

The German Baptizing Tour

Around the world, God's Church is growing! The summer tour is now complete in the German-speaking world—we have more new brethren in Europe! Mr. Kelly here reports directly on this German tour, sharing his and Mr. Schnee's experiences with you.

by Ronald Kelly

Düsseldorf, Germany

A GREAT increase of the German brethren at the Feast of Tabernacles shows the growth God has given in the German work. The summer tour has been completed in Germany. Now we have brethren scattered throughout the entire German-speaking world. RAPID GROWTH keynotes the Work of God in Germany—the same as God's offices *all around the world!* This summer, over *one-hundred-and-fifty* different individuals were contacted by the baptizing tour conducted by Mr. Frank Schnee, manager of our Düsseldorf, Germany, offices, and me.

Think of it!

Far away from most of us, in Europe, a baptizing tour was conducted this year which met as many people as the early stateside baptizing tours met in the first years of Ambassador College. *What tremendous growth is taking place!*

And now, direct from the Feast of Tabernacles held in Prestatyn, North Wales, Mr. Frank Schnee has informed me that fifty-eight German-speaking brethren came all the way to Great Britain to observe the Festival of Tabernacles this year.

Can you imagine seeing those smiling faces beaming at the Feast of Tabernacles enjoying the messages of God's ministers. You may ask—how could they understand the messages when they speak German and all of God's ministers speak English? We will come

to that in a moment; you'll find it *most interesting.*

Not Many Baptized

It is not God's purpose to convert everyone in this age. Rather, God is now calling only a small flock who are the firstfruits (Jas. 1:18). But these few being called now soon multiply and grow. This inspiring growth should encourage each one of us.

On the baptizing tour itself, Mr. Schnee and I only baptized eleven people. This might sound very discouraging at first, and we had hoped we could have baptized more. However, there were many who were almost ready, yet needed to study, pray and, as John the Baptist admonished, "bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" (Matt. 3:8).

Some did!

And at the Feast of Tabernacles in North Wales, *fourteen more* were baptized into the Body of Jesus Christ. Therefore, as a result of this summer's baptizing tour, TWENTY-FIVE newly begotten members of God's Church are now scattered throughout Germany, Switzerland, and Austria.

In addition to the fifty-eight German-speaking people who came from Europe, there are also about fifteen American servicemen and their families who attended the Feast from Germany. So, all in all, from Germany there were nearly seventy-five people keeping the Feast of Tabernacles this year!

The First Member From Behind the Iron Curtain

Another *historic milestone* was crossed this year. Mr. Schnee and I were able to travel down into YUGOSLAVIA to make contact with a listener of the broadcast who lived near the large city of Zagreb. We found this lady to be *very humble* and submissive to God's law and very zealous for God's Truth. She was *ready* in every way to be baptized.

However, because of the government setup in Yugoslavia and because of the spy system in that land, *IT WAS NOT SAFE* for us to take her in the car to the river for baptism.

Part of the reason it was not safe was that she had been sent to a sort of resort area rest home for a period of time due to a particular illness she had. This rest home was simply designed to give rest and provide warm, mineral-water baths.

However, because many people come to these baths, there are many guards stationed in the area. It was not safe to take this lady away for baptism.

We urged her to make every effort to see if she could receive permission from the government to attend the Feast of Tabernacles in England.

Many who knew about her circumstances *prayed* for her! She *was* able to obtain official permission to leave Yugoslavia and travel to England.

She was baptized at the Feast of



Mr. Ronald Kelly, left, and Mr. Frank Schnee, right in southern Germany. This breathtaking and picturesque scenery was very inspiring to both of them on this tour.

Tabernacles!

To my knowledge, this lady, Frau Menka Mershal, is now the **FIRST MEMBER** of God's True Church who lives **BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN**.

You can imagine what a **THRILLED** individual she is knowing that God presented her the opportunity to understand His Truth and now has given her the opportunity to be baptized.

She has God's Spirit to help her continue her life and Christian growth in Yugoslavia.

I am sure by now she is back home in Yugoslavia with many fond and happy memories of God's Feast of Tabernacles—and certainly very happy to be begotten of God's Spirit.

Why So Few Were Baptized

As Mr. Dibar Apartian reported on the French baptizing tour, those God is calling in Europe have *particular problems* which make obedience to God's laws very difficult.

This entire system of world government is *geared* to **BREAKING GOD'S LAW!** Whether it is the pagan world of worshipping carved gods of wood and stone, or this professing "Christian" world of western civilization, it is still

pretty difficult to obey God and remain a part of this society.

