscured their German orientation. The city that had warmly hosted the German-owned docks of these two great companies became the point of embarkation and debarkation for three million doughboys during the years of the U.S. involvement in the Great War.

By war's end, the area's German population had diminished considerably. Hudson County, according to the 1910 Census, had been home to over 42,000 German-born residents. By 1920, 12,000 fewer were counted.

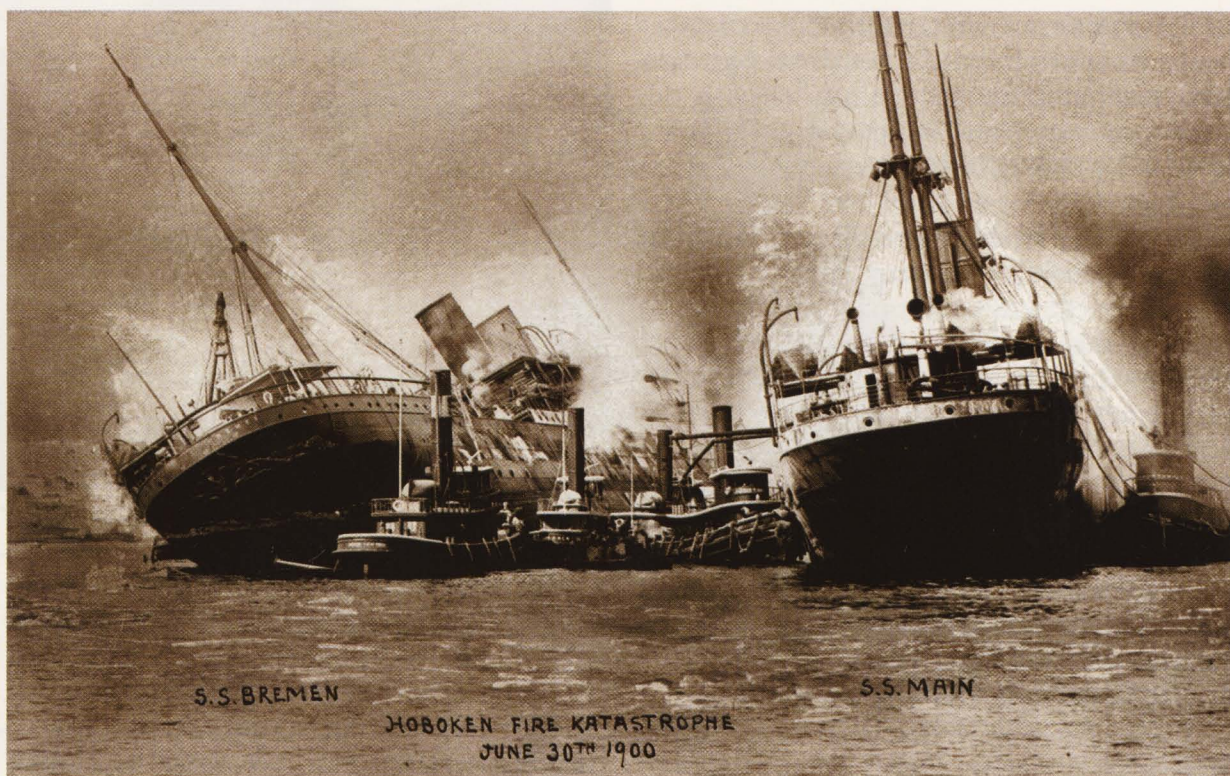
Holly Metz

Hoboken Historical Museum

Above far left: Schuetzen pin, ca. 1900. From the Kirchgessner Collection of the Hoboken Historical Museum.

Far left: Souvenir postcard showing Ellis Island, the Statue of Liberty, and Hoboken's piers and hotels as destinations, ca. 1900, courtesy of Robert Foster.

Above: Schuetzen (marksmen) Corps procession up Washington Street, Hoboken, New Jersey, June 1904, to the Fourth National Shooting Festival, held at Union Hill, Schuetzen Park. From the collection of George and Dolores Kirchgessner.

