

“Bei uns ist immer was los!”

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What the Germans brought to America?

Escaping war and persecution

Of course, those early settlers didn't come from Germany as it is today.

In 1683, Germany didn't exist as a country. It wouldn't do so until 1871. Instead, separate German-speaking states mostly ruled themselves as parts of the Catholic Holy Roman Empire.

But religious tensions in the German states had exploded since Martin Luther published his ninety-five theses in Wittenberg in 1517, calling people to follow the Bible rather than the Pope.

The Thirty Years' War, which broke out in 1618, was one of the most destructive in European History - and it was against this backdrop that many Germans decided to emigrate.



Carl Wahlbom's depiction of the Battle of Lützen, one of the most decisive battles of the Thirty Years' War. Image: Wikimedia Commons

The Thirty Years' War was "a major motivating factor" for Germans emigrating to America, Don Heinrich Tolzmann, Historian at the German-American Hall of Fame told The Local.