ARTICLES

THE GERMAN SPEAKING COMMUNITY IN HONG KONG 1846 -1918

CARL T. SMITH

Introduction - Some Problems

The documents used for this study seldom indicate the language spoken by the person named in the document. The researcher must depend upon the spelling of the name as an indication of national origin. Such a method is fraught with difficulties and pitfalls.

A document may identify a person as being from Switzerland, but were they German speaking? The family language of a Swiss may be German, French, Italian or Romanish. Someone in Hong Kong with a German sounding name may have come here from England, America or another country where his ancestor had settled. The person may no longer be German speaking, his family having adopted the language of their new community. One prominent Hong Kong family has a distinct German name. They are Eurasian and the family tradition is that their Caucasian progenitor in Hong Kong left Germany at the time of the 1848 Revolution in Germany and settled in England. He subsequently came to Hong Kong as a business man and later returned to England but without his Eurasian family.

As the borders of the German states and subsequent nation changed through the years so did the nationality of the residents of these areas. The Chinese Repository published in the 1830 and 1840 lists foreign residents on the China coast. A few of these lists give the nationality of the persons listed. In 1845 the Hong Kong shopkeeper Frederick Funk is listed as French. The name sounds German. He may have been from Alsace or Lorraine where, according to political changes, the inhabitants would have been French or German nationals. The eastern border of Germany also fluctuated. In the 1850 and 1860 there was in Hong Kong a tavern keeper and auctioneer named Henry Winniberg - German sounding, but one record identified him as Polish. A number of Jews with German sounding names settled in Hong Kong, principally after the 1880s. The well known restaurant family of London apparently came some years later.
The name apparently derives from a city in Germany, but records indicated they had for a time lived in Egypt or Turkey before arriving at the China coast.

This study is one-dimensional. I do not have sufficient knowledge nor have I undertaken the necessary research to put the story of the Germans in Hong Kong in a proper international setting or to relate it to the complexities of the internal and external developments of the German states and, subsequently, the German nation. This study is based on Hong Kong sources and hence is seen only from the Hong Kong view. The story could be greatly enlarged and enriched by a scholar with broader knowledge than the present author.

Sources for the study

Documentation of sources is usually of little interest to the average reader but they are important to the scholar who might want to check the facts or further develop aspects of the subject. I am not aware that there has yet been published so detailed a history of the German speaking community in Hong Kong as the present study. Even so, I have not dealt with the subject in a thoroughly exhaustive way. I have confined myself to data found in Hong Kong and I have not included every detail or fact I have in my files.

Readers who check the notes will find that most of my information is from a limited number of sources: Hong Kong newspapers; the Hong Kong section of directors for China and the Far East: the Hong Kong Government Gazette contains jury lists, annual probate calendars, the medical register, notices of changes in the partnership of firms and authorisation to sign; reports of the Spirit Licensing board; the China Repository lists of residents on the China coast 1833-1851; Colonial Office records, especially for the World War I period; selected Series in the Public Records Office of Hong Kong especially those from wills, rates and valuations, and surrendered deeds; and the memorials in the Land Office. With so many references there may have been some mistakes in transcribing dates and names. I hope these errors are at a minimum.

I should like to express my appreciation to the staff of the Public Records Office, the Secretariat Library, the Special Collections Room at Hong Kong University Library and to the Registrar General for permission
to search the Memorials in the Land Office

Abbreviations used in the notes:
CM - China Mail
DP - Daily Press
FC - Friend of China
GG - Hong Kong Government Gazette
HKT - Hong Kong Telegraph
PRO - Public Records Office of Hong Kong
SCMP - South China Morning Post
CO 129/ - Series 129 of the Colonial Office, microfilms at the Public Record Office of Hong Kong.

Number of German residents in Hong Kong 1871-1931

The following figures are from the periodic Hong Kong census returns:-

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Females</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

There was a steady increase in German residents until 1906. The 1911 figures show an increase of six males but a decrease of seventeen females, a decrease for the total population of seventeen.

The report of the Provost Marshall in 1914 of Germans placed under parole provides a profile of the German community in Hong Kong at that time. There were eighty two merchants and their employees and eighteen wives in this category. Shopkeepers, missionaries, ship’s offices, doctors, etc. numbered fifty. There were six wives of missionaries and thirteen wives of others in the non-merchant group. Thirteen missionary sisters were connected with charitable institutions and two other unmarried women. Thus the total was 132 men and sixty women. Children were not
included (CO 129/414, p. 177).

The three German females in the 1921 census are mentioned in a report Canon Bannister sent to the Church Missionary Society in 1914. The Berlin Foundling House had 150 children and the two Blind Homes had 120 children. "The Government has allowed three German ladies to remain in each home and the writer was asked to take general oversight". (Archives of the Church Missionary Society, University of Birmingham, England, CH 1, P/4 No. 149, Bannister, 5 Nov. 1914).

The German community gradually reestablished itself in Hong Kong, but in 1931 it was less than half of what it had been in 1911.

Hong Kong being a British colony, the British were the largest non-Chinese community. Next was the Macanese-Portuguese. The third were the Germans. They were followed by the Americans.

Germans in the Canton trade

German speaking merchants participated in the China trade in the eighteenth century. The trade was confined to Canton. In 1729, the Holy Roman Emperor, the Emperor of Austria, chartered the Imperial East India Company to trade in the East using the port of Ostend in the Netherlands as its home base. At that time Netherlands was a part of the Austrian Empire. This company did not use German ships, but chartered British vessels which were principally manned by British crews. This was a strategem to get around the efforts of the British chartered East India Company to control the European trade with China. Over the years there were usually two or three ships each season from Bremen or Hamburg arriving at Canton.

British free traders used the protection of the office of Consul for foreign states to acquire the privilege of permanent residence in China. These free traders were large importers of opium of India, a trade the British East India Company ships did not engage in as it was prescribed by Chinese Imperial Edict and the company wished to maintain a good relation with the Dragon Throne. It feared that if it was too closely identified with the opium trade the Chinese authorities would curtail the company's lucrative and traditional trade in tea.
As a chartered monopoly the East India Company had the right to exclude British subjects who were not members of the company from residing permanently in China. Their presence was tolerated for only the few months of the trading season. Consuls representing a foreign country could claim exemption from this rule. In 1783, John Reed was commissioned as head of the Austrian Imperial Factory at Canton - the trading establishments were called factories. He had been born in Britain but subsequently became a naturalised subject of the Austrian Emperor. Another Englishman, a subject of Austria, arrived in Canton in 1787, carrying a certificate of naturalisation from Austria. There was, however, a dispute about the national status of Edward Watts and the British East India Company demanded he leave at the end of the trading season, but he stayed on for several more years ignoring the attempt to get rid of him.

Daniel Beale, a British subject who had been in the employ of the East India Company, in 1787 was appointed the Prussian Consul at Canton. This post was held by subsequent partners of the firm of which Beale was a member. The firm eventually became Jardine, Matheson and Co. The present Rua Pedro Nolasco da Silva in Macao is called by Chinese Bak Ma Lo, or in translation White Horse Road. Father Manuel Teixeira, the Macao historian, states that the white horse was on the Prussian flag which flew over what was then No. 1 Rua Hospital, a building occupied by Jardines for some years.

In the lists of residents on the China coast published in the Chinese Repository and the Anglo-Chinese Commercial Directory, the first name I have identified as German is Edmund Mueller in 1835. He was from Hamburg but arrived at Canton from Manila. He became the editor of the Canton Press, holding this position from 1836 to 1844. In the latter year he went into trade at Macao. He appears to have left China by 1847.

Gustav Christian Schwabe is listed as a German residing at Canton in 1837. He had arrived from Calcutta in November 1836 and sailed for Manila in October 1837. The firm of Sykes, Schwabe and Co., which later became Boustead and Co., had its head office at Liverpool with overseas branches at Singapore, Manila and Canton. Mr. Schwabe was manager of the Liverpool office from 1845 to 1853. He then returned to China to head the firm of G C. Schwabe and Co. at Shanghai. This firm was dissolved by lapse of time in 1859 and was succeeded by Bower, Hanbury and Co., Shanghai.
Missionaries and religious institutions

The Rev. Karl Friedrich August Gutzlaff — or as he became known in his later life Rev. Charles Gutzlaff — was a colourful and significant figure in the introduction of Protestant Christianity among both the overseas Chinese and those who lived in China. He was born in Pomerania in 1803 and came to the Dutch East Indies as an agent of the Netherlands Missionary Society in 1827. He severed his relationship with the society and became an independent missionary agent. To secure funds for his work he successfully publicised the missionary cause in Europe and America. His books, articles and letters aroused much interest and some controversy. Critics regarded his assessment of the prospects for the easy and immediate conversion of China as too visionary, but this did not prevent a large number of sympathetic supporters from forming societies to undergird his work.

Before settling in Macao in 1830, Gutzlaff was in Singapore and Bangkok. He was an able linguist and mastered a number of Chinese dialects. When hostilities broke out between Britain and China in 1838, the English employed him as an interpreter. During the British occupation of Chusan he was appointed a magistrate, and on the untimely death in Hong Kong of John Monison the son of the Rev. Robert Morrison, Gutzlaff succeeded him as the Chinese Secretary of the British Superintendent of Trade in China and the Hong Kong Government. He remained in this well paid post until his death in 1851. His official duties did not prevent him from continuing his missionary activities.

Gutzlaff was convinced that China should be converted by Chinese. To further this he organised the Chinese Union in 1844. Its members were converts who were given a somewhat brief course of instruction and then, carrying bundles of tracts and scriptures, were sent to spread the Christian message in the interior of China. The scheme was imaginative, but Gutzlaff did not have the time nor practicability to supervise it closely, consequently some of his trainees used it for their own enrichment. They pocketed the travel allowance, while sheltering in Kowloon or their home village, and then resold the Christian literature back to the publisher, and submitted false reports of their evangelistic achievements in China. Nonetheless, the Union made its impact on China, particularly providing Christian elements for the ideology of the Tai Ping rebellion in China in the 1850s.
Gutzlaff was not unaware that his Union needed closer supervision. He appealed to German missionary societies to send out agents to assist him in his project. In response the Rhenish Missionary Society at Barmen and the Basel Missionary Society each sent two men in 1847. After a brief orientation period in Hong Kong, they were sent into China where they worked severally in areas where Cantonese, Hakka and Tiu-chau speakers lived. During the second Sino-British war they weathered out the war in Hong Kong and Macao. It was also the time when some took home leave. On the return of Rev. Rudoph Lechler of the Basel Missionary Society in 1861, he built a mission house, school and chapel at Sai Ying Pun. The church and school served the Hakka speaking community in Hong Kong. The congregation is now the present Kau Yan Church on High Street.

The Rev Heinrich Cocking, also a medical doctor, arrived in Hong Kong in 1855 as an agent of the Berlin Missionary Society. He opened a small dispensary and hospital in 1858 at the foot of Morrison Hill in Wanchai. It was principally for Chinese but German sailors were also treated there.

Agents of the Berlin Ladies Mission for China opened a home for foundling children on the top of Morrison Hill. The Berliner Frauenveren für China had been organised in response to the Rev. Charles Gutzlaff’s appeal for support for his vision of the speedy conversion of the Chinese nation. The home was moved to No. 1 High Street in 1861 where it had built a large building, which was named Bethesda. It was not far from the mission house and chapel of the Basel Missionary Society.

Before the removal to High Street of the Berlin foundling home, German speaking services were held on Sundays at their establishment on Morrison Hill. At an earlier time these services were held in a tavern on Queen's Road East operated by a German. The Rev. Philip Winnes, of the Basel Mission, reported in 1858: “In this inn, I preached until the sailors had enough, and that they had quite soon”. The Hong Kong Blue Books in their ecclesiastical returns lists a place of worship for Europeans from 1871 at the chapel of the Berlin Mission House on High Street. A small chapel was built beside the foundling home in 1881. Its entrance was off Bonham Road. The services were moved to the hall of Union Church on Kennedy Road in 1902. They remained there until 1904 when they were moved back to the Bethesda Chapel where services were held.
until the outbreak of war in 1914. During the period when the congregation met in the Union Church Hall, the community also conducted a school there. The group meeting there was called the Deutsche Kirchen and Schulegemeinde (Rev. Albert Plag, “Bethesda and the Berliner Frauenverein Für China”, Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1969, v. 9: 149-150, Carl T. Smith, “The German Congregation in Hong Kong until 1914“, ibid, 1975, v. 15: 292-295).

In the 1896/97 the Hildesheim Mission opened the Ebenezer Home for the Blind. There were two homes, one on Hong Kong Island and one in Kowloon. During the First World War they were placed under the supervision of the Church Missionary Society, though the Sisters in charge were allowed to continue to care for the children. Among the first Germans to return to Hong Kong after the end of the war were several deaconesses of the Hildesheim Society. The Ebenezer Home and School for the Blind is now located on Pokfulam Road.

Two German missionaries became Inspectors of Schools in Hong Kong. Rev. Wilhelm Lobscheid was sent to China in 1848 by the Rhenish Missionary Society, but in 1857 he changed his allegiance to the British based Chinese Evangelization Society, yet another of the groups inspired by Gutzlaff. He was Inspector of Schools in Hong Kong from 1855 to 1859. He published in 1859 a valuable historical account entitled A Few Notices on the Extent of Chinese Education, and the Government Schools of Hong Kong; with remarks on the history and religious notions of the inhabitants of this island. From 1861 to 1866 he acted as an emigration agent, recruiting labour for British colonies in the West Indies. His labours in this endeavour again produced a book which contains much of interest as its title suggests, Chinese Emigration to the West Indies — A Trip through British Guiana undertaken for the purpose of ascertaining the condition of the Chinese who have emigrated under Government Contract. With Supplementary Papers Relating to Contract Labour and the Slave Trade.

Another German, Rev. Ernest J. Eitel was Inspector of Schools from 1878 to 1896. He was influential in setting policies for the development of education in Hong Kong. He was sent to China in 1862 by the Basel Missionary Society. Three years later he transferred to the London Missionary Society. He married Miss Eaton, an agent of the Society for the Promotion of Female Education in the East. She was head-mistress of the Diocesan School for Girls. Mr. Eitel became a naturalised British
subject when Governor John Pope Hennessy planned to appoint him as His Excellency’s personal secretary in charge of affairs relating to the Chinese. The British merchants were opposed to the Governor creating an office where he would have more direct communication with the Chinese. Due to their opposition Eitel never occupied such a position. In 1895, he published *Europe in China*, a detailed history of Hong Kong up to that date.