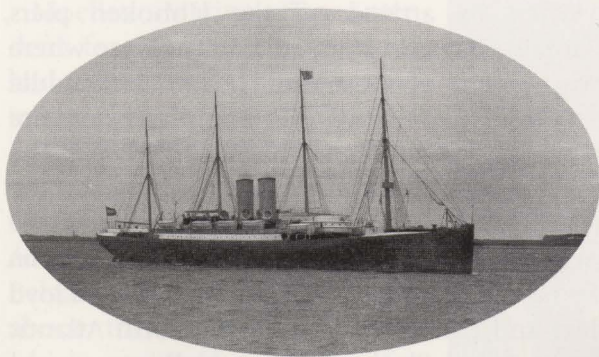


The *Helen McAllister*,
ex-Admiral Dewey, and the
GREAT HOBOKEN PIER FIRE
OF 1900

On June 30, 1900, several bales of cotton,
waiting to be loaded on North German Lloyd's
Pier 2 in Hoboken, somehow ignited.

Soon the fire had spread to ships, including
the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*, the crew of which
finally backed into the harbor and extinguished
the fire. Crewmen on three other burning ves-
sels — the *Bremen*, *Saale*, and *Main* — would
be trapped within them. Most burned to death
or were drowned by the rising tide. Only fifteen
passengers survived, cut from the *Main's* bun-
kers twelve hours after she ran aground, with
the *Bremen*, in Weehawken. The worst disaster
in the history of New York Harbor involving
ocean shipping took place on the waterfront





of Hoboken, New Jersey, in the summer of 1900. At the time there were seven covered piers between the ferry terminal in south Hoboken and Stevens Point. The two southernmost were occupied by the Hamburg-American Line, and the two northernmost by the Scandinavian-American Line. The three remaining piers were used by the North German Lloyd Steamship Company, also known as "The Bremen Line."

On June 30, 1900 there were four passenger ships lying at the North German Lloyd piers. The *Main* was on the north side of the north pier and the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse* was on its south side. The *Bremen* was across the slip from the *Kaiser Wilhelm*, on the north side of the middle pier, and the *Saale* was on the south side. There was no ship on the southernmost pier. In addition to the liners, the slips were filled with barges and lighters carrying cargo, or coal to fuel the ships. More cargo was stacked in the pier sheds. There were no passengers on the ships, but most crewmembers were on duty, longshoremen were at work on the piers, and there were people visiting the ships.

June 30th was a pleasant, warm summer day with few clouds in the sky, but there was a fairly brisk wind blowing from the southwest. Shortly before 4 o'clock in the afternoon, fire was discovered in cotton stored on the pier near the *Saale*. Quickly out of control, it spread throughout the pier, to the adjacent piers, and to the ships. By the time it had run its course, the



three North German Lloyd piers and one Scandinavian Line pier were in ruins; the liners *Saale*, *Bremen*, and *Main* were almost totally burned out, and somewhere between 300 and 400 people had died.

In 1900, the leading supplier of coal to fuel ocean steamships in the Port of New York was the Berwind-White Coal Mining Company. Early on June 30th the two tugboats the company was employing in the Harbor, the *Admiral Dewey* and the *Edward J. Berwind*, had been delivering loaded barges to the North German Lloyd ships. They had returned to the coal loading pier in Jersey City leased by the company



Top left: The burning of the *Bremen* and the *Main*, courtesy of the Hoboken Public Library.

Left: Poster of the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*, ca. 1900, courtesy of Douglas F. Bushnell; recovering bodies from the fire and the Washington Street funeral procession, both courtesy of the Hoboken Public Library.

Above: The *Saale*, ca. 1887, courtesy of Ken Schultz.

Above right: *Saale* gravure interior, ca. 1900, courtesy of Ken Schultz.



from the Pennsylvania Railroad, but around 4 p.m. got underway again, probably intending to retrieve empty barges.

As the lead tug, *Admiral Dewey*, came out from behind the south side of the pier at 6th Street in Jersey City, Captain George Belgarde saw billowing clouds of smoke to the north coming from the Hoboken piers, and even large flames above the roofs of the pier sheds. He headed in the direction of the fire, steaming at full speed.

Captain Belgarde had been commanding tugboats for over eight years, and had been with the *Admiral Dewey* since she was placed in commission that February. He had six other people on board: engineer Robert Petrie, engine room fireman/oiler Oscar Carlson, deckhand Lawrence Hanoway, deckhand Joseph Grimes, cook John Swayne, and purser George Johnson. The *Admiral Dewey* was one of the most admired tugs in the Port of New York. Powered by a 900 horsepower compound engine, she was a strong candidate for the fastest boat in the Harbor and was considered one of the handsomest in appearance.

