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An illustrated guide-book to Heidelberg its castle and environs

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Historical survey

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HISTORICAL SURVEY

Mother Earth lavished her choicest gifts on this spot and favored Heidelberg above other places in the same latitude. Its sheltered position mitigates the severity of winter; Spring comes earlier; and Autumn lingers longer than elsewhere. The mild sunny days of these two seasons are pleasant beyond words, with little rainfall, and even on hot summer days the cool wind from the valley renders a stay here agreeable. Wooded hill-slopes on all sides of the town afford the pedestrian shade, coolness and fresh air. The town lies some 400 ft above sea-level, the mean yearly temperature being 50° F. In the census of 1933 the city numbered 84,641 and to day about 120000 inhabitants.

The geological structures of the region are classical ground for the scientists who have been pursuing their investigations here since the beginning of the 19th century. The Neckar, breaking through the southern part of the Odenwald, has hollowed out a bed in the solid granite stratum, over which it pours just above the Old Bridge. The Castle stands chiefly on granite. There is an interesting spot in the moat where the granite, and the enormous layer of larkose sandstone, which has accumulated as the result of the weathering processes of thousands of years, is exposed.

The frequent occurrence of thermal springs on the edge of the plain of the Upper Rhine led to the commencement of borings in 1903. Thermal water was struck in three horizons, and out of the deepest a saline spring, rich in

radium, gushed up to the surface of the earth. Numerous and surprising cures testify to the healing powers of the water and are leading to its being used for medicinal purposes on a large scale.

With regard to prehistoric times, Heidelberg is able to produce a famous representative of the human race of those times, viz. the *Homo Heidelbergensis*, as the fossilised jaw-bone is called which was found in an outlying district and which belongs to the earliest and hitherto unknown type of paleolithic man. Traces of later stages of human development of the Stone Age, graves of the Bronze Age, a little of the Hallstadt Period, more of the La Tène stage, have been brought to light in Heidelberg and collected in the Prehistoric Department of the Museum of the Palatinate. Fragments of the dry wall are still to be seen on the Holy Mount which was built just a little more than a thousand years B.C. by a tribe belonging to the oldest Hallstadt Period. Other firmly mortared lines of walls belong to the La Tène epoch. Even in the days of the dim past the hinder peak of the Holy Mount served as a last refuge to the inhabitants and its soil hides all stages of civilization down to the late Middle Ages. There is no doubt that in early or pre-Germanic times this spot was a place of worship.

Finds are numerous which date from the days of the dominion of the Romans, whose legions gained a firm footing here about the middle of the first century after Christ. There, where the hospitals now stand, a fortified camp stood at the junction of two important military roads, and the river was crossed by a strong bridge to reach the main road to Lopodunum (the present Ladenburg). Here Romans, Romanized Celts and Germans settled down together. The Romans worshipped Mercury on the Holy Mount. At the foot of the mountain, they came together in the Mythras temple to celebrate the mystery of a divin-

ity introduced from Persia. The altar stone of this temple has been unearthed.

The ever rising tide of the German invasion broke the rule of the Romans. The Alemanni, and after them the Franks, colonized the district. Place names which end in heim, like Neuenheim, Bergheim and Handschuhsheim, indicate that they were founded by the Franks, and their names are found in documents of the 8th century. The Franks introduced Christianity into the land. The heathen altars were laid low and in their place, towards the end of the 9th century, the Cross was erected on the summit of the Holy Mount by the Abbot of Lorch. Pilgrimages were made to the Benedictine Monastery, which was dedicated to St. Michael. Its importance grew and in 1094 a second monastery, dedicated to St. Stephen and St. Laurentius, was erected on the foremost peak of the mountain. A generation later the monks of Lorch occupied a second site beautifully situated in the Neckar Valley and built Stift Neuburg. Later the Cistercians, supported by the Bishops of Worms, gained a footing in the beautiful Aue in the Steinach Valley. Their foundation, Schönau, enjoyed the special favour of the Electors of the Palatinate, who were installed as their patrons.