**Club Germania**

A club for Germans was started in 1859 in Wanchai in an uppretentious building. The German speaking population at the time would have been very small. There were three German firms and two stores conducted by Germans. Within two years the community almost doubled. It was small, but still large enough to provide a social centre for the community. In 1865 George Michelmore advertised the opening of a hotel in premises “which were formerly known as the German Club”. It was below the Headquarters House — now Flagstaff House off the present Cotton Tree Drive. This may have been the second location of the Club as an article written in 1909 states that the first building was in “an outlaying section of Wanchai”, a description which does not fit a location on what is now Cotton Tree Drive (DP, 17 May, 1865).

The club moved in 1865 to a new building erected by Gustav Overbeck at the top of Wyndham Street just south of D’Aguilar Street. But the German population was increasing and the Germania Club decided to build a more commodious building. This was on the east side of Wyndham Street off Queen’s Road. The new building was opened in 1872. It was a brick building in the Gothic style. The architects were Messrs Wilson and Salway. The cost was $21,000. Thirteen granite steps led to the entrance and the main hall. On the either side of the hall was a billiard room and a reading room. On the same level was a library room and a bar. The Concert Hall was approached by a flight of seven foot wide stairs. The Hall accommodated 275 persons, on either side was a drawing room and a dining room. There were accommodations for sixty in the dining room. Four bowling alleys were in the rear of the building (HKT, 27 Nov. 1909). The building served the community well until again it became too small and another building was erected on Kennedy Road. This building became enemy alien property in 1914 and passed into the hands of St. Joseph College. The College is still located in the building.
It was not until 1931 that the Club was revived in rented premises on the fourth floor of No. 2 Connaught Road.

The club’s concert hall was a popular venue for musicals. A singing group, the Liedertafel, was organised in 1873. A pianist, Franz Jachimeck made an eastern tour in 1867. He gave a private recital at the German Club and a public one at the hall of Club Lusitano. The concert included three German songs rendered by an amateur group. In the same year a lighter programme of entertainment was offered to the public in the following advertisement, “Ein Cultur-Historisch und Social Humoristische Vertrag aber California mit einem Seitenblick nach Yokohama. Donnerstage abends 9 Uhr in dem kleinen Saale des Oriental Hotel vor Dr. B.B. Schwarzbach, gehalten werden. Billet a $2 sind bei den Herr Lane, Crawford and Co., Hochstetter, Gaup, Cremer”. The English speaking community were not deprived of Dr. Schwarzbach’s lecture of culture, history and humour, for he repeated it in English a few nights later.

One of the highlights in the history of the old Club Germania was the visit of Prince Henry and Princess Irene of the Prussian royal family. Prince Henry was a grandson of Queen Victoria of England. Consequently the event was not confined to the German community. As a finale to the entertainment of the evening, a naval group from the British war ship “Powerful” presented three “real life Tableaux”: Ready For Action, Battle Scene, and the Death of Nelson, all representative of British patriotism. Included was a patter song linking the guest of honour with his grandmother:

One word before I end my song
To welcome in far Hongkong
The grandson of our Gracious Queen
The Sailor Prince, of course, I mean;
To welcome him, may he always be
Found playing on the side of the Royal Navee.

The warm feelings between Britain and Germany prevailing during the visit of His Royal Highness, were dissipated when war clouds increasingly piled up before August 1914.
Doctors - The Medical Hall

The missionaries were in Hong Kong to relate to the Chinese; doctors from Germany served the health needs of the German community and any others who consulted them.

Dr. Carl Friedrich Arnold Schetelig was in practice in Hong Kong in the 1860s. In 1861 he was also the steward of the German Club and in 1867 its librarian. He was married to Julie von Pustau; presumably she was connected with the merchant family, though her brother was an attorney in Hamburg. Dr. Schetelig returned to Hamburg where he died. His will was probated in Hong Kong in 1901.

The list of enemy alien properties in liquidation in 1914 gives the date of the establishment of the Medical Hall as 1853. Its proprietor was Dr. Harold von Kauffman. He married a Spanish woman, Emelia Manuela. When he left Hong Kong in 1873 with his wife and four children, a relative Mr. Theophil Koflei took over the management of the Medical Hall, which was located on a central site on Queen’s Road. Dr. Kauffman died at Weisbaden in May 1891. A year before Dr. Kauffmann left Hong Kong, Emil Niedhardt arrived to assume the position of chemist in the pharmacy. Upon the departure of T. Koflei, Niedhardt became the proprietor of the business. He retired in 1913 after forty one years in Hong Kong. His friends tendered him a farewell dinner at the German Club. H. Kammel, an apothecary, was admitted a partner in 1897. In 1914 at the time of liquidation, the pharmacy was on Ice House Street opposite the King Edward Hotel. Two pharmaceutical chemists were in charge, A. Kucy and W Kornetz.

Dr. Carl Clouth practiced in Hong Kong from about 1876 to 1883 or later. His seven year old daughter died at Weisbaden in 1883; at the time Dr. Clouth was referred to as being "of Hong Kong. (DP 6 Nov. 1883)

The 1873 Hong Kong Directory lists only two doctors with German sounding names, H. Kauffmann and G. Gerlach. Johann Heinrich Karl Gerlach passed the Prussian State Medical Examination and qualified to practice in 1868. He appears on the Hong Kong Medical Register through the year 1900. Dr. Gerlach practiced in Hong Kong nearly thirty years, others came and went.
Ludwig Braun graduated from the University of Graz, Austria and qualified in 1899. He was in Hong Kong in 1903 and 1904. His address was that of the acting Consul for Austria, Mr. Post. Carl Georg Johann Rohrmann held a diploma from the German State Medical Examination qualifying him to practice medicine from 1897. He appears on the Hong Kong Medical Register in 1900.

Erich Hermann Paulun was admitted to the Hong Kong Medical Register in February 1896, by 1898 he had moved to Shanghai. While in Hong Kong he had his office at the Bank Building, No. 16 Queen's Road Central. He died in March 1909 at Shanghai. His obituary published in the Hong Kong Telegraph on 13 March 1909 gives details of his life. He was born at Pasewalk in 1862. At an early age he became an orphan. He was educated at the grammar school at Wolfenbuttel, the Friedrich Wilhelm Institute, and the Berlin Army Medical Institute. After qualifying in 1887 he was a naval doctor. In 1895 and 1896 he was an assistant in the office of Dr. Zedelius in Shanghai, but then came to Hong Kong for a few years. Dr. Zedelius died in January 1899 and Dr. Paulun returned there to take over his practice. He founded at Shanghai a charitable hospital for Chinese which in time became the German Medical School in Burkill Road, Shanghai. His wife had been a Miss Zedelius, probably a daughter of Dr. Zedelius.

The surgery of the medical firm of Muller and Justi was for some years at the same address as had been that of Dr. Paulun. In 1905 they moved to the Hotel Mansions Building, newly built on reclaimed land in Central (DP 1 Aug. 1905). The firm was established by Oskar Muller, a graduate of the University of Munich. He qualified in 1897, and was registered as a medical practitioner in Hong Kong on 2 November 1900. Dr. Carol Justi joined Dr. Muller in 1903. He was a graduate of the University of Marburg and qualified to practice in Germany in 1897. He left Hong Kong in 1913 (HKT 2 May 1913). Karl Hoch joined the practice of Muller and Justi in 1907. He received his medical education at the University of Kiel and qualified in 1904 Theodore van Wesel, a graduate of the University of Freiburg, became a member of the firm in 1912. He had qualified in Germany in 1903.

Friedrich Piers Grone was a Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians who qualified in 1901. He first appears on the Hong Kong Medical Register in 1906. He became a member of the medical firm of
Dr. Gregory Paul Jordan. The practice became Drs. Anderson and Partners. At the time of the First World War Dr. Grove changed his name to Frederick Pierce Grove and served with the British Army. In spite of his former German sounding name he must have been a British citizen. He died in May 1929 in Hong Kong aged fifty five (Katherine Maddock, *Hong Kong Practice, Drs. Anderson and Partners*, Hong Kong 1984, Drs. Anderson and Partners, p. 28, 64).

**Taverns, Boarding Houses, Cafes and Hotels**

German merchants and professionals met at the Club Germania for eating, drinking and entertainment. At the other end of the social spectrum the crews of German ships in the harbour frequented the taverns and boarding houses for the same purpose.

Some of the taverns had names which would immediately attract their attention and, hopefully, their patronage, as they found their land-legs on the walk from the wharf to the tavern area on Queen’s Road West.

The German Tavern had the longest history. It is first mentioned in 1858, a year before the German Club was organised. It closed in 1910. Its first proprietor Andrew Rudiger was in charge for a very short time. He died in 1858, aged twenty six. He was succeeded by Christian Friedrich Wilhelm Petersen, who held the licence for spirits for the tavern intermittently until his death in 1896, aged sixty four. After his death his widow May was in charge for a brief period. She was his second wife and was Chinese. Three of their children were baptised in the Chinese To Tsai Church. His first wife was an English woman, a native of Bristol. She died in 1878, aged twenty eight, from the effect of taking camphor oil (DP 5 Jan 1878). In 1883, Mr. Peterson was charged by the Inspector of Nuisances for keeping two pigs in his kitchen without a licence. The defendant pleaded that he had only kept them there for a few days and had had them slaughtered as soon as he could arrange it (DP 20 Feb. 1883). There may have been pigs in the kitchen, but soon after the tavern opened there had been preaching in the bar room. We have already noted the reference of the Rev. Philip Wmnes to the services held there.

Petersen for some years was associated with another German, Peter Henry Schmidt, a licensed boarding house keeper who was in the business of recruiting crews for merchant vessels. In 1875 the licensing board
heard that Petersen's barman had been discharged for neglecting his duties due to lack of supervision. The board commented that Petersen's more lucrative employment at the German Consulate led him to neglect his business. If he was to continue to hold his spirit licence, he could not leave the management of his business to others (DP 2 Nov. 1875).

Peter Henry Schmidt was a German by birth but came to the East as a young man and married a Portuguese girl from Macao. For many years he was the proprietor of a licensed boarding house for seamen. Over the years he and Petersen built up a money-making business as shipping masters for the recruitment of crews. While Petersen worked his business though the German Consulate, Schmidt did the same through the American Consulate. In 1881, Mr. Smith - he had changed his name from Schmidt to Smith - brought action in the Supreme Court against the American Consul, Colonel John Mosby, for slander. The alleged slander were remarks published by the Consul concerning the involvement of Smith in the desertion of two seamen from the "Belle of Oregon". The Consul had been informed that Smith had harboured the deserters in his garden in Kowloon and that after the "Belle of Oregon" left port, he brought them to his boarding house in his launch. The testimony of Smith stated he had been in Hong Kong about twenty years and had held a licence for a seamen's boarding house for some eighteen years. "During that time," he continued, "I have done a great deal of business for the various Consuls. I and Mr. Petersen have done lately more than half the foreign business of the port. On December 24th, they [the two deserting seamen] brought permits to ship and I took them into my house. They were Scandanavian. I do work for the Consulate. I have done so for the last ten years. I gave them board and lodging in the ordinary course of business." Smith then goes into some of the history of his connection with the American Consulate and its licensing of crews, "Since Colonel Mosby has been in the Colony, I have not been an officer of the American Consulate nor in any way connected with it. Under his predecessor I had a desk and a clerk in the U.S. Consulate." Mr. Smith's assistant testified that Colonel Mosby had said, "You can tell Peter Smith he is not going to ship any more men in this office. I shall tell all the American shipmasters not to have anything to do with him." The assistant also told the court that in his despatches the Consul had called Mr. Smith some very hard names. Mosby had attacked everyone who had previously been connected with the Consulate.
Colonel Mosby had been sent to Hong Kong by the United States State Department to investigate and eradicate reputed abuses that had arisen in the affairs of the Consulate. His report to Washington was published as a pamphlet. The report claimed that Mr. Smith had been instrumental in the perpetration of great frauds on the United States Government. The Board found Consul Mosby guilty of slander. Before sentence Mosby spoke in his own defence. "It has been proved that when I came here Peter Smith was what was known as 'the shipping master' at the American Consulate. He had a desk and a clerk, and he had a monopoly of the shipping business. He was a powerful man at that time, so far as American shipmasters and sailors were concerned" (CM 10, 11 Jan. 1881). Upon losing the lucrative business of shipping master for the American Consulate, Peter Smith applied for a spirit licence for a house on Queen's Road West which he wished to name the City of Hamburg. The Superintendent of Police questioned whether a boarding house keeper should also operate a tavern. However, the licence was granted, but only for a year and with the caution that if there were any complaints regarding its conduct, the spirit licence would not be renewed (CM 4 Jan. 1881). Smith did not live long to enjoy his accumulated wealth. He died in December 1882, aged forty seven.

Other taverns which would have attracted the German sailor on shore were the City of Hamburg 1861 to 1976, Bremen Tavern 1866, City of Bremen 1866 to 1867 - when the name was changed to Scandanavian Tavern, the Prussian Eagle 1870, and the Hamburg Tavern 1861 to 1878. Several of the proprietors of these establishments followed a pattern set by Peter Smith in marrying women from Macao families. William Gardner, who was born at Strassburgh in 1834, married, in 1863, Cecilia Libonia de Jesus Cenea. Her sister Melenia Rita Correa married William von den Busche in 1864. Both Gardner and von den Busche were associated with the Hamburg Tavern. John Juster took over the Hamburg Tavern from William Gardner in 1871. He had been born in Hanover in 1834 and married in Hong Kong, in 1875, Maria Antonia Botelho, a native of Macao. Louis Kuchmann held the licence for the Land We Live In for twenty years. In 1886 the licence was transferred to Tevel Silbermann, probably a German Jew. Kuchmann had one daughter, possibly by a Chinese wife. She married in 1885 Carl Holm, captain of a German schooner.
Kirchmann transferred his tavern to Silbermann. The Land We Live In passed through a succession of proprietors with German, Jewish or Polish sounding names, Gustav Neubrunn, Moritz and Adolph Freimann, Bernat Cohen, Moses Tchetchiniczki and lastly David Freeman. The tavern was closed in 1912. The licensees of two other establishments suggest Jewish proprietorship: The Central Hotel, 1890 to 1906, Isaac Samuel Greenstein, 1907 to 1912, Ichel Gruman; and the Globe Hotel, 1894 to 1909, Isydor Silbermann, the nephew of Tevil, Ephraim Fischel Zellermayer 1910, and Adolph Weingarten 1911 and 1912. Both the Central and the Globe were closed in 1913.

