

Foreword



IN THE LATE 1830s, Adam Lemp introduced a light and sparkling lager beer to the thirsty patrons who frequented his modest saloon on the St. Louis riverfront. In a city then dominated by English-style ales and porters, Lemp found himself in the right place at the right time, offering lager-style beer to a growing population of his fellow German immigrants. While no one could have known in those early days, Adam and his clientele were witnessing the birth of a brewing revolution.

Nearly two centuries later, the Lemp name remains an enduring institution in St. Louis: The sprawling brewery that grew from Adam's original idea still dominates its south city neighborhood in testament to the beers it exported around the globe. And the stately mansion where his descendants dwelled reflects the family's meteoric rise and the immense wealth they accumulated along the way.

Though Adam sowed the seeds of one of America's earliest brewing dynasties, his accomplishments have long been overshadowed by those of his son, William, who would become head of the family business and build it into an industry leader thereafter known as the William J. Lemp Brewing Company.

Now, in this meticulously researched biography, historian Chris Naffziger offers a well-deserved tribute. Along the way, he examines Adam's lofty achievements and humanizing flaws, and his often-complicated relationships with family members and business associates. A most welcome memorial, this book reveals the details of a life worth celebrating.

We know Adam's legacy. Now we will know the man.

—Stephen P. Walker



Fig. 1. *Portrait of Adam Lemp by Carl Wimar*. Painting, Wimar, Carl, 1828-1862, ca. 1857, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis. 1971-034-0001.

Introduction



JOHANN ADAM LEMP RANKS among the most influential figures in St. Louis history — the founder of a brewery that left an indelible mark on the city. But the story of the German-American founder of the famous Lemp Brewery still lies shrouded in mystery in the Gateway City. Newly uncovered legal documents, newspaper articles and recent scholarly research published in Germany will weave the fascinating tale of a man that is far more complex and interesting than previously understood. His tragedies and triumphs were shared with, and denied to, his three wives and numerous children, grandchildren and even stepchildren. This is not a romantic tale of beer barons living the American Dream, but a clear-eyed story of immigrants finding both success and failure in a new country.

But the story behind Adam's stunning business success in St. Louis, after countless failures in Germany, has remained largely a mystery. Was it just simply that the Gateway City was so fertile in the decades before the Civil War that even the most hapless brewer could succeed? My research has revealed that Adam Lemp was not merely a passive recipient of a booming

city on the frontier. Rather, a portrait emerges of a shrewd and resourceful immigrant who built a brewery from almost nothing into one of St. Louis' leading businesses by the time of his death in 1862.

And for the first time, I will explore his two early business partners: Louis Bach, a successful politician who became a leading citizen, and the other, a mysterious man named John Kaeckell, who became Adam Lemp's stepson-in-law and later lost thousands in failed real estate speculation schemes. Likewise, there is a tangled web of stepsons and stepdaughters that have remained largely anonymous, but who also played a critical role in Adam's personal life as he established his new brewery in St. Louis. And even more sadly, his own son and grandchildren would take great pains to erase one of Adam's own grandsons, Charles Brauneck, from the ownership history of his enterprise. I've also attempted to resurrect the lives of the Lemp women, who were often ignored and even abandoned by the men in their family. Other women also provided critical early financing for the brewery, which until now had been forgotten. Finally, while much has been made of suicide in the history of the Lemps, the scourge of tuberculosis inflicted much more death and misery on Adam's extended family over the course of the Nineteenth Century.

I've laid out the story of Adam Lemp and his family and associates in a mostly linear narrative, but there are a number of tangents that I have taken the liberty to embark on as the circumstances allow. Much of the primary source documentation, particularly newspaper articles and advertisements, were originally written in German, and I have presented them here translated into English. The translations are mine, unless

noted. For consistency, all businessmen, friends, in-laws and stepchildren of Adam Lemp are referred to by their last or full names after their initial introductions, but members of the Lemp family and Adam himself are referred to by their first names. When inconsistencies or conflicts of dates or life events arise, I make note of it. When there are conflicts in the spelling of proper names, I defer to the spelling as given by the named individual's own hand in primary source documents, or the most common spelling. However, in quoted primary source documents, I have preserved the original author's spelling of proper nouns, even if they conflict with established consistency.