The temporal powers had established themselves on the left bank of the Neckar. Most probably vassals of Worms sat in the fortress on the summit of little Gaisberg (where the "Molkenkur" now stands), which commanded the road leading from the district of the Elsenz, via the Klingenteich, to the ford over the Neckar. Under their protection fishermen and boatmen probably settled down at the foot of the Königstuhl and out of the cluster of their huts developed in the course of time the town of Heidelberg. In 1196 we find the first documentary mention of Heidelberg. The town first became important through the Counts of the Rhenish Palatinate who took up their

residence on the heights overlooking the town on the above-mentioned little Gaisberg and, later, on the lower but broader ridge of Jetta's Hill, where the castle now stands. The dignity of a Count of the Palatinate was conferred as early as the year 1156 on Conrad of Hohenstaufen by his stepbrother Frederick I, the Emperor Barbarossa, and his possessions in the districts of Worms and Speyer formed the nucleus of the Palatinate on the Rhine. A closer connection arose between the Counts Palatine and the town in 1225, when Frederick II conferred the Palatinate on Duke Louis of Bayern and the Bishop of Worms granted him and his male heirs the fortress and the borough of Heidelberg as a fief. From this time Heidelberg remained closely bound up with the fate of the Counts of the Palatinate for nearly six hundred years.

About the same time, as researches have shown, there stood on Jetta's Hill some buildings which in the course of centuries, developed into the Castle of Heidelberg. In 1303 we find mention in documents of two castles, one standing on the site of the present Molkenkur and the other dating back to the above mentioned buildings on Jetta's Hill. The older fortress, situated on higher ground, had become too small for the growing political importance of the House of the Palatinate. The top of Jetta's Hill, not so far above the town, was in the end given the preference.

The fishing village, situated at the foot of the fortress, grew in the course of centuries into an important town, which was fortified with ramparts and towers. The east end was formed by the narrow passage between the Neckar and the mountains, where Karl's Gate now stands, and the western followed the line of the present Grabengasse (the Lane along the Moat). The northern side was washed by the Neckar, and the southern wall ran along where the Hexenturm (Witch's Tower) still stands.

Protected by the fortress in the 14th century the so-called Mountain Town began, the houses of which rose, row by row, from the southern line of fortifications right up to the walls of the castle. Toward the end of the 14th century the encircling walls had become too narrow and the Elector ordered the inhabitants of the nearest village, Berghheim, to come and settle down immediately before the gates of the town (1392). Thus arose the "For" Town, whose limits extended to the Sophienstrasse of to-day. The Castle and the three divisions of Old Town, Mountain Town and "Fore" Town form the stage on which the most important scenes in the history of Heidelberg and, for the most part, of the Palatinate also, were played.

The foundation of the University in 1386, by Rupprecht I, was the most momentous event in the history of the development of the town. It was largely due to his energy and discernment that the Golden Bull was issued, whereby Electoral Rights were assured to the Palatinate (1356). Rupprecht III was elected Emperor, a proof of the esteem in which the Lords of the Palatinate were held. He added a lasting ornament to his capital in the shape of the Church of the Holy Ghost, which he built on the site on which a Romanesque church had already had to make way for a bigger one. The palace he built is the castle which has come down to us in a tolerably good condition. His son and successor, Ludwig III was appointed at the Council of Constance, 1414—1418, to lead John Huss to stake. The deposed Pope, John XXIII was entrusted to his guardianship. It was Ludwig III who finished the Church which his father had begun. He completed the Holy Ghost Foundation which bound the University and clergy closely together, by giving 12 of the endowed canonicates to the teachers of the University. It was the clergy who carried and spread knowledge, and the build-

ings the raised were the predominant features of the town. The Begging Orders were represented by three big monasteries; the Augustinians on the southern side of the present University Square; the Franciscans on the present Karl's Square and the Dominicans on Main Street where the present Frederick's building of the University now stands. The latter was founded under the protection of Frederick I (1449—1476) whose nephew, Philip the Upright, introduced the humanistic movement into the Palatinate. Luther himself held a disputation in 1518 in the Augustan Monastery in Heidelberg and visited the Castle, which was already famous. It was beginning to take on a very different appearance under the energetic building activities of Ludwig (1508—1544). He erected all the great works of defense and united all the isolated residences and the few big towers and walls into one mighty, and, for those times, impregnable fortress. Under him, or perhaps his predecessor, arose the strong Arsenal on the banks of the Neckar; immediately outside the gates of the Old Town, which stands out to-day in such contrast to the confused mass of small houses by which it is surrounded. His successors transformed the fortress by degrees into a magnificent Castle, and added to the older medieval structures one palace after another in the then favored style of the Renaissance. Thus arose the Hall of Mirrors, the Ott-Heinrich Building, the Frederick Building, and finally the English Building, erected by Frederick V for his English bride. He it was who added to the many interesting features of his residence one which was the admiration of his contemporaries, the Castle Garden. It was laid out on five artificially raised terraces, and from what remains of it we can only surmise how beautiful it must have been.