When he arrived off the Hoboken piers, Captain Belgarde stopped briefly to see where he could be of most use. He saw the middle North German Lloyd pier completely on fire and half of the pier to the north as well. The ships at the piers were largely hidden by the smoke. The most visible stern was that of the largest ship, the 627-foot-long *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*, flagship of the North German Lloyd fleet and current holder of the North Atlantic speed record. She had been partially unmoored, and her stern was swinging across the slip toward the *Bremen*, which was now well on fire. Belgarde moved the *Admiral Dewey* closer to the *Kaiser Wilhelm*, and an officer on her stern shouted: "For God's sake get us out of here!"

Some lower-powered tugs had been attempting to move the liner without success. The *Sarah Eaton* had a line from the ship and the *L. Pulver* had one to the *Eaton*. Belgarde moved the *Admiral Dewey* under the overhanging counter of the *Kaiser Wilhelm*. He could see a half-dozen men in the water there, hanging onto a log used to warn tugs away from the ship's propellers. The men were hauled on board by the tug's crew, and an eight-inch hawser, lowered from the ship, was placed over the tug's towing bitts. The *Admiral Dewey* was brought around to head out into the River.

For a moment, the *Kaiser Wilhelm* resisted, then she began moving out of the slip. Soon after she began moving, another hawser was sent over to the *Edward J. Berwind*. The liner, with her own engines unable to assist, was towed out into the center of the Hudson, where her crew managed to bring her to anchor. While she was alongside the pier, some small fires had started along her superstructure and some of her wooden lifeboats were burning. The *Admiral Dewey* cast off her towline and went around to the starboard side of the ship, where she used her three hoses to help extinguish these fires. At one point, a burning barge drifted toward the *Kaiser Wilhelm*, and Captain Belgarde temporarily interrupted his firefighting to push it away with the ship.

Moeller, Marine Superintendent for North German Lloyd, had established a mobile command post on the tug *Col. E.A. Stevens*. Once things were under control at the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*, he came alongside the *Admiral Dewey* and asked Captain Belgarde to see what he could do about the *Bremen*. That ship, which appeared to be on fire from bow to stern, had drifted away from Hoboken and was driven by the wind over to the Manhattan side of the River. She eventually came up against the end of Pier 31, occupied by the New York Central Railroad, where she set fire to part of the pier shed and threatened other piers in the vicinity. The *Admiral Dewey* was involved in getting the *Bremen* away from the Manhattan piers and eventually on to the flats off Weehawken, New Jersey, where she was grounded.

Though there was no one on the decks of the *Bremen* when she drifted away from Hoboken, there were still nine men in the engine and boiler rooms, which had not been reached by the fire. As she drifted across the River, the fireboat *The New Yorker*, based at the Battery, arrived and attempted to fight the blaze. Johann Tinken, chief engineer of the *Bremen*, boarded the fireboat, probably through a side port, to help direct the firefighting efforts. When the fireboat found it was having little effect on the fire, it left to see where it could be of better use, after first landing Tinken in Manhattan near the Barclay Street Ferry.

Tinken took the ferry back to Hoboken and reported to Superintendent Moeller. He asked Moeller if he had a tug that could take him back to the men he had left on the *Bremen*. Moeller asked Captain Belgarde on the *Admiral Dewey*. Captain Belgarde took Tinken and a German assistant engineer to the *Bremen*, and, accompanied by the tug's cook, John Swayne, they went



on board with lamps provided by the tug. They entered through the ship's coal bunkers, and, eventually, in the heat and smoke, located eight men, some in the boiler room and some in the engine room, where they were tending the ship's pumps and electrical system, both of which were still operating. They took the men on board the *Admiral Dewey*, but around ten-thirty the tug put Tinken and the other engineer back on the ship to attempt to fight the fire.

They were able to board the *Bremen* on the port side of the promenade deck. A fire hose was passed up to them from the tug, and they used it to extinguish the fire in the area of the cabin saloon. Other tugs were pouring water on the ship from the starboard side. Some of these tugs also put men with hoses on the ship. Tinken attempted to direct the efforts of these tugs, but when the burning liner *Main* appeared to be drifting toward that side of the ship, they stowed their hoses and left. The tug captains

Left: Photograph of the burning piers and ships, taken from Jersey City Heights, courtesy of Michael Lisa.