Mrs. Petersen and the German Hotel Trade

In 1911 Frederich Reichmann, a German national, sought an interim injunction from the court to restrain Mrs. Uschmann and her husband from operating the Station Hotel in Kowloon. Mr. Reichmann charged that Mrs. Uschmann had broken a contract they had signed in November 1909, when he purchased from her for $30,000 her interest and good will in the Oriental Hotel on Queen's Road Central. The contract contained a clause preventing her from conducting in Hong Kong the business of innkeeping, publican or restaurant. The purpose of the clause was to prevent her from attracting to a new establishment the German trade. A summary of evidence presented in court provides information on the background of both the parties in the case. Mrs. Uschmann claimed in her defence that the good will of the Station Hotel was the property of her husband, Robert Albrecht Uschmann, and that she was only his assistant. She had been connected with establishments licensed to sell spirits for some twenty or twenty five years. She became the proprietor of the Thomas' Hotel on the south side of Queen's Road between Ice House and Duddell Streets. The hotel when she took it over had become bankrupt and was closed. No good will went with the transaction. Mr. O E. Owen, then proprietor of the Grand Carlton Hotel, but a former employee of Mrs. Uschmann in 1904 when she and her former husband, Mr. R.A. Matthaey, were operating the Occidental Hotel in Kowloon, stated to the court that it was his opinion "that the Station Hotel would compete with the Grand" (Mrs. Uschmann had changed the name of the Thomas' Hotel to the Oriental Hotel and Mr. Reichmann, in turn, had changed it to the Grand Hotel) because of her "long association with the hotel business and her intimate knowledge of the German community." In fact, "The German customers used to call her 'Mother' as a pet name" (HKT 6 June 1911).
Fredenk Reichmann had left Germany in 1897 at the age of sixteen. For some time he was in London where he rose to the position of chief inspector of the popular restaurants of Lyons and Co. He then spent a short time in Australia where he married the daughter of Mr. A.B. Crew, a former head of the Land Record Office in Sydney. Mr. Crew wished to set up his new son-in-law in business in Hong Kong. As a German, Mr. Reichmann was eager to take over an establishment that had most of the German trade.

There are a number of difficulties presented in the material available on the background and identity of Mrs. Uschmann. In the correspondence concerning German women and children interned in 1914 it was stated that Miss Petersen is the daughter of Mrs. Uschmann and that she had a sister in the Colony that might be willing to support her. The sister was probably Mrs. Arthur G. Seidel. On a list of the internees the names of Mrs. Uschmann, Mrs. Seidel and Miss Petersen follow each other. The next clue for establishing relationships is the obituary of Mrs. John Sanderson Smith, who died on 9 March 1936, aged forty one. She was born in Hong Kong and had been the proprietress of the Station Hotel which had been closed in March 1930. She was survived by her husband, J.S. Smith of the firm of Luhring and Smith, two sisters in Shanghai, a brother in London and a brother-in-law A.C. Seidel. Wreaths were sent by "Sister Maggie, Harry and family, Sister Martha, Arthur and family, Sister Lizzie, Franz and family" (CM 9 Mar. 1936, emphasis supplied). 

This information can be related to the children of Christian Friedrich William Petersen and his wife Mary recorded in the baptismal register of the London Missionary Society's Chinese congregation. Maggie Mary born on 15 October 1887, Martha Louise born on 5 January 1889 and Henry William born on 4 January 1892. These were presumably the brother and sisters of Mr. Sanderson Smith who was born in 1895 but not recorded as baptised in the church records. If these conclusions are correct it would identify her mother, Mrs. Uschmann, as the wife of Mr. Petersen, the long time proprietor of the German Tavern. Mary was his second wife. He died in 1896 aged sixty four leaving his wife to administer his estate which was valued at $16,000. Was Mary Petersen a Chinese? Children of Caucasian parents were not baptised in Chinese congregations except under the most unusual circumstances. On the other hand, if she were Chinese, why would she have been interned as a German alien in 1914? The statement in 1911 that Mrs. Uschmann had been connected with the German trade some twenty or twenty five years suggests that she
began her long association as the wife of Mr. Petersen, the proprietor of the German Tavern.

After his death she was left with several small children and by the year 1904 was married to R.A. Matthaey. He became bankrupt in February 1907, having operated the Occidental Hotel in Kowloon since 1904. His wife in October 1907 opened the Oriental Hotel on Queen's Road in the building formerly occupied by Thomas' Hotel. By November 1909 she had become Mrs. Uschmann.

Mr. Reichmann must have lost his case against Mrs. Uschmann as from 1911 to 1914 R.A. Uschmann was the licensee of the Station Hotel at Nos. 11 and 13 Nathan Road. The hotel was closed during the war but in November 1919 Mrs. Louisa Jane Stewart Brown applied for a spirit licence. In 1921 her name is replaced by Mrs. A.B. Sanderson Smith. A summary of the history of the Station Hotel was published in the *South China Morning Post* at the time of its closure in 1931. The proprietors Mr. and Mrs. Sanderson Smith closed it at the end of March after it had been in existence some twenty years. Two houses on Nathan Road were occupied as residences when purchased by the Procurator of the Dominican Mission in 1908. In the following year Mrs. Uschmann established a boarding house. Then an annex in the rear facing Hankow Road was purchased by the Dominicans. Mr. J. Sanderson Smith arrived in Hong Kong in 1921 and married Mrs. Uschmann. In my opinion the account is incorrect in stating he married Mrs. Uschmann. I conclude from the evidence presented above that he married Miss Petersen, the daughter of Mrs. Uschmann.

Mr. Reichmann, though he lost in his attempt to stop competition in the German hotel trade, continued offering hospitality to them until the outbreak of the First World War. Before that he had applied for British nationality but he had not yet received it. In considering the treatment to be given to enemy aliens the Provost Marshall recommended that special consideration be given to Mr. Reichmann. He had been a valuable source of information to the British military authorities and was considered to be of value in keeping tabs on what was happening in the German community. However, events overtook the recommendation as soon after almost all the Germans in the colony were either interned or deported. (CO 129/413 - information from Provost Marshall regarding Germans on List, 8 Oct. 1914) The list of spirit licensees for November 1914 states that Mr.
Reichmann’s application for the Grand Hotel was not granted as he was a German national. He applied again in 1915 but to no avail. Though he was unsuccessful, the application suggests he was not interned with his fellow countrymen. After peace returned he again sought a decision on his application for naturalisation (CO 129/455, p. 37, 11 July 1919).

I have presented this material in what some might consider excessive detail because it relates a connected history of accommodation for travelling and resident Germans from 1859, when Petersen’s German Tavern was opened, to 1931, when his daughter retired from the management of the Station Hotel in Kowloon and closed its doors.

**Cafe Weissmann**

The Cafe Weissmann opened in 1904. In 1914/15 the name was changed to Wiseman, a less Germanic spelling. Lane, Crawford and Co. had acquired a controlling interest in Weissmann Ltd, so its Cafe was not considered to be alien enemy property. The licence for spirits was transferred from Reinbold Ekhaidt, who had held it from 1909, to Ellen H.K. King.

According to Jarrett, the author of the column “Old Hong Kong” in the *South China Morning Post* (23 Sept. 1933) Hans Weissmann was a ship’s baker who began business near the Bowrington Canal. If this is accurate, he must have begun his Hong Kong career at the Hong Kong and China Bakery Co. It was a limited company with the controlling interest being held by Lane, Crawford and Co. Mr. Weissmann opened a restaurant in a small room in the Beaconfield Arcade in 1904, but he soon moved to the south east corner of Queen’s Road and Wyndham Street. Here, in addition to his “Refreshment Room”, he had a “Tiffin Room” at No. 1 Wyndham Street. At the same time the business became a limited company (DP 20, 27 Apr. 1905). The management of the restaurant was taken over by Carl Frieder in 1908. A year later the business was moved to No. 14 Des Voeux Road Central. Mr. Frieder was not long after replaced by Reinbold Ekhaidt, who conducted the business under various names until 1914.

Cafe Weissman became Cafe Wiseman in 1914. No. 14 Queen’s Road was redeveloped in 1926 as the Exchange Building. Lane, Crawford and Co. had its store there and for several years Cafe Wiseman became the...
Lane, Crawford Restaurant and for several years in the 1930s it was known as the Exchange Restaurant, but in 1935 the name reverted again to Cafe Wisseman (details of management, location and name are from notices of the Spirit Licensing Board published in the Hong Kong Government Gazette).

An incident took place at the Cafe in September 1914, just after war was declared, which placed three German nationals under suspicion. They were observed throwing down a copy of the China Mail and stamping on it because it contained a report that the British had compulsorily bought two battleships then being built for the Turkish Government (Co 129/413, Information from Provost Marshall regarding Germans on list, 8 Oct. 1914).

**Firms**

I have tried to reconstruct the history of these firms from the records available in Hong Kong. The average reader may not be interested in the detailed account of change of partnership, location and other minutiae, but as most of this material has not been published previously, I presume to do so now in the hope that there may be some who have an interest in the firms may learn more about them. The information and references may provide a starting place for those who might wish to write a fuller history of particular firms.

Though Germany was not a colonial power in Asia, its merchants carried on an active trade there. Throughout the nineteenth century German firms became increasingly competitive with those of other western countries. In the opening decades of the century Canton was the centre for trade, but it declined in importance when the ports at Hong Kong and Shanghai developed.

When war was declared between Britain and Germany in August 1914 citizens of enemy countries were placed under parole but in October new laws were enacted enabling the Hong Kong Government to place German nationals who held reserve status in the military to be interned. Representatives of German businesses in Hong Kong sent a letter dated 30 October to the American Consul General there asking him to submit it to the British authorities. The merchants appealed for a reversal of the orders on the grounds that they had contributed through the years to the
While naturally trading for their own benefit, they think that they may justly claim to have contributed in no small way to the development, growth of prosperity of the Colony, and in their capacity as peaceful traders they consider themselves and their businesses a valuable asset to the community. It has taken decades of hard work to create such an asset which they consider particularly valuable to the Colony since they have as impartial traders been instrumental to a great extent in attracting to this part business from all quarters of the globe thereby promoting British trade more than that of any other nation. As reasonable as this argument might seem to those who could differentiate between trade and politics, it found no sympathetic response among those who were responsible for the defence of the island and the patriotic call of God and King (CO 129/144, p. 573 No. 520005)

The letter was signed by the following firms with the date of their founding:

- Siemssen and Co. 1848
- Arnhold, Karberg and Co. 1865
- Melcher and Co. 1866
- Sandei, Wierer and Co.
- F. Blackhead and Co. 1854
- Reuter, Brockelmann and Co. 1846
- Garrels, Bornet and Co. 1860
- William Meyerink and Co. 1889
- Carlowitz and Co. 1866
- Deutsche-Asiatische Bank 1900
- Carl Bodker and Co. 1860
- Raderkers and Co. 1868
- The Medical Hall 1853
- Jebsen and Co. 1894
- Berbinger and Co. 1908
- Bume and Renf 1905
- Ferd. Bornemann and Co. 1888
- Kruse and Co. 1868
- C.M. Schellhass
- Hans Schubart
- G. Prien 1880
- Ulcrup and Shluter 1905
- China Export Import and Bank Compagnie 1856
- Charles J. Gaupp 1859
In addition to these names additional names appear on a list of firms in liquidation and the respective liquidators. These additions were:

- Wendt and Co.
- O. Struckmeyer, Siettssen and Co.
- Hugo G. Fromm
- Witzke and Co.
- Hill, Bergdahl and Co. and personal affairs of Mr. F. Loria
- A. Bune, personal affairs
- Hamburg Amerika Line
- Norddeutsche Lloyd
- Austrian Lloyd
- H. Wicking and Co.

**Pustau and Company**

William Charles Engelbrecht von Pustau announced in a Hong Kong newspaper that on 1 January 1846 the business of William Pustau would in the future be carried on under the name of William Pustau and Co. at Hong Kong and Canton. (FC 12 Jan. 1846). In 1848 the company was appointed agent for the Austrian Lloyd Steam Navigation Co. They advertised the "Overland Route" from Trieste to Alexandria. The passengers would then cross by land to the Red Sea where they would connect with the P. and O. route to Ceylon (FC 20 Nov. 1858).

William Pustau was named Consul for Bremen in 1852 (FC 31 Jan. 1852). He later returned to Germany and opened an office of the firm at Hamburg. The firm failed in 1878 (DP 30 Dec. 1878). This failure pushed him into a breakdown and he entered a mental asylum where he died in 1880 aged fifty nine (CM 18 Feb. 1880). His business failure may have been caused by over extension into real estate. In 1867 news from London stated that William Pustau of Altona had lately bought 19 Pall Mall and was in the course of erecting "a magnificent mansion of five storeys on the site" (CM 4 Jan. 1867). Three years later news from Hamburg stated that he had purchased "the extensive and beautifully wooded grounds at Menstedten, on the banks of the Elbe, known as Parish's Villa from the family of Mr. Parish, formerly the head of the firm of Parish and Company, China Merchants, Hamburg, for the sum of 2,000,000 marks. "Mr. Pustau intends to pull down the building and substitute a handsome modern country villa on a better locality in the centre of the park" (CM 39 July 1870).
Charles Brodersen, a partner of Pustau and Co., left at the end of 1861. Two new members were admitted to replace him, Julius Menke and G.W. Sieweisz von Reeseman (GG 5 Apr. 1862). The latter left in 1867 and Theodore Probst was named a partner (GG 12 Jan. 1867). A relative, William Probst, was already a partner, but left at the end of 1869 (GG 8 Jan. 1870). Theodore Probst's interest ceased in 1871 (DP 8 Feb. 1871). New partners were Otto Christian Behn and Johannes F. Cordes. Dr. Behn's interest ceased in 1875 and that of Mr. Cordes the next year (DP 20 Apr. 1876, 2 Feb. 1877).