In his reign the religious discontent, which had been smouldering for several decades, flamed out with great

fury. Otto Heinrich was the first of the Palatine Princes to become Protestant and his successors, down to Frederick V were in turn Calvinists and Lutherans. The people naturally followed the lead of their princes. John Casimir, who acted as regent during the minority of Frederick IV, added to the town its biggest building, the electoral Marstall (Cavalry Barracks), behind the Arsenal. Thus the town had in all important respects reached its highest pitch of development along with the Castle, when the Thirty Year's War broke out.

The Palatinate was the most exposed to attack, because its Prince was not only the leader of the Union of Protestant Princes but had also accepted the crown of Bohemia, thereby placing himself in direct opposition to the House of Habsburg. He was defeated in the Battle of the White Mountain near Prague in 1620 but was still hoping to regain possession of the Palatinate, when his death after the Battle of Lützen put an end to his hopes.

Tilly appeared in 1622 before the gates of Heidelberg, which was obliged to surrender to superior forces. After by the enemy the garrison of the Castle surrendered on the surrounding heights and the town had been occupied condition that they were allowed to withdraw. In 1633 the town passed into Swedish (Protestant) hands but two years later the imperial troops again took possession of it. By the Peace of Westphalia, which made an end to the Thirty Years' War, the Upper Palatinate and the Electoral Rights passed to Bavaria, but Electoral Rights were also granted to the Lower Palatinate. The Elector Karl Ludwig succeeded in a comparatively short time in restoring peace and order to his country. In order to open up new markets for the agricultural produce of the Palatinate, he founded on the site of the old village of Mannheim, at the junction of Neckar River and the Rhine, the new town of Mannheim. To this town he granted the privileges of

self-administration, full freedom of trade and manufacture, religious toleration, and made it open "to all honorable people of all nations". He succeeded in restoring the Castle and introduced religious tolerance into the University. Within the precincts of the town, he built for the Lutherans in 1659-1661, the Providence Church, so named from his motto, "Dominus providebit". To promote peaceful relations and increase the influence of his house, he gave his daughter, Lieselotte, as wife to the Duke of Orleans, the brother of Louis XIV of France. Contrary to the express terms of the marriage contract, Louis XIV pressed his brother's claim to part of the Palatinate. His hordes advanced, devastating and plundering as they came. Heidelberg capitulated and was granted immunity from destruction. When, however, an army marched up to its relief, three cannon-shots were fired from the Castle as a signal and on March 2nd, 1689, the fortifications were blown up. All parts of the town were set on fire but when the enemy withdrew the townfolk were able to extinguish it. In 1693 the French again occupied the town after a short and weak resistance and finished what they had begun in 1689. This time the town was destroyed not by order of a general, but by the unbridled license of wild soldiers. The Castle shared the same fate and from this time on, it stood in ruins.

After the Peace of Rijswick in 1697, the work of rebuilding the town was begun. Valuable building material was at hand in the blown up walls of the Castle. The Elector, Johann Wilhelm, (1690-1716), considered the idea of building a baroque palace on the western side of the Castle and connecting it with the plain by a gradual ascent, but could not come to an agreement with the municipality. His successor, Karl Philip, resided for some time in Heidelberg, but a fierce quarrel with the municipality as to the right of the Catholics or the Protestants to use

the Church of the Holy Ghost finally decided him to take up his residence, in 1720, in Mannheim.

Nevertheless, this period of the beginning of the 18th century, which is noted for its love of building and ostentation, has left its mark on the town. Of important private houses, only the "Ritter", which was built of stone, was left standing after the destruction of the town. The chief builders of the new Heidelberg that now arose, were the high officers of the Army and the Court. Thus arose in Haupt Strasse several buildings which deserve the interest of all friends of art to-day; the present Museum of the Palatinate built in 1712, the House of the Giant (Riese) in 1707, the Weimar Palace, in about 1714, Buhl House and the Academy, both rebuilt later and finally the Breitwieser block of buildings at the Klingentor. Big squares were laid out; the Parade (now Lange-marck) Square, the Corn Market and Hay Market helped to beautify the town. In 1701—1703 there arose the new Town Hall, which has been preserved within the present one. The University acquired a new building with lecture rooms, the Domus Wilhelmina, called after the Elector, Johann Wilhelm. The Jesuits filled a whole quarter with their buildings, which are preserved to-day practically as they were: the Jesuits' Lecture Hall, 1703, the Jesuits' Church, 1709, the Jesuits' Classical School (Gymnasium) 1715, to-day the seminary building of the University, and Karl's Hall of Residence, 1750.

Heidelberg owes to the last Elector of the Palatinate, Karl Theodor, (1742—1799), two much admired works of architecture, the Old Bridge (1786) destroyed by the Germans during World War II, and Karl's Gate (1775). This art-loving prince wished to restore the Castle as a summer residence, but the Bell Tower was struck by lightning in 1764 and the work that had been done was destroyed.