A note about sources: For decades, the vast majority of secondary sources on the Lemps have relied on only a few primary and secondary sources for their documentation.¹ As such, much of the secondary literature on Adam Lemp is inaccurate or imprecise. Unfortunately, far too many secondary sources rely on James Lindhurst's Masters Thesis from the 1930s, which is now over eighty years old and suffering from the lack of availability of many primary sources now at our disposal.² There has been recent German interest in the family, and the publication of two articles on Adam Lemp's early life in Hesse.³ The main English language secondary source I trust

1 For a nice introduction and overview of St. Louis brewing, however, *St. Louis Brews* is a good place to start. See Henry Herbst, Donald Roussin, Kevin Kious and Cameron Collins, *St. Louis Brews: The History of Brewing in the Gateway City* (3rd Ed. St. Louis: Reedy Press, 2018).

2 James Lindhurst, "History of Brewing in St. Louis, 1804-1860" (Masters Thesis, Washington University, 1939).

3 Jürgen Beck, "Ein Eschweger Bierbrauer Erobert Amerika," *Eschweger Geschichtsblätter*, No. 20 (2009), 49; Nikola Stumpf, "From Rags to Riches, The Early Years of Johann Adam Lemp (1793-1892), Brewer

for the Lemp family is Stephen Walker's work, published in 1989.⁴ I have presented here, for the first time, hundreds of new records of business transactions, German language newspaper articles and advertisements, as well as heretofore unpublished marriage, birth and death records to create a more realistic, full and comprehensive picture of the first thirty years of the Lemp family in America.

I would like to acknowledge the assistance of the following people and organizations: Dorris Keeven-Franke; Stephen Walker; David Mullgardt; Lynn Josse; Frederick Atwood III; Ron Elz; Dan Fuller and Richard Lay at Bellefontaine Cemetery; Jaime Bourassa, Dennis Northcott, Lauren Sallwasser and others at the Missouri History Museum and Archives; Richard Buthod, Harry Kennedy, Dusty Reese and Katie Bowen at the City of St. Louis; the staff of New St. Marcus Cemetery; the staff of Calvary Cemetery and Gabe Jones, Archdiocese of St. Louis; Andrew Weil and Katie Graebe, Landmarks Association of St. Louis; Andrea Meszaros, Jessica Rahmer and Jason Gray at the Saint Louis Art Museum; Adele Heagney at the St. Louis Public Library; and Jennifer Clark and Bob Moore at the National Park Service, Gateway Arch National Park.⁵

in St. Louis, Missouri," *Pohlheim Archive*, June 30, 2016. Thanks to Dorris Keeven-Franke for providing the article.

4 Stephen Walker, *Lemp, The Haunting History*, (St. Louis: Stephen Walker, 1989).

5 Some of the aforementioned individuals have left the positions listed above; the institutions listed are where they were employed when they assisted in the research and writing of this book.

Personal Life and Business Career in Eschwege, Hesse



JOHANN ADAM LEMP, SON of Jeannette Gilbert Lemp and Wilhelm Christoph Lemp, was born sometime between May 25, 1793, and May 20, 1798, in Grüningen-by-Gießen, in what is now the German state of Hesse.⁶ There were no official government birth certificates from that era, so the local Lutheran priest would have recorded Adam's birth in church records.⁷ To complicate matters, Adam's death certificate places his birth in

6 For 1793, see Christy Hawes Bond, *Gateway Families: Ancestors and Descendants of Richard Simrall Hawes III and Marie Christy Johnson* (Concord, Massachusetts: Christy Hawes Bond, 1994), 103; Stumpf, "From Rags to Riches." For 1798, see Beck, "Ein Eschweger Bierbrauer Erobert Amerika," 49. Note: Johann, or John in English, is an extremely common given name in Germany. It is not surprising that Lemp chose to be known by his middle name, Adam. The Adam Lemp burial monument in Bellefontaine Cemetery also lists May 20, 1798, as his birth date. Since cemetery staff do not handle the purchase and construction of monuments, the answer to who erected the monument and the rationale for the date of birth inscribed on it is unknown.