After the failure of 1878 a new company was formed. Two of the sons of the founder of the old firm became partners in the new, Wilhelm Carl Engelbrecht von Pustau, Junior, and Theodore Johannes Engelbrecht von Pustau. The firm became Reuter, Brockelmann and Co. in 1898. Ernest Carl Ludwig Reuter had been a partner in Pustau and Co. from about the year 1882 and Friedrich Alexander Alfred Buesing Brockelmann was admitted to partnership five years later (DP 4 Jan. 1887). Mr. Reuter died at sea only a few months after the name of the company had been changed (DP 15 Nov. 1889). Mr. Brockelmann died in 1902, aged forty-five (CM 15 Mar. 1902).

In 1914 the office of Reuter, Brockelmann and Co. was in the Prince's Building. The partners were H. Heyn, of Hamburg, R. Fuhrmann and M. Steger.

Carlowitz and Company

The first German firm to be permanently established in China was Carlowitz and Co. It was founded by Richard von Carlowitz who opened an office at Minqua's Hong in the Canton foreign factory compound in 1844. Since 1840, he had been coming to China on periodic business trips sailing around the Cape of Good Hope (DP 31 Dec. 1895). He went into partnership with Bernard Harkot in 1846 (CM 13 Mar. 1846). A branch office was opened at No. 2 D'Aguilar Street in Hong Kong in 1866. At the same time Adolphus Eibeke was admitted a partner (GG 7 July 1866). In March 1868 the Hong Kong office was moved to 15 Praya Central opposite the wharf of Douglas Lapraik and Co. (DP 31 Mar. 1868).

Mr. Carlowitz served as the Prussian Consular Agent in Hong Kong (GG 5 Jan. 1867). By that time he had the title of Baton. He retired from
the business in 1876 and died at Dresden in June 1886 (DP 17 June 1886, 31 Dec. 1895).

Bernard Harkort established a firm of his own at Shanghai in 1857 when he took over the business of Trautmann and Co (FC 30 June 1857). He retired in 1863 and returned to his home at Leipzig where he died in 1865 (CM 5 Feb. 1863, 7 Dec. 1865). Gustav von Hitzeroth became a partner of Carlowitz and Co. in 1864.

The importance of the firm in the German trade with China is indicated by the presence of successive partners of the firm on the Board of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation from 1879 to 1914. A branch of the firm was opened at Shanghai in 1877 under the management of Alfred F.O. Krause (DP 3 Apr. 1877). Mr. Krause and Bernhard Philipp Schmacker became partners in the company in 1881 (CM 3 Jan. 1881). Chemical dyes have long been a specialty of the German trade. In 1880 Carlowitz and Co. advertised themselves as the agents for the Aniline Dye Co. of Berlin (DP 30 Apr. 1881). The company represented German financiers in arranging a five million mark loan to His Excellency Li Hung-chang in 1887 (DP 28 Feb. 1887). It also represented the Krupp armament firm in 1912 for a loan of six million marks with the head of Chekiang Province (DP 15 May 1912).

The enlarged business interests of the firm was accompanied by the admission of additional partners: Charles Von Bose 1883, Eduard Jean Mac Paquin 1887, Gustav Adolph Degeneri, retired 1899, H. Caesar Erdmann, retired 1900 but remained a dormant partner, Friedrich Carl Paul Sachse 1893. This list is not exhaustive. When the firm was placed under liquidation in 1914 the partners were M. March, R. Lenzmann and A. Schultz, all of Hamburg, T. Rusmore in New York, B. Rosenbaum and R. Laurenz in Shanghai, A. von Bohusciewicz in Tientsin and C. Landgraf in Hong Kong.

Siemssen and Company

Pustau and Co. was the first German firm to open an office in Hong Kong. Siemssen and Co. followed them from Canton some nine years later (FC 31 Mar. 1855). George Theodor Siemssen had established himself at Canton in 1849. In 1855 he bought a lot on Queen's Road near the present Hongkong and Shanghai Bank building. Until the building he
erected on the lot was completed, he moved into temporary offices. Two marine lots were bought in 1858 in Sai Ying Pun on which extensive godowns (ware-houses) were built (Hong Kong Land Office, Memorial 1477, 21 Sept. 1858). He soon after left Hong Kong to assume management of the firm's affairs in Hamburg. There he married in 1859 a Miss Wagner (North China Herald 6 Aug. 1859). He continued to reside at Hamburg until his death on 24 November 1886 aged seventy one (DP 6 Dec. 1886).

When Mr. Sicmssen left Hong Kong his partners were Ludwig Wiese and Woldemar Nissen (FC 31 Mar. 1855). Mr. Wiese was a Norwegian by birth but subsequently became a naturalized British citizen. From 1849 to 1855 he had been an assistant in the office of Carlowitz, Harkort and Co. at Canton. At various times he served as Consul for Hamburg, Lubeck, Sweden and Norway and was acting Consul for Prussia and Austria. His connected with Sicmssen and Co. ended in 1863 (CM 5 Jan 1865). He located in London, where in 1871 he joined the Board of the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China (CM 24 July 1871). Though no longer a partner he represented the interests of Sicmssen and Co. in England. He died in England on 22 March 1887 (GG, Probate Calendar 4 July 1887). His widow Joanna died in the City of Westminster on 10 May 1904 (GG, Probate Calendar 25 Apr 1906).

Agathon Friedrich Woldemar Nissen — usually known as Woldemar — was a partner from 1855 until his death in Hamburg 28 December 1896 (DP 7 June 1897). He was a member of the Provisional Committee for the organisation of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation in 1864. He was Deputy Chairman of the Board in 1866 and Chairman in 1867. He left Hong Kong in October 1867 (CM 31 Oct 1867). In Hong Kong he was Consul for the Hansa Towns of Bremen, Hamburg and Lubeck as well as for Sweden and Norway.

The business of the firm increased rapidly. New branches were opened and new partners admitted. Rudolph Heinsen was transferred from the Canton office to Shanghai to open a new branch there in January 1856 (FC 1 Jan. 1856). He later became a partner and his interest in the company ended in 1868 (GG 9 Jan. 1869). George Wilhelm Schwemann was the managing partner at Foochow in 1861. Friedrich Adolph Joost was a partner from 1864 to 1873 (CM 1 Jan. 1864, Daily Press 28 Jan. 1874). When Messrs Schwemann and Heinsen retired from the firm in 1868, they were replaced by Ferdinand Nissen and Heinrich Hoppius (GG 9
Ferdinand Nissen retired in 1876 because of ill-health (DP 2 Jan. 1877). Hans Christian Heinrich Hoppius — usually known as Heinrich — died in Hong Kong on 12 December 1894 aged fifty-four. He had arrived in Hong Kong in 1862 at the age of twenty one. He had been the President of the German Club since its establishment (DP 13 Dec. 1894). He was apparently unmarried as he mentions neither wife nor children in his will.

When Mr. Joost left the firm in 1873 two new partners were admitted, Albert Gultzow and Paul Gerhard Hubbe (DP 28 Jan. 1874). Mr. Gultzow is not on the Hong Kong jury list after 1885. Mr. Hubbe retired from the firm in 1886 (DP 2 Mar. 1887). Nicolaus August Siebs joined the firm in 1881 (DP 2 Jan. 1877). The branch at Canton was closed for some years but reopened in 1877 (ibid). The business of the Foochow branch was transferred to Gustav Siemssen in 1888 for him to continue in his own name (DP 30 Jan. 1888).

At the time of liquidation in 1914 the partners were A. Fuchs in Hamburg, O. Stuckmeyer in Shanghai, H.A. Siebs in Hong Kong, E. Sibert in Hankow and E. Hoeft in Tsingtau.

The firm was operating a coastal steamer service of three vessels in 1872. Within twenty years the firm’s shipping interests had expanded to the China Coast Navigation Co, the German Steamship Co. of Hamburg and the Kingsan Line. In 1893 the firm represented some twenty insurance companies, most of them were German based.

Amhold, Karberg and Co.

Amhold, Karberg and Co. was established in September 1866 by Jacob Arnhold, Peter Karberg and Alemander Levysohn. The new company was a reorganisation of the former Oxford and Co. which in turn was the reorganised firm of L.E. Lebert and Oxford of Canton. The following notice was published in a Hong Kong newspaper: “Interest of L.E. Lebert of Hamburg ceased 4 December last [1857] in L.E. Lebert and Oxford of Canton, from this date business will be carried on as Oxford and Co. A. Bourjau and C.A. Hubener are authorized to sign. Macao, 12 February 1858.” (FC 18 Mar. 1858). Messrs. Bourjau and Hubener later opened a business under their own names. In June 1865 Joseph Oxford, Henry Danziger, Jacob Arnhold and Alexander Cosman Levysohn, trading under
the style of Oxford and Co., entered a suit in the Supreme Court of Hong Kong against H.B. Cama and Co. for a debt of $12,294.21 (GG 10 June 1865). Alexander C. Levysohn and Jacob Arnhold were admitted partners in Oxford and Co. 1 January 1863 (CM 30 Apr 1863).

Jacob Arnhold, one of the original partners of Arnhold, Karberg and Co. died in July 1903 (DP 18 Nov. 1903). He made his will on 5 September 1902. In it he gave his address as 5 East India Street, London, and named his brother Philip Arnhold and Sir Ewen Cameron, London Manager of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank as his executors. All his estate was left to his wife Anne (PRO Will File 201 of 1903/1642).

Philip Arnhold died on 29 March 1910 at Altona, Germany aged a little over sixty years. He was then the senior partner. His obituary states he came from Europe to China as a young man in his twenties. In 1868 he joined Messrs. Oxford and Co. of Canton. A few years later he followed his brother Jacob Arnhold to Hong Kong where the firm of Arnhold, Karberg and Co. was formed. Philip joined the new firm. The careful reader will note that the chronology of the obituary differs from the notices in contemporary newspapers noted above. After a few years a branch was established at Shanghai and Philip went there, where he remained until 1902. The obituary observes that he lived a plain business man’s life, devoid of ostentation. He was a director of the Soy Chee Spinning Co. at Shanghai and various other local companies. In 1902 he returned to London to join his brother Jacob in the management of the headquarters office. Upon Jacob’s death in 1903, Philip became senior partner, and upon the latter’s death E. Goetz assumed that position (HKT 1 Apr 1910). Mr. Arnhold made a will dated 13 May 1900. It mentions the children of his first marriage but does not name them. His second wife was Thelka Emma Elizabeth Vogler, formerly the widow of Dr. Gustav Carl Ludwig Zedelius. He left bequests to his sisters and sister in law Theresa Wagner, Nee Arnhold, Hanna Delbanco, nee Arnhold, and Adele Hoppe, nee Vogler. The place of his death is given as Klein Flottbek, Holstein, Germany (PRO Will File No. 43 of 1911/2366).

Peter Karberg, one of the founders of Arnhold, Karberg and Co., appears in the Hong Kong jury lists from 1867 to 1876. Four children were born in Hong Kong to him and his wife Helene Dorothea between September 1871 and April 1876. A Christian, Peter Karberg was an assistant in the firm at Hong Kong from 1882 to 1898. After leaving Hong Kong Peter Karberg lived in Copenhagen, Denmark.
Alexander Cosman Levysohn, another founder of the firm is on the Hong Kong jury lists in 1864 and 1865. He then went to Canton to take charge of the Shameen office there. Lewis Mendel became a partner in 1875 (DP 3 Jan. 1874). He died at Hong Kong on 4 November 1895 aged fifty one. He came to China to join the firm in 1867, retired in 1883 and returned home, but came back to Hong Kong later and established his own business as a share broker (DP 5 Nov. 1895). His will made in 1882 mentioned only his father, brothers and sisters as his heirs. His executors were Jacob Arnhold of London and Lorenz Poesnecker of Hong Kong. Mr. Mendel was a native of Altona, Germany (PRO will File No. 101 of 1896 [4/1105]).

Lorenz Poesnecker was an assistant in Arnhold, Karberg and Co. in Hong Kong from 1870 to 1880. He was authorised to sign for the firm on 6 June 1874 (DP 7 June 1876) and became a partner in 1880/81. When he made his will in June 1896 he gave his address as 5 East India Avenue, City of London. He left his estate to his wife and after her death to his children. He named Caesar Erdmann of Hamburg and Richard Mullitzer of Hof, Bavaria as his executors. He died in London on 9 July 1897 and the administration of his estate in Hong Kong was granted to Carl Beurmann and Max Carl Johann Grote as attorneys of the executors named in the will (PRO Will File No. 20 of 1898 [4/1162]).

Julius Kramer was authorised to sign for the firm in June 1888 and was admitted a partner in 1892 (DP 13 June 1888, 18 Mar. 1892). During his first years with the company he was at its Canton office. At an auction for lots in the French Concession on Shameen in November 1889 he purchased Lots 1 and 7 for $2,610 (DP 8 Nov. 1889). After being admitted a partner he moved to Hong Kong. There his wife Bertha died on 14 February 1896 at “Luginsland” on the Peak Road (DP 15 Feb. 1896). Not long after he left Hong Kong and died on 11 November 1898 at Heidelberg. Administration of his estate in Hong Kong was granted to Ernest Goetz as the attorney of Philip Arnhold (GG Probate Calendar 7 June 1898). A former street in Tai Kok Tsui, Kowloon, was named after Mr. Kramer. When the Royal Dutch Oil Co. began importing oil to China by tanker in the last decade of the nineteenth century, Arnhold, Karberg and Co. acted as its agent. Oil storage tanks were built at Tai Kok Tsui. The Royal Dutch is better known as the Shell Co.

When Philip Arnhold died in 1910 Ernest Goetz became senior partner.
In 1888 he was an assistant and in 1905 the manager in Hong Kong. Rudolph Ludwig Ernest Lemke was the head of the company when he died at Shanghai on 10 June 1908 aged forty four. The company advertised on 1 July 1908 that Wilhelm Helms and Fritz Lieb were admitted as partners and C.A.H. Westerburger was authorised to sign (SCMP 1 July 1908).

In 1914 the partners were Harry Arnhold and C.H. Arnhold of Shanghai, E. Goetz of London, M. Niclasson of Berlin and F. Leib of Hong Kong. Though the Hong Kong business of the firm was liquidated in 1914, a limited business continued at offices elsewhere in China.

