

NOTES

1. Bremen city archive.
2. Presiding Bishopric, "Financial, Statistical, and Historical Reports of Wards, Stakes, and Missions, 1884–1955," CHL CR 4 12, 257.
3. West German Mission branch directory, 1939, CHL LR 10045 11.
4. West German Mission manuscript history, CHL B 1381:3.
5. Germans would soon be telling countless jokes featuring "Herr Meyer" in an obvious reference to Goering.
6. Helene Albetzky Deters, autobiography (unpublished), private collection.
7. West German Mission manuscript history, CHL B 1381:5.
8. Gerald Deters, interview by the author, Bountiful, UT, July 1, 2009.
9. Gerald Deters, autobiography (unpublished), private collection.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Erwin Büsing, "Beitrag zur Geschichte der Gemeinde Oldenburg von 1946 bis 2007" (unpublished), private collection.
13. West German Mission manuscript history, CHL B 1381:7.
14. Gerald Deters, interview. The incident occurred at Hitler's headquarters for the Eastern Front, near Rastenburg, East Prussia. The bomb was planted by Claus Graf Schenk von Stauffenberg, who was executed for treason later that same day in Berlin.
15. Ibid.
16. *Sachschaden-Antrag*, submitted by Wilhelm Deters to the city of Bremen on September 1, 1944; private collection.
17. West German Mission manuscript history, CHL B 1381:8.
18. Gerald Deters, interview.
19. West German Mission manuscript history, CHL B. 1381:9.
20. West German Mission manuscript history, CHL B. 1381:10.
21. Bremen city archive.
22. Elli Ellinghaus to Ellen Cheney, December 8, 1946; used by permission of George and Lorene Runyan.
23. Lina Schubert to Ellen Cheney, November 16, 1946; used by permission of George and Lorene Runyan.
24. Lina Schubert to Ellen Cheney, April 26, 1947; used by permission of George and Lorene Runyan.

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## WESERMÜNDE- LEHE BRANCH

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The home of the Wesermünde-Lehe Branch was, in general, the city of Bremerhaven. Thirty-eight miles downriver from Bremen, the community is located at the mouth of the Weser River at the North Sea. The members of this branch lived closer to the enemy air bases during the war

than any other Church members in Germany. This fact alone made life in the area very challenging.

The meetings of this branch were held in a building at Poststrasse 123, but no description of the rooms is available. More than one-half of the branch members were females twelve and over and only four members were children. Priesthood leadership was present; there were three elders in the branch. It is also evident from the records of other branches in the district that visitors from Bremen and Wilhelmshaven were seen in this small branch on numerous occasions. The small number of members would explain why the mission directory of August 1939 shows that Mutual and Relief Society were the only groups holding meetings during the week.<sup>1</sup> Sunday School took place at 10:00 a.m. and sacrament meeting at 7:00 p.m. each Sunday.

Wesermünde-Lehe Branch <sup>2</sup>	1939
Elders	3
Priests	0
Teachers	1
Deacons	4
Other Adult Males	4
Adult Females	21
Male Children	2
Female Children	2
<i>Total</i>	37

The following comments are taken from the West German Mission manuscript history:

October 29, 1939: Karl Kinast was ordained an elder and called to be branch president following the departure of the missionaries.<sup>3</sup>

October 25, 1942: A branch conference was held in the Wesermünde Branch which, under the circumstances, was well attended; forty-two persons attended. A wonderful spirit was in all the meetings.<sup>4</sup>

November 29, 1942: In Wilhelmshaven, which is in constant danger of enemy attacks, a branch conference was held. In spite of two air raids that interrupted the meetings, the spirit of God was present in rich abundance. The attendance was seventeen.<sup>5</sup>

June 17, 1944: The Wesermünde Branch meeting hall was destroyed. The Bremen District spring conference had been planned to be held in the Wesermünde chapel on June 25. All the preparations had been made in vain. Since another meeting hall could not be found in Wesermünde, one room in the ruins of this building was used to hold meetings.<sup>6</sup>

The last entry in the branch general minutes referring to the war was recorded on July 5, 1945. President Deters of the Bremen District had found a way to travel again and visited the Wesermünde-Lehe Branch that day. The clerk wrote, “The meetings are still being held in the ruins of the former meeting hall. In spite of this the attendance is constantly increasing. Branch President Kinast has done a wonderful work here. . . . He has stayed on the job and done his best.”<sup>7</sup> The man mentioned was Karl Kinast, who had been serving as the second counselor to the branch president, an American missionary, just before the war began.

The port facilities of Bremerhaven were attacked on a great many occasions during the war by the British Royal Air Force and the U.S. Army Air Corps. It can be assumed not only that the branch meeting rooms at Poststrasse 12 were damaged, but that the homes of several members were damaged or destroyed. Whatever the damage was, they were still holding meetings in the summer of 1945 and were likely joined soon by LDS refugees from the East German Mission.

#### IN MEMORIAM

The following members of the Wesermünde-Lehe Branch did not survive World War II:

**Friedrich August Wilhelm Biermann** b. Stadthagen, Schaumburg-Lippe, 13 Oct 1910; son of Heinrich Friedrich Wilhelm Biermann and Sophie Karoline

Wilhelmine Huckemeier; m. Cuxhaven, Hamburg, 1933, Emmy Geimplinger; d. 8 Oct 1943 (FHL microfilm 25723, 1925 and 1930 censuses)

**Ludwig Blass** b. Trier, Trier, Rheinland, 2 Jun 1876; son of Karl Ernst Gabriel Blass and Klara von Schmoll; bp. 2 Feb 1928; conf. 2 Feb 1928; ord. deacon 4 Sep 1932; m. Johanna Kühn; k. air raid Bremen 24 Jun 1944 (FHL microfilm 68785, no. 130; FHL microfilm 25725, 1930 census)

**Dieter Danklefsen** b. Friedrichstadt, Schleswig, Schleswig-Holstein, 28 Aug 1940; son of Paul Heinrich Danklefsen and Anita Martha Elisabeth Brassat; d. dysentery 19 Oct 1942 (FHL microfilm 68808, no. 569; FHL microfilm 25751, 1935 census; IGI)

#### NOTES

1. West German Mission branch directory, 1939, CHL LR 10045 11.
2. Presiding Bishopric, “Financial, Statistical, and Historical Reports of Wards, Stakes, and Missions, 1884–1955,” 257, CHL CR 4 12.
3. West German Mission history, CHL LR 10045 2; West German Mission manuscript history B 1381:3.
4. West German Mission manuscript history, 6.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., 7.
7. Ibid., 9.

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## WILHELMSHAVEN BRANCH

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The smallest branch in the Bremen District was located in the North Sea port city of Wilhelmshaven. About forty miles northwest of the city of Bremen, Wilhelmshaven could be reached via railroad in an hour. Only twenty-six members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were associated with this branch when the war began.

Brother Rodewald was the branch president in July 1939 and remained in that position until November 10, 1940.<sup>1</sup> On that date, he was released and replaced by Erwin Gulla during a meeting attended by the presidents of the Bremen and Hamburg Districts (Willy Deters and Alwin Brey, respectively). That same day, the following comment