7 Email from York-Egbert König, Eschwege city historian, to author, dated June 16, 2017.

1796, and a German language guide to St. Louis claims 1797.⁸ The exact date of his birth is still problematic. Christy Hawes Bond claims he was baptized on June 2, 1793, but when his family's church was contacted in 2021, there was no record of a Lemp ever having been a member of the congregation.⁹ Adam's father Wilhelm Lemp was a brewer, and it has long been assumed the son learned the profession from the elder.¹⁰ Records from this period can be difficult to locate, and in May 2017, when I requested copies of the documents cited in an earlier article concerning his birth, the Lutheran Church in Germany could not find them.¹¹ New research has revealed that since Adam's father died when his son was thirteen years old, other brewers in Grüningen must have taken over his education before he moved to Eschwege.¹²

Central Europe was convulsed in war during this era, as Napoleon battled against various coalitions of great powers who tried and failed to prevent the French leader's rapid conquests of the small, disorganized states of the Holy Roman Empire. In fact, it is highly likely that a young Adam's

8 City of St. Louis Certificate of Death dated August 23, 1862; Ernst Kargau, *St. Louis in früheren Jahre: Ein Gedenkbuch für Deutschthum* (St. Louis: August Wiebusch & Sohn Printing Co., 1893), 353.

9 Bond, 103; Email from Reinhold Hahn, to author, dated May 18, 2021. As far as can be ascertained, Bond's research is incorrect. There is no other evidence that points to such an early date of birth. It is possible that Bond found another Adam Lemp in the microfilm rolls held by the Church of Latter-Day Saints.

10 Beck, 49.

11 Letter from Annette Schnarchendorff, Zentral Archiv, Evangelische Kirche in Hessen und Nassau, to author, dated May 30, 2017.

12 Stumpf, "From Rags to Riches."

childhood was deeply affected by the violence of the times, and Grünigen probably saw the armies of France and other nations frequently pass through the centrally located Hesse.¹³ By the time Adam moved to Eschwege to work at the city brewery at the age of eighteen, Napoleon had been defeated, Hesse had been restored by the victorious allies as two states, Electoral Hesse-Kassel and the Grand Duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt, and a semblance of normalcy returned to the region for the time being.¹⁴

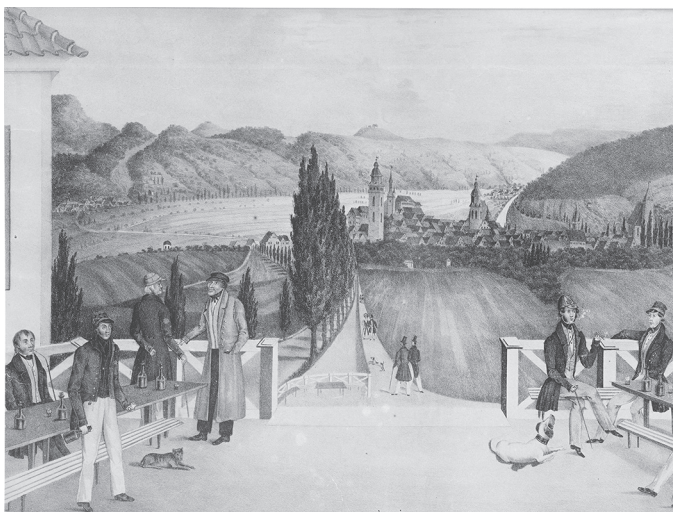


Fig. 2. Adam Lemp's Felsenkeller on the Reichsächischer Road. Adam is supposed to be the second man from the left.

13 Jean-Camille Abel-Fleuri Sauzey, *Campagnes du Contingent de Hesse-Darmstadt, sous le Premier Empire*, 1901-12.

14 Beck, 49.



Fig. 3. *Portrait of Justine Baum Lemp by Carl Wimar.*
Painting. Wimar, Carl, 1828-1862, ca. 1858. Missouri
Historical Society, St. Louis. 1971-034-0003.