In an account of the firm published in Wright’s Twentieth Century Impressions of Hong Kong, Shanghai and the Port Cities in 1908 the statement is made that: “The Teutonic thoroughness which has characterised the firm from the beginning is one of its features” (Wright, Twentieth Century Impressions, p. 788). In 1917 the two Shanghai partners of the firm, the brothers Harry and C.H. Arnhold, both probably born in London, registered the company in China under the name of Arnhold Brothers and Co (HKT 1 Oct 1917). Five years later they took over the China interests of the old Jewish firm of E.D. Sassoon and Co. — the latter is not be confused with David Sassoon, Sons and Co. which continued its operations in China. When Arnhold Brothers was organised in 1917 the following Danish or British assistants were authorised to sign: J.S.C. Cooper and J.A. Miller at Shanghai, W. Heresnperger and A.C. Cooper at Hankow and F.N. Bell at Canton (HKT 1 October 1917).

Harry Edward Arnhold wrote his will at Shanghai in 1949. As his executors he appointed his wife Martha Jean and his brother Charles Herbert (PRC Will File No. 141 of 1950/540) Esther Jean must have been a second wife as there is a will dated 1948 by Mary Oldham Arnhold which mentions her “former husband”, Harry Edward Arnhold. The will leaves bequests to Mrs. Suzette Cecilia Meyrick, née Arnhold, wife of Timothy C. Meyrick and to Philip Richard Arnhold.

The obituary of Charles Herbert Arnhold appeared in the South China Morning Post 21 November 1954: “Died Mr. Charles Herbert Arnhold, aged 75, managing director of Arnhold Trading Co. Ltd. at Matilda Hospital, Nov. 11. He had been a resident 48 years on the China coast. He is survived by his son Philip Arnhold of Hong Kong and daughter
Mrs. T.C. Meyrick of Fareham, Hants, England. He was educated at University College School, London, from where he went to Brasenness College, Oxford in 1900. He arrived in China in 1907 to join Arnhold, Karberg and Co. He was a keen supporter of racing with his later brother Harry Arnhold. They ran a stable in Shanghai for many years under the nom-de-guerre of “Winsome and Hasty”. He was the last Chairman of the Shanghai Race Club before the change of régime in China. At one time he was a member of the Shanghai Municipal Council and Vice Chairman of the British Chamber of Commerce, Shanghai. He came to Hong Kong in 1949 and the head office was then transferred here. He had been interned at the Haiphong Road Internment Camp in Shanghai. He supported the British Orchestra and the Hong Kong Concert Orchestra. He was born in London in 1881.

Since 1888 a member of the firm of Arnhold, Karbert and Co. had been on the Board of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank though, of course, after 1914 German firms were not represented. The firm also represented German financial interests in the negotiation of foreign loans to China. Its “Teutonic thoroughness” is shown by the number of offices the firm had in China in 1908 — Hong Kong, Shanghai, Canton, Hankow, Tientsin, Tsingtau, Wuhu, Kiukiang, Newchwang, Chungking, Mukden, Peking, Tsinanful, Kirin etc. It had buying offices in London, New York and Berlin. Dr. Frank King in his history of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation designates the firm as an “Anglo-German” company. Like other large China based German firms it found it advantageous to establish strong links with Britain. It was about the only German firm able to continue its trade after 1914, principally because the two Shanghai partners were born in England.

Bourjau, Hubener and Co.

Adolph Bourjau and Carl Albert Hubener were authorised to sign for L.E. Lebert and Oxford and Co. at Canton in 1858 but by the next year they were in business in Hong Kong under their own name (FC 18 Mar. 1858, 31 May 1859). They are mentioned as emigrant agents in 1866 (DP 1 Nov. 1866). Mr. Bourjau continued as a senior partner until his death on 14 February 1873 (DP. 5 Apr. 1873).

Arthur Booth was a partner in 1862/3 and Oscar Booth from 1866 to 1869. Ernest Behre was the managing partner at Shanghai in the 1860s.
Hermann Emil Hubenci was admitted a partner in 1868. In 1861 Behre, Emil Hubenci and A. Booth were assistants in the firm. Frederick Clause, another assistant, subsequently became a partner but left the firm in 1871 (DP 2 Jan 1872). Gustav Adolph Wieler and his brother Oscar were assistants in 1866. Gustav became a partner in 1873. After the closure of Bourjau, Hubenci and Co. the two brothers formed the firm of Wieler and Co. It subsequently merged with Sander and Co. to become Sander, Wieler and Co.

*Meyer and Co = Sander, Wieler and Co*

Meyer, Schaeffer and Co. was established at Hong Kong in April 1851. The partners were Julius Meyer, F.A. Schaeffer and William Fiedler (FC 24 April 1851). In the notice the name is given as F.A. Schaeffer. In the notice of Fiedler's retirement it appears as H.T.A. Schaeffer; in other documents it is Hermann Schaeffer. Mr. Fiedler retired from the firm four months later (FC 25 July 1851). They were charterers of ships for the Chinese emigration to California during the 1850s. The firm also had business connections with the Chilean port city of Valparaiso, which suggests they were also active in shipping coolie labour to South America (FC 1 July 1852). Their office in Queen's Road Central was burnt out in December 1858 (FC 8 Dec 1858). The partnership between Schaeffer and Meyer had been dissolved in April 1855 and only Hermann Schaeffer was in charge of the business at the time of the fire (FC 18 Apr. 1855). Hermann's brother Walter, an unmarried twenty year old, died of consumption at Macao in July 1857 (FC 1 July 1857). After the fire H. Schaeffer and Co. found temporary quarters on Gough Street and then moved to Hollywood Road. They were agents for the Compagnies d'Assurance Maritimes de Paris and Marseilles (FC 6 Oct. 1860). The firm shut down in 1863.

Fritz Sander, who had been an assistant in Schaeffer and Co., entered into partnership with Thomas Henry Elmenhorst in 1862 (CM 26 June 1862). The partnership was dissolved in January 1865 (GG 21 Jan. 1865). They executed a deed of assignment to Charles Henry Maurice Bosman and Adolph Meyer in December 1866 (GG 22 Dec. 1866). Bosman was interested in the shipment of Chinese labour overseas. The connection implies that the firm of Elmenhorst and Sander was connected with the same trade, as had been the firm of Meyer, Schaeffer and Co. with whom Sander had had a link in the past.
After the firm of Elmenhorst and Sander had closed under financial pressure — Elmenhorst was declared a bankrupt in July 1866 (DP 24 July 1866) — Fritz Sander continued business under his own name. Fritz Adolph Riscius Grobien joined him as a partner in 1869 (DP 20 Apr. 1869. Mr. Grobien had formerly been an assistant in Oxford and Co. After his association with Sander ceased he conducted a brokerage business in Hong Kong on his own account. He became a naturalised British subject in 1888 (GG 21 Feb. 1888).

Brune Herbert Becker became a partner of Sander, who returned to Hamburg. When Mr. Becker left for a visit home in 1892 he appointed as his attorney in Hong Kong Gottlieb Lebricht Theodor Bunge, and employee of his firm, and his brother Albert Wilhelm Arthur Becker, from the firm of Wieler and Co. in Hong Kong. Sometime between 1896 and 1911 the two firms of Wieler and Co. in Hong Kong amalgamated under the name Sander, Weiler and Co.

Wieler and co. was operating in Hong Kong in 1876 under the management of Oscar Wilhelm Wieler. Mr. Wieler returned to Germany in the year 1887 where he died on 25 August 1895. After his departure the Hong Kong office was managed by his brother Gustav Adolph. Both the brothers had been assistants in the firm of Bourjou, Hubener and Co.

At the time of the liquidation of Sander, Wieler and Co. in 1914 the partners were G. Wieler and R. Becker of Hamburg, A. Becker of Hong Kong, A. Sander and B. Mielek of Shanghai.

Melchers and Company

Siemssens and Melchers were the two largest of the German firms in China in the nineteenth century. Melchers was established at Bremen in 1806 by Anton Friedrich Carl Melchers (DP 9 Jan 1906). Sixty years later they opened a branch in Hong Kong. The partners were Hermann Melchers and Adolf Andre (DP 30 Aug. 1866). Soon after they opened their offices at No. 4 Graham Street, the old firm of Dent and Company failed. This provided the opportunity for the German firm to acquire a large and convenient office and godown on the seafront at Pedder’s Wharf (DP 21 Nov. 1868). Before the office was opened, Hermann Melchers had been an assistant in the firm of Schellhass and Company. He remained with Melchers and Company until it was liquidated in 1914. The interest
of Adolf Andre in the firm ceased in 1889 (DP 16 Feb. 1890). He left Hong Kong about 1882 and settled in London. He also had interests in France, and at the time of his death in Paris in 1911, he was director of Paguin Ltd and Maison Virot Ltd, as well as the London based firm of Andre, Mendel and Co. At the time of his death he was a baron. For some years he had been the Austrian Consul in Hongkong (DP 25 July 1911). Wilhelm Raemers was admitted a partner in 1874 (DP 3 Jan. 1874). He was appointed a Consul for Russia in Hong Kong, and was an Acting Consul for Austria. He took charge of the Shanghai office in 1881 and was elected to the French Concession's Municipal Council (CM 17 Jan 1881). He retired from the firm in 1883 and returned to Hamburg (DP 16 Jan. 1884). Carl Krebs a former bookkeeper at the Hong Kong and Dock Yard, was admitted the partner of Melchers in 1877 and sent to open a branch in Shanghai (DP 4 July 1876, 13 Apr. 1877).

Max Carl Johann became a partner about 1884, but left the firm in 1887 (DP 3 Jan. 1888). He then joined the firm of Chater and Vernon. About the year 1897 he entered into a partnership with H.Z. Just and J.J.B. Heemskerk. The partnership was dissolved soon after. Heemskerk and Grote continued under the style of Heemskerk and Grote (DP 3 Jan. 1888). In 1903 he retired from this firm (DP 1 January 1903). Laurenz Heinrich Carl Melchers Jantsen - usually known as Carl Jantsen - was an assistant in Melchers and Company in 1869. Sometime after 1880 he became a partner and was placed in charge of the Shanghai Office.

Stephen Cornelius Michaelson became an assistant in Melchers and Company in 1887. In 1888 he became a partner. As had been other partners in the Company, he was a Consul for Russia in Hong Kong. Upon the occasion of Tsar Nicholas' visit to Hong Kong, when he was still the Tsarovuth, Mr. Michaelson was awarded the order of St. Stanislaus and St. Anne. Mr. Michaelson's interest in Melchers ceased when he left China in 1898 (HKT, 30 Mar. 1898). Gustav Adolf Melchers, a nephew of Hermann Melchers, became a partner in 1894 (DP 1 Aug. 1894).

As opportunities for trade increased, the company opened new offices — Shanghai 1877, Hankow 1884, Canton 1893, Tientsin 1897 and Chinkiang 1900. In 1914 the partners were Hermann Melchers and A. Korpff of Breman, C. Michelau, J.W. Bandow and A. Widmann of Shanghai, G. Friesland of Hong Kong and K. Lindemann of Hankow. Mr. Friesland as the managing partner in Hong Kong was a director of
the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, succeeding the partners of the firm who had occupied a board seat since 1872. Some of the 1914 partners were still with the firm in 1929, Adalbeert Korff and Karl Lindemann of Bremen, Adolf Widmann and Dr. A. Korff of Shanghai and C.G. Melchers of Hong Kong. At that time the head office was in Bremen with branches in China at Shanghai, Hankow, Tientsin, Tsingtau, Canton, Swatow and Hong Kong, as well as being represented in the United States by Nelchers, Inc., of New York.

Schellhass and Co

Edward Schellhass opened an office in Hong Kong in 1861. Within a year or so Ludwig Beyer joined him as a partner. Among their trading interests were arms and ammunition. Their permit to ship munitions was canceled in 1865 for failing to make a return to the Harbour Master (GG 7 Jan. 1865). Edward Schellhass's connection with the firm ceased sometime between 1878 and 1884.

In 1863 Hermann Melchers was an assistant in the company but he left in 1866 to open the first office of Melchers and Co. in Hong Kong. A Frederick T. Schellhass established himself as a general commission agent in Hankow in 1862 and the following year he was authorized to sign for Nelchers and Co. at Hong Kong (CM 23 Apr. 1863).

Ludwig Beyer is listed as a principal of Bourjau, Hubener and Co. in the 1861 Macau Directory with offices at 35 Praia Grande. The next year he was an assistant in Eduard Schellhass’s firm in Hong Kong. He soon became a partner. His interest in the firm ceased in 1886 (DP 1 Jan. 1887). For some years he was Consul for the Netherlands in Hong Kong.

Carl Emil Bade after serving sometime as a clerk in the company became a partner in 1869/70. He was in charge of the Shanghai office but retired from the firm in 1877 (DP 1 Jan. 1878). Peter Julius Rudolph D. Buschmann — usually known as Rudolph — was a clerk in the company from 1873 to 1878. In the latter year he was admitted a partner (DP 1 Jan. 1878). He was sent to the Shanghai office but returned to Hong Kong in May to marry Johanna Elise Hinsch of Wandsbach, Germany. The marriage took place at the residence of Ludwig Beyer (DP 22 May 1878). Mr. Buschmann served as the Hong Kong Consul for the Netherlands and for Sweden and Norway. A relative, Carl Otto Bernhard Buschmann —
usually known as Bernhard — became a partner along with Friedrich Seip in 1888. He had charge of the Canton office (DP 14 Mar. 1888).

Gustav Harling became a partner in 1883 (DP 10 Jan. 1883). The firm may have been dissolved by the year 1896, for in that year George Wilhelm Gustav Harling — probably the same as Gustav Harling — was a member of the firm of Harling, Buschmann and Menzell in Hong Kong. In 1900 the name of this firm was changed to the East Asiatic Trading Co.

*Carl Bodiker and Co.*

Carl Bodiker and Co was among the German firms placed in liquidation in 1914. In a petition of German firms to the Government at that time the date of its establishment is given as 1860. I am unable to trace the company to this date. In 1912 Carl Bodiker, who styled himself as the sole partner of the company and was then resident in Hamburg, appointed Frank Esrom to hold his power of attorney in Hong Kong. The document states that by an indenture dated 28 November 1911 George Wilhelm Gustave Harling transferred to Bodiker all the business of Schuldt and Co.