Above: Interior of the Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse, from NGL's 50th anniversary publication, ca.1897, courtesy of Ken Schultz.



told Tinken they were afraid of being squeezed between the two burning ships. With the fire increasing again, Tinken went back on board the *Admiral Dewey*. It was now around twenty minutes to midnight. At Superintendent Moeller's request, Captain Belgarde remained at the *Bremen* well into the morning. It was 4 a.m. when he finally landed Chief Engineer Tinken on one of the undamaged Hamburg-American Line piers, twelve hours from the time he first saw the fire off Jersey City.

There were around thirty-five salvage claims as a result of the fire. Hearings were held in November 1900 by the United States District Court sitting in Admiralty. The Court announced its decision on February 16, 1901. A total of \$21,449 was awarded to twenty-two tugs and one steam lighter. The highest award, over ten percent of the total, went to the tug *Admiral Dewey*. Eighteen hundred dollars went to the owners, plus \$67.55 in expenses, most likely for repairs for damage the tug sustained. The remainder was divided among Captain Belgarde and his crew.

Today the former *Admiral Dewey*, converted

from steam to diesel in the 1950s and later renamed *Helen McAllister*, is preserved by the South Street Seaport Museum in lower Manhattan.

Norman Brouwer

Curator of Ships, Maritime Historian
South Street Seaport Museum

This text is based on U.S. District Court records held by the Manhattan Branch of the National Archives, including oral testimony of Captain George Belgrade of the Admiral Dewey and Chief Engineer Johann Tinken of the liner Bremen. The tragic fire forced officials at New York Harbor piers to take greater precautions, and to encourage the redesign of portholes of new ocean liners. They would be significantly larger, so as to allow trapped passengers to escape through them – an option unavailable to those imprisoned behind the tiny portholes of the burning vessels.

Above: Photograph of the burned piers of North German Lloyd, looking north east, July 1900, courtesy Hoboken Public Library.

IMPERIAL FLEETS

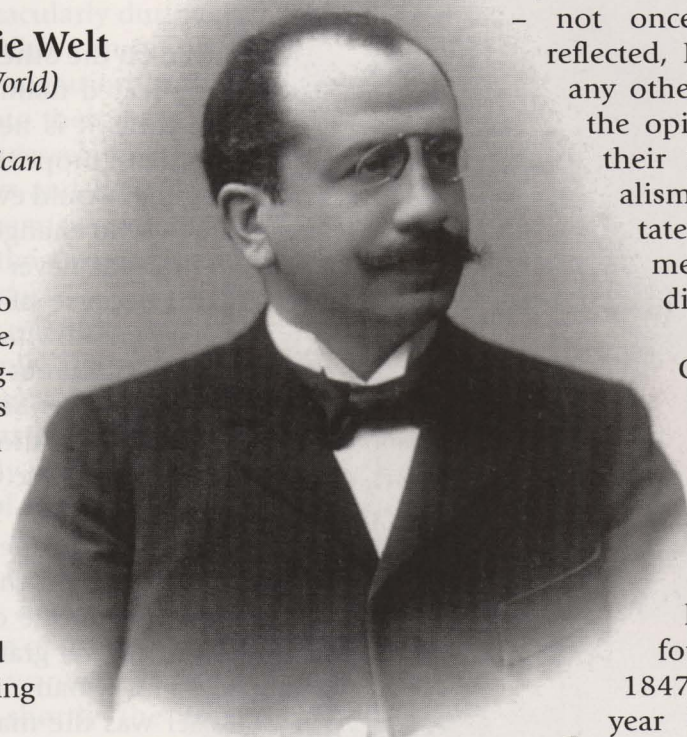
Mein Feld is die Welt

(My Field is the World)

— Hamburg-American
Line motto

Never was a motto truer than the above, as between Hamburg-American and its great rival North German Lloyd, the two companies literally covered the world. At one point in its history, HAPAG alone had 442 steamers serving 350 ports.

Their backgrounds were very similar and throughout their histories the intense rivalry between the ports of Hamburg and Bremen was to forge a pattern of give-and-take that was to give both companies a sense of being almost one – until, in the end, they did become one.



*Albert Ballin
Commodore
11. 6. 98*

They both would start with humble beginnings and rise to spectacular heights, only to see everything swept away – not once, but twice. They reflected, I believe, more than any other shipping company, the opinions and mood of their nation – a nationalism almost always dictated by strong-willed men, twice to ultimate disaster.

Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse sat on the throne of Prussia when the oldest of the two companies, Hamburg Amerikanische Packetfahrt Action Gesellschaft (HAPAG) was founded on May 27, 1847. On October 15, a year later, the “all sail” *Deutschland* made the company’s first Atlantic crossing. It was to be 8 years before the *Borussia* did the same with steam.

In 1857, ten years after HAPAG opened its gates to the sailing public, its soon-to-be Bremen counterpart, Norddeutscher Lloyd (NGL), opened its own. Unlike HAPAG, NGL went at once to steam, with the *Bremen* making the company’s first crossing on June 19, 1858. It was to be a record-breaker and NGL pushed that fact to the hilt. The rivalry



Above: Photograph of Albert Ballin, June 11, 1898, courtesy of HAPAG-Lloyd AG.

Left: Painting of the early NGL steamship *Neckar* by Antonio Jacobsen, maritime artist of West Hoboken, New Jersey, 1879, courtesy John J. McMullen.



began! In the ensuing years that rivalry would burn hot and cold, and on occasion the companies would even seem to work together.

Then two events took place, each as different as the two men involved. One would change world shipping, the other the world itself.

In May of 1886, Albert Ballin joined the Hamburg-American Line. Two years later, in June of 1888, William II became Emperor of a united Germany.

Albert Ballin, a man of humble origins, came almost out of nowhere to HAPAG. His great drive, coupled with equal brilliance, charm, and foresight, brought him, virtually

overnight, to the directorship of the company. The years he reigned at HAPAG would be the most brilliant the company would ever know.

The Kaiser, on the other hand, was a much more complicated man. In order to understand him fully, it is necessary to consider the structure of Europe during this period, a structuring that would eventually lead to the events that would change the world. Europe in this period was never more controlled by royalty, and because of that, more volatile. It was still an era in which a supposed royal snub could send armies into battle.

One factor, however, seemed to hold everything together, from the Court of Berlin to the Halls of the Czars: Grand Ma-ma. Not for nothing was Queen Victoria called "the Grandmother of Europe." Her granddaughter, Alexandra, sat on the throne of Russia; another on the throne of Spain; and most important of all, her grandson, Willy, sat on the throne of Germany.

The Kaiser was the maternal grandson of Queen Victoria and the only person who impressed him more than himself was his grandmother. While she lived, he was very keen on impressing her and the rest of the British royal family. In fact, his desire to impress eventually lead every one of the crowned heads into the abyss. While the old queen lived, all went surprisingly well. Even when she died in 1901, in the Kaiser's arms, her influence was so great, it carried through the reign of the next sovereign, Edward the VII.

By 1911, however, when George and Mary ascended the English throne, the strain had already begun to show. Cracks had started to appear in the veneer of what was supposed to be a united Europe. The Kaiser, a true megalomaniac pushed by the power behind the throne, Otto Von Bismarck, had become drunk with the power of Germany's military might, which had risen to spectacular heights during his reign. By 1914, he was ready to

show the world who really ruled Europe.

The fleets of HAPAG and NGL had also risen spectacularly during the Kaiser's reign. With a stunning rise in European emigration both companies came into their own. It was a period with vessels bearing the names of *Kaisers* and *Kaiserines*, *Kronprinzen* and *Kronprinzessins*, the most opulent era the two companies would ever know.

It began in August of 1889, when the Kaiser accompanied his uncle, the Prince of Wales, to inspect the new White Star liner *Teutonic*. He was totally enthralled with every aspect of her, especially her comfortable and luxurious appointments. As he was leaving the vessel, he was heard to say: "We must have some of these!"

What the Kaiser wanted, he usually got. Very shortly the German ships started to resemble their English counterparts, until in 1887, the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse* surpassed anything thus far. Her beautiful exterior, coupled with the most lavish appointments yet seen, made her an instant success. She was to set the tone for what would become the most spectacular period in German shipbuilding. The era of the "floating palace" had begun!

In retaliation for the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*, and to attempt to gain lost ground against NGL, HAPAG launched its own four



stacker, *Deutschland* in 1901. She was to win the Blue Ribbon for the company, the first and only time it would claim it.

Albert Ballin had been opposed to the building of the *Deutschland* but had been overruled by his board of directors. Although she won the Blue Ribbon, the deck vibration and the cost of operation made her a losing proposition. It was determined there would be no more like her at Hamburg-American.