On July 16, 1816, Adam married the first of his three wives, Anna Elisabeth Clermont (or Clermund and Klermund). She was older than him, having been born in Eschwege June 1, 1792. As will be common with many of the figures in Adam's life, spelling is not uniform, and names frequently are interchanged between their German and French variants, illustrating the influence of Napoleon's interventions in Hesse. Anna was the daughter of Heinrich Wilhelm Clermont, a cloth maker, and Catharina Elisabeth Reinfurt Clermont. She gave birth to one daughter, Jeannette (or Johannette) Catherina, before dying on March 28, 1832, at the age of forty.¹⁵ Adam and his family had been living at 9 Herrengasse.¹⁶

Adam married his second wife, Justina Anna Charlotte Baum, either three months later on August 11, 1832, or one year from the same date in 1833.¹⁷ Justina was born on May 8, 1811, the daughter of Johannes Baum and his second wife, Martha Walter Baum, from nearby Treffurt. Justina bore Adam two sons: Wilhelm, who was born on May 24, 1834, and Jacob, who was born on February 21, 1836. The younger son was named after his mother's brother, who was also his godfather. But tragedy would strike Adam's family on December 12, 1838, when Wilhelm died at the age of four. Jacob would take his older brother's Anglicized name by the time he arrived in St. Louis in 1848, and the rest is history, as Adam's younger son became known as William Jacob Lemp.¹⁸

15 Bond, 107.

16 Beck, 49.

17 Bond, 103; König, June 16, 2017.

18 Beck, 49; Weston Arthur Goodspeed, *The Province and the States: A History of the Province of Louisiana under France and*

Meanwhile, 1836 was turning into a pivotal year in Adam's life. His mother died on Feb 17, 1836, at the age of seventy-six in Eschwege. Apparently, she had followed her son at some point after her husband died.¹⁹ And a series of poor business decisions and heart-wrenching personal choices in the years leading up to 1836 would forever change the lives of Adam and his family. Adam had been brewing beer at his house at 9 Herrengasse in Eschwege between 1832 and 1834, while apparently operating a restaurant, *Das goldene Faß* (The Golden Barrel), at Schloßplatz 7 in 1834. Adam seems to have been struggling to remain focused, as he also opened the Lemp Rock Cellar, on the Reichensächser Straße, ten minutes outside of town on the road to Kassel, an apparently failed venture that further damaged his finances.²⁰

"He left Eschwege for America, leaving behind his wife, children and many debts," reports a document found by Jürgen Beck in the State Archives of Marburg, Germany. Adam most likely indeed fled Eschwege in 1836 due to pressure from his creditors.²¹ A later document published by Bond states that his wife Justina actually left him.²² However, that is almost certainly incorrect, as other evidence supports that Adam did in fact abandon his wife and son. A newspaper advertisement published in a German national newspaper reads thus:

Spain, and of the Territories and States of the United States Formed Therefrom, Vol. VII (Madison, Wisconsin: The Western Historical Association, 1904), 203.

19 König, June 16, 2017.

20 Beck, 49-50.

21 Ibid, 50.

22 Bond, 105.

Family News: I urge my husband, brewer Johann Adam Lemp, who fled from here in 1836, to return to me at once to resume his marital duties. Eschwege, October 30, 1841, Justine Marie Charlotte Lemp, née Baum.²³

Confusion remains around Adam's whereabouts between 1836 and 1840, when Lemp Brewery publications claim he founded his brewery in St. Louis.²⁴ The Lemp family would later become the subject of several biographies in the late Nineteenth Century and the dates for his arrival in St. Louis range from as early as 1836 to the most common year of 1838 or even as late as 1839.²⁵ Various sources place the opening of his brewery as early as 1838, to the most accepted year of 1840, to the latest in 1841.²⁶ The city directory of 1840–41 lists Adam's

23 "Familiennachrichten," *Allgemeiner Anzeiger und Nationalzeitung*, No. 303 (November 6, 1841), 3950; reprinted verbatim in No. 310 (November 13, 1841), 4044.

24 *Lemp Columbian Exposition Souvenir Book*, 1893.

25 For 1836, see William Hyde and Howard Louis Conrad, "William J. Lemp," *Encyclopedia of the History of St Louis*, Vol. 3 (New York: The Southern History Company, 1899), 1255. For 1838, see Beck, 51; George Derby and James Terry White, *The National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, Vol. XII (New York: James T. White & Co., 1904), 36; Kargau, 352; Goodspeed, 203; "Heartbreaks of Society," *The San Francisco Examiner*, Vol. 191, No. 143 (Sunday, November 20, 1949), 7. For 1839, see "Growth in Beer Trade has No Parallel," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Sunday, July 18, 1909.