A compradore’s bond and agreement dated 7 August 1908 names the partners of Schuldt and Co. at that time as Adolf Heinrich Ernest Schuldt, 28 Armurgstrasse, Hamburg, George Wilhelm Gustav Harling, same address, and Schelte Swart, Hong Kong. As noted under the history of Schellhass and Co., Mr. Harling was successively with Schellhass and Co., Harling, Buschmann and Menzell Co. and the East Asiatic Trading Co. The 1860 date for the founding of Bodiker and Co. must be the date for the founding of Schellhass and Co.

By the year 1923 Carl Bodiker and Co. was again doing business in Hong Kong as import and export merchants and engineers. The partners in 1929 were O. May and B. Soltau.

*Hesse, Ehlers and Co. = China Export and Import Bank Compagnie*

The China Import and Export Bank Compagnie was one of the firms place under liquidation in 1914. It had its origins in the firm of Hesse, Ehlers and Co.
Paul Ehlers opened an office in Macao in September 1858 as a general agent and commission merchant (FC 9 Sept. 1858). This was during the Second Opium War when foreign merchants who had been trading at Canton had to locate in Hong Kong or Macao. After the British forces occupied Canton some of the merchants moved back. Paul Ehlers moved on 9 December 1858 (FC 9 Dec. 1858). In January 1859 he and Theodore Hesse entered into partnership as Hesse, Ehlers and Co (GG 8 Jan. 1859). Mr. Ehlers returned to Europe in 1865 and withdrew from the firm. It continued under the name of Hesse and Co (GG 18 Nov. 1865). Five years after his departure from China Mr. Ehlers returned and began conducting business under his own name at Hong Kong (GG 14 May 1870). In 1872 Paul Ehlers and Carl Robert Meuser formed a partnership. Meuser had been doing business on his own account since October 1871 (CM 3 Jan, 20 Oct. 1872). The firm went into liquidation in 1874. The business was taken over by a former employee Justus Peter Lembke of Hamburg (CM. 29 Sept. 1875). He continued doing business in Hong Kong as Justus Lembke and Co until 1890 when he transferred the business and good will to the China Export and Import Bank Compagnie. Mr. Lembke was appointed the manager of the new Hong Kong office of the Hamburg based firm and Hermann Witte and Ernest Brubitz were authorised to sign for the firm (HKT 3 Mar. 1890). Since writing this article I have received from Mr. Alfred Schmitt, of Hoechst China Ltd, a history of the firm entitled Die China Export-Import-und-Bank-Compagnie, undated but recently published. After the First World War the company was re-established in Hong Kong with its head office in Shanghai and branches also at Canton, Tientsin, Osaka and Tokyo.

When Paul Ehlers returned to Europe in 1865 the business of Hesse, Ehlers and Co, was continued by Theodore Hesse under the name of Hesse and Co with Herman Peter Hase in charge of the Canton office. Under his full name Anton Hermann Peter Hase, he was admitted a partner in 1867 (GG 5 Jan. 1867). Six months later Mr. Hesse withdrew and it was continued under the same name by Mr. Hase. Hase died at Marseilles in December 1873. He named Hermann Stolterfoht, an assistant in his firm, as the executor of his will (PRO Will File No. 221 of 1874 [4/274]). Leonard Stael became a partner of Hesse and Co in 1869 and retired in 1879 (GG 3 July 1869, DP 1 Jan. 1880).

Hermann Stolterfoht was admitted a partner in Hesse and Co, shortly after the death of the senior partner in 1873. Charles Joseph Hirst joined
Mr. Stolterfoht in 1880 (DP 6 Mar. 1880) The following notice appeared in the Government Gazette on 1 January 1885: “We, Hermann Stolterfoht and Charles Hirst, the only remaining partners in the firm of Hesse and Company, Hong Kong and Canton, have decided to continue the business of the said firm under name Stolterfoht and Hirst with the same capital as heretofore. The interest and responsibility of the original partner, Mr. Theodore Hesse, ceased entirely on 30 June 1867 when his capital was withdrawn. Mr. Oscar Wegener has been authorised to sign for the new firm per procuration.” The firm continued under this name for ten years. Then Mr. Hirst withdrew and was replaced by Edward Hagen and the name was changed to Stolterfoht and Hagen. In 1898 the business was transferred to Lautz, Wegener and Co. The liquidators of the old company were Oscar Wegener and Alfred Finke (DP 5 Jan. 1898).

Mr. Hagen must have died within a short time of entering the partnership as the surviving partner advertised in April 1897 that the late Mr. Hagen’s interest in the company ended on 1 January 1897 and Mr. Stolterfoht would continue the business on his own account (GG 19 Apr. 1897). A year later Mr. Stolterfoht transferred his business to the firm of Lautz, Wegener and Co. The firm of Lautz and Haesloop was registered at the German Consulate at Swatow in 1892 (DP 25 Apr. 1892). The next year the firm of Lautz, Wegener and Co. was formed by Johann Theodore Lautz, Oscar Wegener and Franz Heinrich Luedes Haesloop (DP 3 Jan 1893). Lautz had been at one time an assistant in Melchers and Co. Mr. Wegener had been an assistant in the firm of Hesse and Co. and Stolterfoht and Hirst. He remained with the firm of Lautz, Wegener and Co. until his death by suicide in April 1902. He left a letter stating he took his life because of ill health (HKT 24 Apr. 1902)

Vogel, Hagedorn and Co. opened a branch at Shanghai in 1871 under the management of Charles Vogel and Theodore Schneider (DP 1 Aug. 1871). About the year 1883 Vogel and Co. ceased doing business in Hong Kong.

Heinrich Kirchhoff became a partner of Vogel, Hagedorn and Co. in 1868 and remained with the company when its name was changed to Vogel and Co. He was successively in Canton and Shanghai. After Vogel and Co. closed, he traded as a partner in the firm of Kirchhoff and Levogt at Shanghai, where he died in September 1883 (DP 3 Oct. 1883).
Wilhelm Detmers became a partner in Radecker and Co. in the 1880s and was still with it, though living in Hamburg, at the time of liquidation of the company in 1914.

This somewhat tortuous account of the partnerships, changing of firm names, and former employees forming new companies illustrates some of the complicated relationships in the business community in Hong Kong, especially among the individuals who never developed such large trading interest as companies like Melchers, Siemssen and Co. and Arnhold, Karberg and Co.

Radecker, Hagedorn and Co, Krummenacher and Co, Vogel Hagedorn and Co

Radecker and Co. was among the German firms placed in liquidation in 1914. Richard Hermann Radecker from 1862 to 1864 was an accountant in Schellhass and Co. He was briefly with Elmenhorst and Co. before he went into partnership with F.W. Hagedorn as Radecker, Hagedorn and Co. in July 1865 (GG 1 July 1865). Mr. Radecker retired from the firm in 1867, but the business was continued by the remaining partners as Hagedorn and Co (GG 5 Jan. 1867). Mr. Radecker continued as an independent merchant until he joined with Joseph Krummenacher in the firm of Krummenacher and Co. (GG 2 Jan. 1869). From 1876 to 1882 Richard H. Radecker appears in the jury lists as a merchant in the firm of Radecker and Co. He died in Hamburg on 12 April 1884 aged forty four years (DP 23 May 1884).

Joseph Krummenacher, who joined up with Mr. Hagedorn in 1869, had been since 1866 a partner in the firm of Sander and Company (DP 29 Sept. 1866, GG 8 Feb. 1868). Mr. Krummenacher last appears on the jury list in 1872.

Frederick William Hagedorn began his business career in Hong Kong in 1864 as an assistant in the firm of Hesse, Ehlers and Co. In July 1865, he and Richard H. Radecker became partners. He continued the business when Mr. Radecker left the firm in 1867 (GG 1 July 1865, 5 Jan. 1867). Hagedorn and Co. took on two new partners in 1868 and the name of the firm was changed to Vogel, Hagedorn and Co. The new partners were Emil Vogel and Heinrich Kirchhoff (GG 15 Feb. 1868). In 1877, Mr. Hagedorn retired from this company (DP 3 Sept. 1877).
Emile Ernest William Vogel had previously been an assistant in the large American firm of Russell and Co. After Mr. Hagedorn and Mr. Vogel dissolved their partnership, Vogel continued in business as Vogel and Co. until he left Hong Kong in 1881/82.


The firm of E. and J. Meyer was in operation by the year 1863. The 1866 Hong Kong Directory names the partners as Heinrich Constantine Meyer, Wilhelm Daniel Johannes Meyer (absent) and Otto Benecke. One of the assistants was G.C F. Rodatz, who later went into business as Rodatz and Company. The same year the firm executed a deed of assignment of its assets to Frederick August Julius Menke and Albert Eduard Deetjen (GG 1 Dec. 1866). Heinrich Constantine Eduard Meyer later appears in 1891 as a partner in the firm of Meyer and Company.

At about the same time as the firm of E. and J. Meyer closed, the firm of Bahlmann and Company had financial reversals. It was dissolved. The liquidators were A. Letham and Adolph Meyer (DP 25 Aug. 1866).

Adolph Emil Meyer is on the Hong Kong jury lists in 1865 as a clerk of (E. and J.) Meyer and Co., in 1866 as a merchant in Bahlman and Co., in 1867 as an independent broker, from 1868 to 1871 as a merchant, and then successively with Meyer, Alaboi and Co. and Meyer and Co. He died in March, 1884 at Hamburg, aged thirty nine. His obituary states he was a partner in Messrs. Meyer and Co., Hong Kong (DP 9 May 1884).

Johannes Alaboi and Adolph E. Meyer entered into a partnership about the year 1873. In 1872, J. Alaboi is listed as an assistant to A.E. Meyer, and from 1869 to that year he was an assistant in Schellhass and Company. The partnership between Meyer and Alaboi, as Meyer, Alaboi and Co., was dissolved in 1876 (DP 1 May 1876). Shortly after Mr. Alaboi opened an office in his own name (DP 1 July 1876) until the year 1880, when there must have been financial reversals, he then became an assistant in the firm of Lamment and Co. He died in Hong Kong in May 1891, leaving a small estate of $1,500 (GG, H.K. Probate Calendar, 1891). The interest of Adolph Meyer was acquired after his death by Heinrich Constantine Eduard Meyer, of Hamburg and London. Johann Heinrich Garrels, who had become a partner about 1884, retained his interest in the
firm and Mr. Friedrich Christian Lemke was authorised to sign for the firm (GG 1 Jan. 1885). From 1879 to 1881 Mr. Garrels had been an assistant in Siemssen and Company, but in 1882 transferred to Meyer and Co. He remained a partner of Meyer and Co. until its name was changed in 1908 to Garrels, Borner and Co.

Heinrich Friedrich Meyerink was admitted a partner in Meyer and Co. in 1878 (DP 1 Jan. 1878). He left the firm by 1884. From 1890 he was connected with the firm of William Meyerink and Co. The head office was in Shanghai, and a partner Max Tiefenbah was in Hamburg. Hermann Friedrich Meyerink died at Kobe on 10 September 1908, aged fifty eight (DP 21 Sept. 1908). William Meyerink died in 1928, aged eighty two (SCMP 31 Oct. 1928).

Another partner of Meyer and Co. was O. Grabe, who was authorised to sign for the firm at Tientsin in 1874 (DP 3 Jan. 1874). His interest as a partner ceased in 1879, but he continued to sign until 31 May 1880 (DP 1 Jan. 1880). Gustav Fischer replaced Grabe as a partner. Johann George Ludwig Schroter and Hermann Friedrich George Borner became partners in 1896. The latter had been a former assistant in Siemssen and Co. before joining the staff of Meyer and Co. as an assistant. In 1896 the firm operated in Shanghai under the name of Meyer, Lemke and Co.

There was a name change in 1908. Meyer and Co. became Garrels, Börner and Co., though there was not a change in partnership at the time. The partners were J. Heinrich Garrels, Herman Borner, Paul Wassendorf and Carl Schroter. Hartwig Nellner continued to sign for the firm (SCMP 1 July 1908). The Company was placed under liquidation in 1914.

One of the three assistants in E. and J. Meyer and Co. in 1866 was Gittinied Carl Friedrich Rodatz. He left in 1868 to open a ship chandlery with Rudolph Freks. The business continued until 1868 (DP 11 May 1878). Mr. Rodatz was Secretary of Club Germania in 1876.

Heuermann, Herbst and Co.

Leopold Frickel conducted a ship chandlery and sail making establishment on Queen's Road from 1862. The business later became McEwen, Frickel and Co. It was not placed under liquidation in 1914 but became bankrupt the following year (CM 4 June 1915). In 1910 Ernest
Oscar Rudolph Vollbrecht became a partner (CM 3 Jan. 1910), though he was not the first person with a German sounding name associated with the firm for in 1872 two of the assistants were Frederick William Heuermann and Carl August Edward Herbst — usually known as Edward. They began business on their own in 1876. Mr. Herbst died in Hong Kong in December 1905 aged sixty four (DP 25 Dec. 1905) Mr. Heuermann also died in Hong Kong the same year aged sixty eight (DP 25 Feb. 1905)

Dreyer and Co

Frederick Dreyer is listed as a merchant on Queens Road in 1867 and appears on the jury list of Hong Kong until 1875. His partner was Claus Budde Budde arrived in Hong Kong in 1863 and was an assistant in the firm of Adam Scott and Co from 1864 to 1867, when he joined Mr. Dreyer (DP 17 June 1871).

William Dreyer had been in the firm of Schwemann and Co. at Canton from 1847 to 1856 when the name was changed to Dreyer and Co A branch was established at Hong Kong (FC 1 Jan 1856) The company closed its branch at Canton in 1862 and moved to Newchwang in North China (FC 31 Mar., 1 July, 1862).

Scheele and Co

Lutkens, Roest and Co = Lutkens, Einsmann and Co

Ludwig Stiemund Lutkens and Gustave Adolph Roest were in business in Hong Kong from 1862 to 1865, when the firm of Lutkens, Roest and Co went bankrupt (GG 3 June 1865) For several years after the bankruptcy Mr. Lutkens traded in his own name, but from 1871 to 1876 he was an assistant in the firm of Pustat and Co. Mr. Roest, before joining up with Lutkens, was an assistant in the firm of Schaeffer and Co as early as 1858 (FC 1 May 1858).