During the Napoleonic Wars a battle was fought before the gates of Heidelberg, when the Austrians heroically defended the head of the Old Bridge against the attack of the French. The peace which followed entirely altered the map of Germany and sealed the fate of the Palatinate also, and it ceased to be an independent state. The part of the Palatinate which lay on the right bank of the Rhine fell to Baden, under whose Prince Frederick the land began again to prosper. Heidelberg owes to him the reorganization and revival of her University. He issued an edict in 1803 assuring to the University its liberty of scientific research, untrammelled by religious doctrines, and reserved for himself and his heirs the office of rector. The newly-founded University soon became famous far and wide for the activity of its intellectual life.

The ruins of the Castle, which had been overgrown by ivy, brushwood, and trees, acquired during this time a new significance through the "Romantic Movement" which sought to derive from the German past new strength and new ideals. Most of the Romantic poets either lived here or spent some time here. Goethe stopped here in 1775 on his first journey to Switzerland, and from here he set out for Weimar, having accepted the invitation of Duke Karl August. As a man of 65 he won here the admiration and love of a youthful friend, Marianne von Willemer, who presented him on his 75th birthday with a poem recalling the happy hours she had spent on the castle terrace. The series of poets is fittingly brought to a close by Scheffel, who was a student here in 1844—1847 and later came as often as he could from Bruchsal to Heidelberg. His song "Old Heidelberg" is known throughout the whole world, and has been translated into English by the former American Ambassador to Berlin, Dr. Jacob Gould Schurman, who was an old student of Heidelberg.

The poets combined with the artists of the Romantic Age to glorify the Castle in line and color. A whole series of painters have depicted the charm of the incomparably beautiful situation of the town, with the Castle enthroned above in its gorgeous coloring: John Wallis, Turner, Rottmann, Trübner and others.

No less than Art did Learning contribute to spread the fame of Heidelberg through the world. An endless number of scholars could be mentioned, but it will suffice to mention only a few whose names have become household words: Schlosser and Häusser, the historians, Bunsen, the chemist, Helmholtz and Kirchhoff, the physicists.

Just as the medieval town was dominated by the pointed roofs of monasteries, and the new town that arose after the fire, by the buildings of the Jesuits, so is the appearance of the town to-day being influenced by the buildings of the University, which is continually expanding. In 1929 the so-called "New Lecture Hall" was pulled down and on its site a new University Building was erected from funds collected by the American Ambassador to Berlin, Jacob Gould Schurman. Since 1930 the Kaiser Wilhelm-Research Institute and a new hospital in its vicinity were built.

*Illustration
No. 17.*

Another side of Heidelberg is less known, the industrial side. In consequence of the cultivation of tobacco in the near neighborhood, there were over 100 tobacco factories in and around Heidelberg. The old mill of the times of the Electors was taken over by the Herrenmühle Co., which was one of the most up-to-date of its kind. There are Portland Cement Works, and near the town porphyry quarries which yield excellent material for roadmaking. The metal industry had several big factories in and near Heidelberg. There were firms that manufactured instruments and apparatus for the University. The influence of the University was felt in the printing and publishing

world, and there were several firms of considerable importance. A fountainpen industry of importance was developed in the adjoining district. That Heidelberg played a leading part in the Hotel business is obvious, for the enchanting beauty of its position, the reputation of its University and the romance of its world-famous Castle brought an ever-increasing number of visitors and friends to old Heidelberg.

ROUND THE TOWN

The Main Railroad Station is a modest building but not devoid of a certain artistic quality in the enclosure of its approach by a row of vaulted arches. Opposite stands the General Post Office and a few steps farther we come to Bismarck Platz, finished off on the south by a row of arcades.

From Bismarck Platz the electric trams run in all directions, eastward to the Old Town and the Neckar Valley; northward across the Neckar to Neuenheim and Handschuhsheim, in which direktion the Ö.E.G. runs along the Bergstrasse as far as Weinheim; westward, the same company runs fast trams to Mannheim and the Municipal trams run along Bergheimerstrasse to Wieblingen or to Schwetzingen. To go southward to the "Bergfriedhof" (Hillside Cemetery) or to Rohrbach, Wiesloch or Kirchheim it is best to take a tram from the R. R. station.

From Bismarck Platz and the adjoining Bismarck Garden one can get to the Motor Speedway (Atobahn) by Bergheimer Strasse or along the Neckar by the Schurmanstrasse. On the other side of the Neckar lie the suburbs of Neuenheim and Handschuhsheim, the Brückenstrasse (Bridge Street) leading there. In the plains lie fruitful