Instead, the company turned to a large, comfortable ship of moderate speed, *Amerika*. She would be one of the ships most associated with Ballin. The largest vessel afloat, she would also be the most opulent and innovative. Luxuries such as electric lifts, winter gardens, suites with private baths, and her celebrated Ritz-Carlton a la carte restaurant, were all instant hits. The great success of *Amerika* was followed the next year by the very similar and equally successful *Kaiserin Auguste Victoria*.

The second of NGL's four stackers, the *Kronprinz Wilhelm*, made her maiden voyage on the 17th of September 1901. She was another record-breaker. Nothing she ever did in her civilian career, however, would com-

Far left: Kaiser Wilhelm II passenger list featuring its namesake, 1903, courtesy Ken Schultz.

Above: Kronprinzessin Cecilie's innovative and luxuriously outfitted folding lavatory, ca.1907, courtesy Tom and Sheree Troy.

Right: Postcard of Kronprinzessin Cecilie band, ca. 1907, courtesy of Leonard A. Lauder.





pare to her exploits as an armed raider during World War I.

On the 14th of April 1903, the third of NGL's giantesses, the Kaiser's namesake, made her maiden voyage. Another record-breaker, she remains today probably the best remembered of the German four-stack liners.

The last of the German four-stack liners, *Kronprinzessin Cecilie*, made her maiden voyage to New York in August of 1907. She is best remembered for her summer at Bar Harbor, Maine – to this day one of the most bizarre incidents of World War I.

Finally, in 1908, the last of the great pre-World War I NGL vessels, the *George Washington*, made her maiden voyage. She was the largest liner yet built, but as every other great German liner built after her and prior to World War I, the greatest part of her career would be in service to other countries. She is best remembered as the "President's Ship" bringing President Wilson to and from the Versailles Conference.

In 1911, at the zenith of his power as HAPAG's director, Albert Ballin took steps

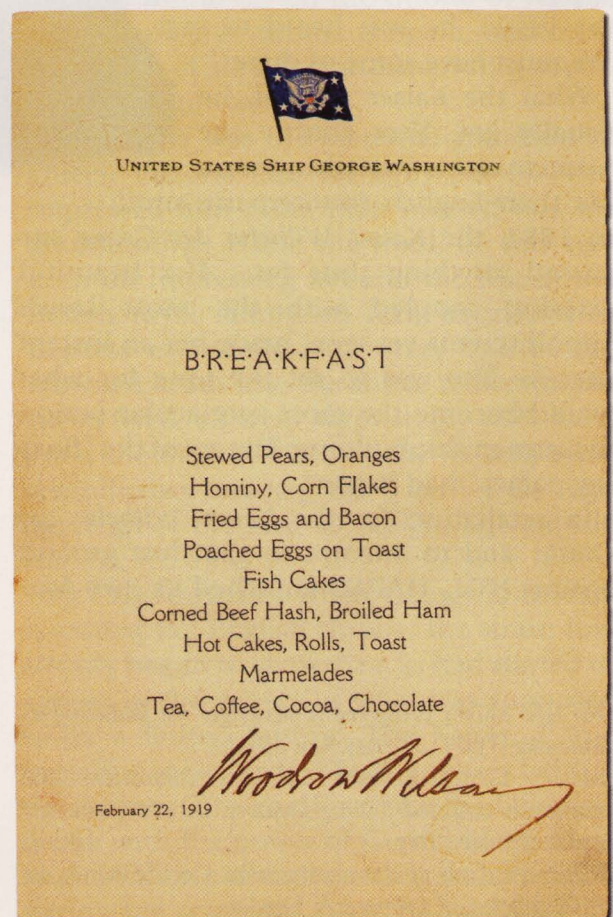
Above: Framed double portraits of unknown travelers to America on the *George Washington*, with ship portraits, ca. 1908, courtesy Douglas F. Bushnell. This ship transported many European immigrants to America prior to its seizure and conversion to a U.S. troopship in 1917, following American entry into the war.

Right: Menu from the *George Washington* autographed by Woodrow Wilson, 1919, courtesy Stanley Lehrer.

that he believed would finally give his company dominance over North German Lloyd and the other leading shipping companies. Three new liners were commissioned, each the largest in the world.