The firm of Scheele and Co is listed in the 1891 Hong Kong Directory. Its principal, Alfred Scheele, was then living in Hamburg. The company went into liquidation in 1897. The partners were Alfred Scheele, Richard Abesser and Gustav Axenroth. The business of the old firm was continued by Messrs. Abesser and Axenroth under the name of Lutkens, Einsmann and Co (GG 28 Aug. 1897). They were still in business in Hong Kong in 1905
Friedrich August Richard Abesser — usually known as Richard — was an assistant in Schellhass and Co. in 1885 and 1886 and then with Scheele and Co and its successor Lutkens, Einstmann and Co. Mr. Atzenroth had also been an assistant of Schellhass and Co. before the firm of Scheele and Co. was formed.

Arnemann and Co.

They were established by the year 1865 when a notice of the cancellation of their permit to ship munitions of war appeared in the Government Gazette. They had not made the proper return to the Harbour Master’s Office (GG 7 Jan. 1865). The firm closed in October of the next year (DP 4 Oct. 1866). G.W Hartmann paid the debts of the company and then conducted business under his own name, but for a very brief period.

Deetjen and Von Bergen

Edward Deetjen and Ernest William von Bergen, both former employees of Bourjou, Hubener and Co. set themselves up in partnership in 1866 (GG 1 Jan. 1866). Mr. von Bergen retired from the firm in 1871, but Mr. Deetjen continued in business under his own name (DP 15 Apr. 1871). Adolph Lebreht Strack was a partner of Deetjen and Co. from 1873 to 1876 (DP 1 Mar. 1873, 26 Jan. 1877). In 1893 Albert Edward Deetjen the only remaining member of the firm closed its office in Hong Kong (GG 30 Dec. 1893).

Raynal and Co., Peter and Ebel, Milisch and Co.

Raynal and Co. had an office in Macao from 1861 to 1877. One of the partners Gustav Raynal was in Hong Kong from 1867 to 1890. He and his partner Carl Milisch dissolved the company in 1877 (DP 2 Jan. 1877). Mr. Raynal continued to conduct business in Hong Kong until he left in 1890. Mr. Milisch continued the business in Macao. When the firm of Raynal and Co. ceased doing business, Mr. Milisch took over the business of Ebell and Co. at Macao. Carl Friedrich Riner Milisch was a long time resident of Macao. He died there in 1910 leaving to survive him a daughter Louise Milisch.

Heinrich Ebell was an assistant of Gustav Raynal and Co. at Macao in
1863. By the year 1867 he was in partnership with N.G. Peter. Mr. Peter served as Vice-consul for France at Macao, but left when he retired from the firm in 1871 (Macau Boletim 1 July 1871). Mr. Ebell in 1877 transferred his business at Macao to C. Milish and joined the firm of Edward Herton of Swatow under the style Herton, Ebell and Co. At the same time the firm opened an office at Haiphong in Tonquin (DP 16 Jan., 8 Oct. 1877).

Kirchner, Boger and Co

John Alfred Kirchner, and assistant in Siemssen and Co., and Heinrich Boger, an assistant in Hesse, Ehlers and Co., entered into a partnership in 1866 to conduct business as merchants and commission agents under the name of Kirchner, Boger and Co. (CG 7 July 1866). They closed down in 1874. Mr. Boger died about the year 1905 (PRO Hong Kong, Probate file 18/1905/1727 jacket for will of Heinrich Boger, but there is no document in the jacket).

Firms established after 1880

There was a significant increase of German firms in Hong Kong during the 1860s. Partially this is attributable to the necessity of firms leaving Canton during the Second Opium War and relocating in Hong Kong and to a lesser extent in Macao. When foreigners could return to Canton not all firms which had been operating there chose to do so. Others did but retained their office in Hong Kong.

I have found no records of the establishment of a German firm in Hong Kong in the 1870s. Bornemann and Co. opened an office in Hong Kong in 1888. The founder was Fred Bornemann. In 1914 the partners were Carl Breeding and Sohn, Soltau, Germany. H. Schumacher, Shanghai and G. Binder. Gustav Wilhelm Binder began his business career in Hong Kong in 1897 as a clerk in Carlowitz and Co. The firm returned to Hong Kong after the Second World War. In 1929 the principals were Sum Pak-ming, F. Ortlepp and H.A. Westphal.

Jebsen and Co. according to the list of companies in liquidation after 1914 was established in 1894. At the time of liquidation the partners were J. and H. Jebsen. Jacob Friedrich Christian Jebsen appears on the Hong Kong jury lists from 1897 to 1901. Christian Wuzke and Heinrich
Peter Jebsen in 1908 established a business of repairing ships, boilers, machines etc. at Kowloon under the name Witzke and Co. In 1912 they mortgaged their property in Kowloon to Johann Heinrich Jebsen and Jacob Friedrich Christian Jebsen, then residing in Germany (PRO Hong Kong, Surrendered Beeds Series 11 B. No. 171). Both Witzke and Co. and Jebsen and Co. were liquidated in 1914, but Jebsen’s returned to Hong Kong in the 1920s.

Ulderup and Schluter opened an establishment in Hong Kong in 1906 as general merchants, engineering agents and motor boat builders. The partners were Johannes P. Ulderup and Carl Schluter. When Jebsens returned to Hong Kong after the Second World War, Mr. Ulderup was head of their machinery department.

Berblingei and Co. was founded by A. Berblinger and W. Otto in 1908 and was liquidated in 1914. The firm of Hugo Fromm opened in Hong Kong in 1908. In 1914 its manager was A. Jabarand. George Prien was an assistant in Blackhead and Co. in 1902 but in 1908 he set himself up in business as a dealer in cigars and tobacco. In 1914 his shop was in the Hong Kong Hotel Building. F. Wendt had an office at 6 Ice House Street in 1902. His business became Wendt and Co. in 1908. The partners in 1914 were F.A. Wendt and W. Melchers. The aerated water firm of Hdl Beigdahl and Co. was liquidated in 1914.

Several firms in existence in 1914 appear to be German but were not on the list of those placed under liquidation. Heuser, Eberius and Co. is listed in the 1914 Hong Kong Directory but both its partners were not in Hong Kong at the time. Mr. Heuser had retired from the firm in 1911, and a year later the remaining partner, Gottfried Fritz Eberius committed suicide (HKT 1 Mar. 1912).

The firm of Lamke and Rogge was formed in 1890 as shipbrokers by Johannes Lambe and Carl Heinrich Rogge. Mr. Lamke had been an assistant in Blackhead and Co. and then Arnhold, Karber and Co. In 1885 he had his own shipbroking office until he and Mr. Rogge became partners. Mr. Rogge began his business career in Hong Kong with Melchers and Co. In 1914 Lamke and Rogge are listed as ship, freight and coal brokers. The directory also lists Robitske and Reis (Grossmann and Co), merchants, 12 Des Voeux Road Central. No partners or staff are named. Christian Friedrich Grossman became a partner of Kirchner, Boger and Co. in 1867.
Before that he had been an assistant in Siemssen and Co. He went into business for himself in 1875 and two years later took on as a partner his brother Gustav Adolph Grossmann (DP 19 Jan. 1878). Christian Friednch died in Hong Kong February 1899. A few days before his death Alexander Heinrich Alfred Finke became a co-partner (GG 7 Jan. 1899). Mr. Finke had been an assistant in the firms of Stolterfoht and Hinst 1892-1895, Stolterfoht and Hagan 1896 and Lauts, Wegener and Co 1898.

Ships and Stores

Blackhead and Company

Friedrich Johan Berthold Schwarzkopf, a ship's captain who took the name Blackhead, was in China by the year 1853 for in February of that year he was married at St John's Cathedral, Hong Kong, to Sarah Bullen, the youngest daughter of William Robert Bullen of West Hackney, Middlesex, England (FC 19 February 1853 and St. John's Cathedral Marriage Register No. 131, 16 February 1853). He was an assistant in the firm of Murray and Stephenson. He named his first child, who died in infancy, after William Murray. Mr. Blackhead began business on his own. In 1856 he opened a ship chandlers store on a hulk at the Whampoa anchorage on the Pearl River (FC 24 July 1856). His store shop “Hornet” was an old sailing vessel turned into business premises.

When hostilities broke out between Britain and China over the Arrow lorcha incident at Canton, and foreign shipping had to leave Whampoa, the “Hornet” was moved to the Hong Kong harbour. Mr. Blackhead began building warehouses and an office by the seaside at the foot of Aberdeen Street. In September 1860 the company announced it had removed its ship chandlery, sail making and auction business from the “Hornet” to “those new buildings lately erected in Queen’s Road West, opposite Messrs. Gibb, Livingston and Co. and next door to offices of Messrs. Phillips, Monte and Co (FC 13 September 1860).

John Morris was admitted a partner in March 1860 (GG 31 March 1860) but he died in January 1861 (FC 21 Jan. 1861). He held a one third share in the business (PRO, Probate File No. 19 of 1861 [f/1044]). Captain Henry A. Bell was in charge of the business at Whampoa in 1860 and 1861, but Mr. Blackhead was the sole proprietor of the company until he left Hong Kong in 1872.
He was then described "as perhaps the oldest foreign resident of the colony" (Daily Advertiser 23 Apr. 1872). Shortly before his retirement John Henry Smith and Frederich Rapp were admitted as partners in the firm.

John Henry (or Johan Heinrich as it is given in one record) Smith remained a partner until his death at Genoa, Italy in June 1890. He was on his way back to Germany after a visit to Hong Kong with his wife (DP 21 June 1890). His will, which had been written in Macao in 1873, states that he was formerly of Cappelen, Germany. In his will he left "all business of ship chandler and auctioneer and commission agent at Macao in trust for his wife Lizzie Smith of New York" (PRO Probate File No. 29 of 1891 [4/8201]. By the time of his death some seventeen years after writing his will he had disposed of his interests in Macao. They were taken over by A. Muller in January 1875 (Macau Boletim 2 January 1875).

Christian Frederich Rapp (or as he was usually known Fritz Rapp) was admitted a partner in the firm of Blackhead and Co. in 1871 and his interest ceased some six years later (DP 2 Oct. 1877). He then went into business on his own as auctioneer and commission agent with an office on Zetland Street (DP 16 October 1877). Mr. Rapp died in Hong Kong on Christmas Day 1895. His tombstone in the Old Residents' Section of the Colonial Cemetery at Happy Valley states he was born at Stade on 30 January 1841. In his will he appoints his wife Mei Ho (May) as guardian of his children: Kwai Tsun otherwise Gustave, King Tsun otherwise Gustave, King Tsun otherwise Hermann, Sham Tsun otherwise Fritz, Shui Sun married to Mr. Li, Shui Yee and Shui Sun. In a codicil written on 1 December 1894 he states his daughter Shui Sun is now called Johanna Rapp and that one of the executors he had named, Heinrich Hoppius, was ill and likely to die. In his place he appointed Heinrich Garrels (PRP Probate File No. 7 of 1895 [4/1008]).

Blackhead and Co. in 1886 were agents for the Kerscheldt Ice Depot. The ice was manufactured at the Saki Distillery on the Shaukiwan Road (DP 1 April 1886). In the same year they announced plans to build a wharf adjoining their coal godowns, then in course of erection, at what became known as Blackhead's Point in Tsim Sha Tsui (DP 39 April 1886). The account of the firm's Jubilee published in the Daily Press 1 March 1905 stated the company was the largest of the coal merchants in Hong Kong. The coal godowns and wharf later passed into the hands of Butterfield and Swire and were known as Holt's Wharf. The site is now...
that of the New World Hotel. A soap factory was built on Shaukiwan Marine Lot 1 which the company purchased at a Crown Land Sale in 1890 (DP 29 June, 6 August 1890). In a series of articles on Hong Kong industries published in the Hong Kong Telegraph the writer chides British reluctance to invest capital in Hong Kong and cites the soap factory as another case in which German enterprise had outstripped that of the British (HKT 10 September 1895).

At the time of the forced liquidation of German firms in 1914 the partners of Blackhead and co were F H Hohnke, then of Hamburg, E H Thiel and J.E. Danielsen. Hohnke had been a partner since about 1888. At about the same time a son of the founder joined the firm. After Germany acquired the concession at Tsingtao, Mr. Hohnke went there to open a branch of the firm (DP 1 March 1905).

German Watchmakers

Charles Weiss, Gaupp and Co

The first shopkeeper in Hong Kong with a German sounding name was Charles Weiss — Aberdeen Street — second in the list of foreigners on the China coast published in the Chinese Repository in 1845 gives his nationality as German. In May of the previous year he advertises himself as “Charles Weiss, Chronometer and watchmaker from London and Geneva, Oswald’s Hill opposite Gibb, Livingston and Co.” This would be in the vicinity of the present Aberdeen Street (FC 24 May 1844). Two months later he moved a bit down hill to the corner of Graham and Wellington Streets (FC 24 July 1844). His brother Alexander A. took charge of the business in 1853 during a temporary absence of Charles (FC 6 July 1853). Charles left Hong Kong permanently in 1856 and transferred his business to Henry Vaucher, formerly of Canton (FC 2 June 1856). Henri Vaucher was either French or Swiss, he had been a clerk in the watchmaking firm of Bovet Brothers and Co. at Canton from 1851 to the time he took over Charles Weiss’s business. He died of chronic diarrhea a year after moving to Hong Kong (FC 6 Nov 1857).

Louis Heermann was an assistant in the shop of Charles Weiss from the year 1854. After the shop was closed upon the death of Henri Vaucher, Mr. Heermann opened his own store on Queen’s Road in February 1858 (FC 1 Feb. 1858). While in his shop notice Mr. Heermann calls himself
Louis, in the Hong Kong jury lists he is designated Ludwig. In 1857 he was an assistant in the watch and chronometer store of Douglas Laplaik. Not long after opening his own store, Mr. Heermann left Hong Kong. One of Mr. Heermann’s assistants, Charles J. Gaupp, continued the business after his employer left. There were three individuals surnamed Gaupp who were associated with the Gaupp and Co. store in its early years, Charles, Louis Frederick and Hermann Frederick. In 1873, Carl Richard Heermann and Jules Kwiser were admitted partners in the firm, but Heermann left the firm by the end of the year (DP 22 Mar. 1872, 19 Feb. 1873). A relative Carl Otto George Heermann was an assistant from 1870 to 1883, and then a partner until the firm’s liquidation in 1914. Also associated with the firm about the turn of the century were Paul Emil Heermann and Huge Frederick Heermann. Oscar von der Heyde was admitted partner in 1892 (GG 5 Mai. 1892). In 1883, Gaupp and Co. purchased the watch and jewellery business of the late John Noble (DP 21 Nov. 1883). In 1913 a branch of Graupp and Co. was opened at Singapore under the management of C. Bunje.