26 For 1838, see Hyde and Conrad, 1255; "St. Louis and Beer: German Influx of 1848 Gave Real Impetus to Industry," *The St. Louis Star and Times*, Wednesday, June 6, 1934; Goodspeed, 203. For 1840, see Hyde and Conrad, 1255; "Growth in Beer Trade has No Parallel," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Sunday, July 18, 1909; *One Hundred Years of Brewing* (New York: H.S. Rich & Co., 1900), 166; Richard J. Compton and Camille Dry, *Pictorial St. Louis, the Great Metropolis of the Mississippi*

address as “Lemp, A. & Co., family grocery, corner of Sixth and Morgan.”²⁷ There are also unverified claims that he lived for two years or less in Cincinnati before reaching St. Louis.²⁸

A mysterious marriage license in the records of the Recorder of Deeds of Hamilton County, which encompasses Cincinnati, lists a Jacob Wagner marrying a “Louise Deikmiller” in 1838—the married name of Louise Bauer during her first marriage in Germany.²⁹ Likewise, there is a corroborating record in the Roman Catholic archdiocesan archives of Cincinnati for a marriage between the same people on March 15, 1838. However, the last name of Louise is spelled Deikmueller.³⁰ Was

Valley; A Topographical Survey Drawn in Perspective (St. Louis: Compton and Co., 1876), 191; Ernst Kargau, *The German Element in St. Louis, A Translation of Ernst D. Kargau's St. Louis in Former Years: A Commemorative History of the German Element*, ed. Don Heinrich Tolzmann, trans. William G. Bek (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2000), 262; Paul H. Walker, reporter. *Reports of the Tax Court of the United States, April 1, 1952 to September 30, 1952*, Vol. 18 (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1953), 588, Docket No. 30136. “William J. Lemp, III, was a direct lineal descendant of Adam Lemp, who began the manufacture of ‘Lemp’ beer in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1840.” For 1841, see John Thomas Schard, “Trade, Commerce and Manufacturers,” *History of Saint Louis City and County: From the Earliest Periods to the Present Day: Including Biographical Sketches of Representative Men*, Vol. 2 (St. Louis: L.H. Everts, 1883), 1330.

27 Charles Keemle, *The St. Louis Directory for the Years 1840-1* (St. Louis: Keemle Book and Job Printer, 1840).

28 Bond, 105.

29 Marriage record of Jacob Wagner and Louisa Deikmiller, Vol. A7, Page 241. Recorder of Deeds, Hamilton County.

30 Marriage of Jacobus Wagner and Ludovica Diekmüller on March 15, 1838, at Holy Trinity, West End, Cincinnati by Rev. John M. Henni, Archives of the Chancery, Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Note:

Adam Lemp living under a pseudonym in Cincinnati, still worried that his past would catch up to him? There is no way to know for sure, but it is highly unlikely that another woman with such a rare name would be marrying in the probable same year for Adam's third marriage, and that his third wife would also be marrying someone else before leaving for St. Louis.

However, by 1840, the year the Lemps claimed Adam founded the family's brewery, the paper trail picks up in earnest. The federal census of 1840 contains an entry for an "A. Lemp" in the 4th Ward of St. Louis. In this household were two males twenty to thirty years old, one male forty to fifty years old, five females five to ten years old, and one female thirty to forty years old. Three persons were employed in "Commerce."³¹ The city directory of 1840 lists Adam as operating a "family grocery" at 6th and Morgan.³² In 1840 the boundaries of the 4th Ward included the 6th and Morgan address.³³ Unfortunately, the census does not name the people in the household. We can assume the "one male forty to fifty years old" is Adam Lemp, but the other residents are open to debate.

the original handwritten notation was in Latin, hence the spelling of the given names of the participants.

- 31 U.S. Census Bureau, 1840 Federal Census, 4th Ward of the City of St. Louis, Missouri. Notation of "No. 4" on the left side of the ledger; "146" on the right side.
- 32 Charles Keemle, "Lemp, A. & Co., family grocery, corner of Sixth and Morgan," *St. Louis Directory for 1840-1* (St. Louis: C. Keemle, 1840), 35.
- 33 Charles Keemle, "Fourth Ward commences at Vine Street, and extends to the northern limits of the city," *St. Louis Directory for 1840-1*, IX.