They would be everything he envisioned – beautiful and popular, and still remembered years after they ceased to exist. The only aspect he did not envision was that their great fame would not be as *German* liners. The Kaiser did not envision it either and according to his expressed wish, the first liner's name was changed from *Europa* to *Imperator*.

The second Ballin masterpiece was launched on April 3, 1913. Once again, she was to be named *Europa*, and once again Ballin conceded to the Kaiser's nationalistic vision and called her *Vaterland*.



As the war began in Europe – it was not called a World War until the U.S. entered it in 1917 – both companies were forced to leave a good portion of their fleets in the safety of their U.S. docks. Among these vessels were the *Vaterland*, *Kaiser Wilhelm II*, *Kronprinzessin Cecilie*, *Kronprinz Wilhelm* (after 8 months of blockade running), *George Washington*, *Amerika*, *Cincinnati*, *President Lincoln*, *Pennsylvania*, and *Barbarossa*.

For many years before the war, Albert Ballin has seen what could happen to the German shipping companies in the event of hostilities and had tried to use his great influence with the Kaiser and others to prevent it. He saw it as the greatest failure of his life that he was unable to do so.

As the war drew to a close, Ballin surveyed the company's prospects. They were not encouraging. Certainly all the interred ships, including the *Vaterland*, would be seized as prizes of war. These accounted for most of the fleet. The *Imperator* and the unfinished *Bismarck*, however, had remained at the Hamburg docks throughout the war, and it seemed possible the two ships might be spared. At North German Lloyd, the prospects were even worse.

As bad as the prospects seemed, the eventual reality was devastating. The Armistice of 1918 took everything, leaving each company only one, non-descript ship. For HAPAG it was even more humiliating, as the company was forced to finish the *Bismarck* and then hand her over to Britain.

It was obvious to maritime observers that it would take decades before the German companies could regain the prominence they had before the Great War, which was, after all, the intention of the Allies.

And what happened to the chief architect of World War I? The Kaiser was to spend the remainder of his life in exile, in Doorn, Holland. For a man of his temperament and personality, it was an extremely bitter pill to swallow.



Albert Ballin fared no better – in fact, much worse. Disillusioned and more important, disheartened, he had watched the destruction of the dream for which he had lived. He died a broken man in 1918 – to the best of anyone's knowledge, by his own hand.

Ken Schultz

Guest curator, *Destination Hoboken*

Above: Pillowcase printed with an image of the *George Washington* and a portrait of Woodrow Wilson, ca. 1919, courtesy of Douglas F. Bushnell.

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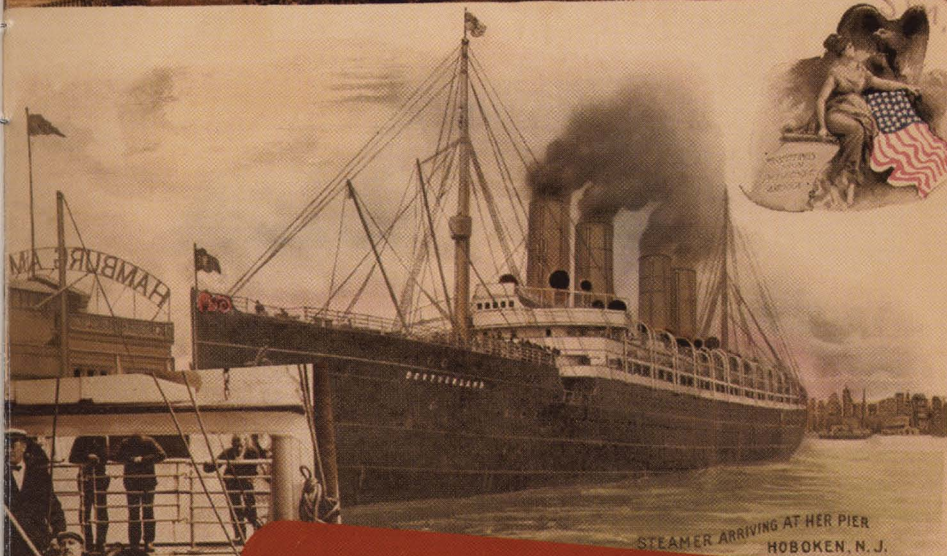
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Above: North German Lloyd-inspired kerosene lamp, ca. 1890, courtesy of Ken Schultz. An independent manufacturer was inspired to create them to pay homage to the great liners.



Liner Vaterland.
on the Bridge.