Auctioneers

Lammert and Co

Lammert the auctioneers have a long history in Hong Kong. Their first association in Hong Kong was with the watchmaking trade. The transition from the watch to the auction hammer occurred as follows.

One of the assistants in the watchmaking shop of Charles Weiss in 1852 was M. Zobel. He is listed as a watchmaker from 1853 to 1855. In 1856, L. Zobel, watchmaker, is mentioned (FC 3 July 1856) and two years later Mr. G.L. Zobel announced his intention of leaving Hong Kong. His business was carried on by Charles Henry Glatz (FC 1 Dec. 1858).

Tragedy struck in 1858 when a youth employed in the shop as a watchmaker was murdered by a coolie who had been engaged by Mr. Glatz’s servant to take over his duties while he was absent. The murderer fled to Macao but was captured and returned to Hong Kong for trial (FC 27, 30 Jan. 1858). The victim was a French lad named Francis Hypolite, but he was also known as Francis Glatz. He was probably a foster son of Mr. Glatz.
By 1861 Mr. Glatz had left Hong Kong and was in Paris, and George Reinhold Lammer, his partner, was in charge of the Hong Kong store. At that time watchmaking is no longer mentioned and the firm of Glatz and Lammer was described as auctioneers, storekeepers and commission agents. About the year 1863 the name was changed to Lammer, Atkinson and Co., Mr. Glatz having retired and James Atkinson having joined. Atkinson left the firm about 1867. William Henry Moore and Otto Friedrich joined as partners in June 1870 (Daily Advertiser 2 Oct. 1871). Mr. Moore was with the company until 1877. He died in Brixton, England, on 30 April 1897. Mr. Friedrich severed his connection in 1874 or 1875.

George Reinhold Lammer married on 28 January 1862 at St. John’s Cathedral, Hong Kong, Miss Jane Hilder. They had ten children. He died on 21 September 1897, aged sixty-six. For many years his auction house was at Pedder’s Wharf (DP 6 May 1892). Their next premise was on Duddell Street. From there they moved in 1935 to the Oriental Building on Connaught Road — the present site of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. After the liberation of Hong Kong in 1945 they moved into the Pedder Building. Only recently has the company again relocated (SCMP 7 Apr. 1958). After the death of George Reinhold Lammer, his eldest son George Philip took charge of the business. The business eventually passed to G.R.’s youngest son, Lionel. Lionel’s son-in-law Ken A. Watson became a partner in 1956 (SCMP 8 Apr. 1956).

Tobacconists

Kruse and Co

The founding date of the firm Kruse and Co. in the liquidation list of 1914 is given as 1868. From 1868 to 1871, Johann Carl Kruse, the founder of the firm, was an assistant of Raynal and Co. In February 1871, Mr. Kruse announced he had for sale at the premises of Messrs Charles Hock and Co., cigars (CM 1 Feb. 1871). Three months later he informs the public that he has established himself as a wholesale and retail tobacconist and commission agent at No. 10 Queen’s Road Central next to the premises of Lammer, Atkinson and Co. (DP 15 Apr. 1871). He also advertised himself as a jeweller and watchmaker. Mr. Kruse died in Yokohama in August 1876 of consumption, aged thirty-two.

After his death the company was carried on by Charles Theodor Henry...
Kuhlmann — usually known as Henry Kuhlmann. He soon took into partnership Richard Schonberger. His interest ceased in 1887 (DP 27 Jan. 1888). John Max Heinrich Meier, a former clerk of Radecker and Co., became a partner in Kruse and Co. in 1890 (DP 1 Jan. 1890). Mr. Kuhlmann died at Hamburg in September 1893. He was unmarried and aged about forty-five (CM 29 Sept. 1893).

In 1905 the company moved into new premises in the recently built Hotel Mansions Building at the corner of Chater Road and Pedder Street (DP 9 Aug. 1905). Carl Wilhelm Longuet had been a partner of the firm until his death in November 1910 at Blaneness, near Hamburg. He was a native of Lubeck and was aged forty-seven at the time of his death (HKT Supplement 19 Nov. 1910).

The partners at the time of liquidation were John Meier and P. Hall. The business was sold by the liquidators as enemy alien property in 1915 to a British firm, The Hong Kong Cigar Store (HKT 3 Feb. 1915).

Storekeepers

Jurgens - Claussen and Muller

Henry Joachim Jurgens operated a haberdashery shop on Queen's Road in 1858. His wife and Mrs. Adonia Rickomanz ran a millinery department in connection with the shop (FC 14 May 1858). Mrs. Jurgens gave up her business interests in September 1859 (FC 15 Sept. 1859). Mr. Jurgens left Hong Kong in 1866 with the intention of settling in Hamburg, but he returned to Hong Kong in 1870 and re-established himself in premises lately occupied by Thomas Hunt and Co. at Pedder's Wharf (DP 7 Sept. 1870). Within a year he had moved to a store recently vacated by Lane, Crawford and Co. on Queen's Road, (DP 23 July 1871) but soon he had relocated in Yokohama, Japan (DP 3 Apr. 1872). Again he was on the move and finally settled in Shanghai, where he died in 1897, aged seventy-two. His obituary states he arrived in China in 1856 and within the brief period of seven years he had made a fortune of $160,000, but out of boredom or financial reverses he came back to China seven years after he left (DP 20 July 1897).

Charles Henry Claussen was an assistant in Mr. Jurgens' haberdashery from 1862 to 1865. He then entered a partnership with August Muller
They had then their shop at 10 Queen’s Road until 1869 when they closed out their business (DP 17 Mar. 1869). They moved to Macao where A. Muller and Co. is listed in the Macao Directory for 1877 as a naval and general storekeeper at 75 Rua Prata Grande (Macau Bulletin, 12 Dec. 1868).

Gunmakers

Wilhelm Schmidt

Wilhelm August Ferdinand Schmidt opened a gunsmith shop on Wellington Street in 1865 (DP 2 Jan. 1866). After several changes of location and some years later he advertised his firm as a commission agent in arms, machinists and artists in general, scientific mechanics and inventors of spring mountain chairs. He assured the public there were trained native assistants at the shop. In 1885 he moved his store to Beaconsfield Arcade in Queen’s Road. Mr. Schmidt died in 1895 leaving his widow Caroline Johanne Georgine Schmidt to carry on the business. She died in 1923 at the age of eighty one. They had two children, a son Hermann Hugo James, who died at the age of fourteen in the same year as his father, and a daughter Henrietta A. Schmidt, who married Capt. B.R. Branch in 1917 (DP 5 Oct. 1895). The daughter was the proprietor of the firm in 1914. As she had been born in Hong Kong in 1884 she was not considered an enemy alien and was allowed to continue the business, though the name of the firm was changed to something less Germanic, the Hong Kong Sporting Arms and Ammunition Store. It was for many years in business at the Beaconsfield Arcade.

German Banks

The Deutsch Bank had branches in China from 1873 to 1875 (Frank H.H. King, The History of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, Cambridge University Press 1987, Cambridge, England), p. 151. In 2, Chapter II, p. 603-27, Dr. King discusses the Hong Kong Bank’s relations with Germany.

As a result of the France-Prussian War, the French bank Comptoir d’Escompte dismissed its German employees. These dismissals provided management for the newly organised Deutsch Bank. A notice in the Daily Press of 29 April 1872 states that: “Mr. Schumann, formerly of Comptoir d’Escompton arrived here [Hong Kong] and will proceed to Shanghai to
establish a branch there of the new Deutsch Bank. Mr. Mammelsdorf to take charge in Yokohama. A special branch will be opened in Hong Kong. Both of these gentlemen were formerly in the Comptoir as was also Mr. Wallach who will take charge at Berlin. Mr. Probst, formerly of Pustau and Co. takes the branch at Hamburg. At Bremen will be Mr. Van der Heyde, formerly of Behre, Meyer and Co. Singapore."

At the same time as the Deutsch Bank was in the process of opening offices in China, the Deutsche National Bank of Bremen was organised and appointed Melchers and Co. their agent in Hong Kong and Siemssen and Co. their agent in Shanghai (DP 29 June 1872).

The Deutsch-Asiatische Bank was registered at the Imperial German Consulate in Shanghai on 15 May 1889. In 1905, M. Hemann, the manager of the Hong Kong branch of the Bank was succeeded by Hugo Suter (DP 17 July 1905). The Bank redeveloped in 1913 the property on Queen's Road which it had occupied since 1901. The building, of modern renaissance style "on chaste and simple lines", was occupied for only a few months before it had to shut its doors with the outbreak of hostilities between England and Germany (SCMP 14 Aug. 1913, HKT 6 Jan. 1914). The building was purchased from the liquidators in 1917 by Sir Paul Chater for $355,000 (SCMP 14 Aug. 1917).

From the time of the organization of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation in 1864 to 1914 there were Germans on the Board of the Bank. Woldemar Nissen of Siemssen and Co. was on the Provisional Committee. Another member of the Provisional Committee was Waldemar Schmidt, whose name sounds German, a partner in the English firm of Fletcher and Co. In May 1868 Julius Menke of William Pustau and Co. joined the Board. With the failure of William Pustau and Co. in 1877 the firm was no longer represented. But in the meantime Hermann Melchers of Melchers and Co. was elected to a seat on the Board in 1872. The bank was watchful that the British interests should not be swamped by German and American. Arnhold, Karbegg and Co. had a representative on the board from 1888 and Carlowitz and Co. from 1875. In 1914 all the firms mentioned, but William Pustau and Co., had a partner of the Bank (Dr. King's detailed history of the bank has lists of the directors for each year).
German Firms and Insurance Agents


Steamship Lines

William Pustau and Co., was appointed in 1848 an agent of the Austrian Lloyd Steam Navigation Co. The route was from Trieste to Alexandria, then by land to Aden on the Red Sea where the traveller could connect with the P. and O. Line to Galle in Ceylon (FC 5 Dec. 1848). In 1886 the German Lloyd Steamship Co. opened an office in Hong Kong. In 1914 it and the Hamburg Amerika Line had Hong Kong offices.

Internment of Germans in 1914

War declared between Britain and Germany on 5 August 1914. A few days later the Hong Kong Government placed enemy aliens under parole. They were restricted to certain areas and had to report to the police at stated times. This arrangement was not sufficiently tight to satisfy Major George F.H. Kelly, the Officer Commanding British Forces in Hong Kong. He saw the German residents of Hong Kong as a distinct threat to the speedy end to the war. He conveyed this opinion to the Governor of Hong Kong.

"I look upon every German, man or woman, at large in the Colony, as a potential factor for evil, and possibly for prolonging the war"
There is little doubt they spread rumours and not unnaturally do what they can to incite the Chinese and Indians against us. The proximity of Macao, Canton and Coast ports make it easy for them to get information out of the Colony and home to Germany. Money remittances can be made with very little arrangement from Shanghai and Manila. They go on taking the trade which the present war gives an opportunity of British firms to take hold of. Their presence renders it necessary to take more elaborate precautions in guarding all important places.

Personally, I should not be sorry to see all fit for service made prisoners of war” (CO 129/413, Kelly to May 5 Oct 1914)

He had not long to wait for an order for internment was issued the last week of October. This action was taken when Germany issued a call-up of their military and naval reserves.

All Germans in Hong Kong on the reserve list were sent to Stonecutters Island. Soon after they were moved to Hung Hom Bay.

This move was made before the Hung Hom site was fully ready to receive the internees. The mat huts had dirt floors and were open to the elements. The presence mosquitos posed the threat of malaria. The internees were put to work sweeping streets and performing other manual tasks. Word seeped back to Germany that the internees were being treated badly. Through official channels the Germans contacted the Americans, the American Consul in turn contacted the British to ask if the representations made by the German were accurate. The Consul was taken to the Camp for an escorted inspection and found conditions satisfactory. One can appreciate the situation of the internees, mostly well fed, well cared for, comfortably situated merchants before they were caught up in the tides of global politics and swept into the crude conditions of a hastily built camp for enemy aliens. The contrast between their large well-staffed homes and abundant meals prepared for their individual tastes and the primitive shelters and an institutional British style mess must have been difficult to adapt to overnight. After two years the internees were moved to Australia.

Those above military service age, wives and children were deported to Shanghai or Manila, the former under international control, the later under American administration.
There were two attempts to escape from the Hung Hom Bay Camp. The first try was made by five prisoners. They were assigned to build a platform for concerts. The platform was near the barbed wire fence. It provided a shelter for them to tunnel to freedom and a storage place for the earth removed during their digging. Under cover of darkness five crept through the tunnel, however the last of the group was spotted by a sentry, who shouted the usual "Halt or I shoot". The escapee kept on going and the sentry shot. The bullet hit the bag the prisoner was carrying containing some of his gear, so he escaped injury, but he was overtaken and captured. Shortly after, another of the escaped internees was found in the hills of the New Territories. Several days later the remaining three were rounded near Sai Kung.

Some time after this incident, another man arranged to accompany two other prisoners on a visit to a dentist in the Hong Kong Hotel. The dentist was only expecting two patients. He took these two into his surgery, one was to serve as an interpreter for the other. The third man who had somehow arranged to come along was left in the waiting room with a guard. He informed the guard he must go to the toilet. The guard accompanied him there, however, he did not go into the toilet as he wished to keep his eye both on the door of the dentist and the door of the toilet to ensure that none of his three prisoners escaped. The man in the toilet was able to escape through a window but he was caught the same night and returned to the camp.

The patriotism aroused by war stirred up in a British colony much doubt, distrust of old friends, ill will and harsh words. The clubs passed resolutions excluding enemy aliens, the ties of former friendship were severely strained and in many cases broken. Many in the Colony who frequently passed the former premises of the Deutsche Asiatische Bank on Queens Road not far from the Hong Kong Shanghai Bank were irritated by the continuing presence of the Prussian double-eagled ensign, an architectural feature of the building. Many indignant letters appeared in the correspondence column of the newspapers before the emblem finally was removed.

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1 Since my delivery of the talk upon which this paper is based, Anne Selby has published a well researched article in the South China Morning Post 25 June, 1988, entitled "When Germans were unwelcome in HK". She used many of the same sources as I have used in the Public Records Office. I would refer interested readers to her article for information I have not included in my account.