



Little Germany on the Missouri: The Photographs of Edward J. Kemper, 1895-1920

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Capturing the day-to-day life of the German-American community of Hermann during the years from 1895 to 1920, *Little Germany on the Missouri* is an illuminating and fascinating look at Missouri's German heritage. Featuring more than a hundred images taken by Edward J. Kemper, a gifted horticulturist and viticulturist, the book depicts life in Hermann during the height of its cultural and economic achievements.

Although Kemper's photographs center around his family, friends, and neighbors, they encompass the "essence of Hermann" through his eloquent visual realization of a golden age of German American culture. The photographs, taken over a twenty-five-year period, record scenes that are now totally lost to us, embodying the inner character of the town and leading the viewer into the life-affirming world Kemper knew and loved. To this world, Kemper brought an affectionate eye, a sense of fun, and pride in his community.

Produced from glass-plate negatives and original prints by Oliver Schuchard, the photographs are arranged in three parts: manufacturing and agriculture; the grape and wine industries; and customs and traditions. The images, along with supporting commentary by Anna Hesse and the contributing editors, explore the economic, cultural, and social life of the community, detailing Hermann's traditional German practices as well as the influences of developing American technologies. The contributors conclude that the Kemper photographs provide new evidence pertinent to the understanding of how immigrant groups preserved their culture and new data for reexamining the immigrant experience in the United States.

Because of its unique insights, *Little Germany on the Missouri* will make an invaluable contribution to German American studies. It will also be of great interest to local historians and genealogists, as well as to anyone interested in German heritage.

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