In Europe, **RELIGION** means *so much more* than it does in America or Great Britain. The church, whether Catholic or Protestant, has a *strong hold on the people* that even makes *listening to the Truth* or reading about it a *major step forward!*

Unlike France, Germany is not 100 per cent Catholic. However, it is nearly half Catholic—about 48 per cent. The other one half or 52 per cent of the population just as firmly believes in the Evangelical Church—that is, the Lutheran Church. So, there is a great deal of religious pressure on anyone who departs from either of these two large denominations.

The way of life of the German people for many years now has entailed work on Saturday—God's true Sabbath. Unlike America, unions have not enforced a forty-hour work week in Europe with free weekends. To ask for the Sabbath off is almost virtually unheard of—and of course is immediately branded **JEWISH!** And you all remember what happened to the Jews in Germany just a few years ago.

Even the public school system *requires* attendance at school on Saturday

mornings. Although it is possible to work out this problem with school authorities, it still is a very trying situation and these school officials try to make it very embarrassing for any who ask for Saturdays free as a result of religious convictions. A few of God's people in Germany have even had to move from their homes to an entirely different section of the country to obtain this permission. For this reason, although *many thousands* are hearing the Word of God, only *a very few* are able to step out **IN FAITH** and take the final steps of obedience and prepare themselves so that they are ready for baptism.

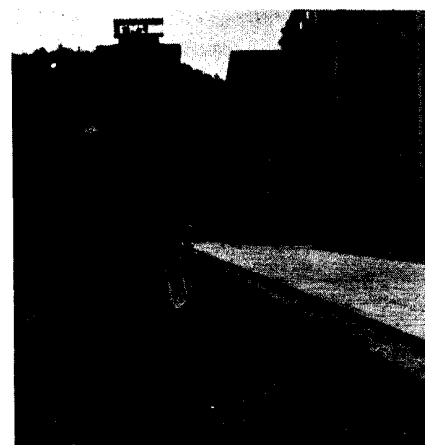
Many Germans we talked to this summer who avidly read *The PLAIN TRUTH* magazine felt such a step as this was *virtually impossible!* But they did not realize, as the twenty-four who were baptized began to realize, that **WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE!**

You can certainly be sure these new members of God's Church *appreciate THE TRUTH!* They have faced a great deal of persecution from family, friends, relatives, business associates, and the entire society around them. And in Germany one is even more "odd" for following God's way than he might be in America or Britain—although it certainly is not easier to obey God any place on earth than it is in any other physical location.

The Beautiful Countryside of Europe

For those of you who have never been to Europe, let me describe a little

Frau Menka Mershal



bit of it to you. Most of Europe is extremely *beautiful!* There are so many people who live in such a small space that it is necessary to keep virtually every square foot under cultivation. In America, one can drive through vast regions of land that have never been cultivated or tilled. There are other portions of property which are allowed to run down and grow up in weeds. One beautiful thing about Europe is that the people *can't afford* to have land go to waste like that. They need every bit of available space to grow crops, plant forest, or to live on. In driving through a great portion of Europe we *never* so much as saw one JUNK PILE.

The land of Germany is *heavily forested*. Most of these forests are a result of a man-planted reforestation project. Throughout these forests there are many different-sized trees, each planted in particular plots. As the larger trees are logged off, new trees are planted in their places so that the forest is continually being replanted and there will always be sufficient lumber for their needs.

Many small villages dot every valley and area where a small town could possibly be raised up. There are literally *thousands* of towns in Germany and it is only a short distance from one town to another on winding, narrow highways in the mountain and hill regions.

Throughout the major sections of Germany, however, there is an entire and elaborate *freeway system* which the Germans call the AUTOBAHN. These autobahns are modern superhighways which enable travel in Germany to be very pleasant and enjoyable as well as swift and safe.

The coal-rich region of central Germany forms the nucleus of a heavily industrialized and modern Germany. This region is called the Ruhr. Its huge smokestacks belch smoke nearly twenty-four hours a day and this vast area extends some 200 miles long and up to 50 miles wide. Driving through the Ruhr is like driving through heavily industrialized sections of Pittsburg, New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles—in fact, it's more like driving through all of these areas put into one huge

area of some 6,000 square miles. It is a *gigantic* area—you can't imagine it unless you see it yourself. Millions of people live in this vast sprawling area of trains, trucks, and smokestacks.

This by no means means that Germany is perfect. There are many beautiful spots to describe in every land on earth—God who created the earth made it all beautiful—each land in its own particular way.

The People We Met

Most Americans probably have the idea that people in Europe or Germany are much different from us. I have personally thought there would be many different kinds of problems brought up by Europeans from those

most of them were able to see and to *prove* where God's Church is and that many thousands of people around the world are praying for them to understand the Word of God. They came to see that it was not important what nationality we are—but rather that it is up to each one of us to strive to enter *God's Kingdom* and that that has nothing to do with the nation of our physical birth.

Out of the 150 people we were able to counsel, only about eighty or eighty-five of these could really be considered baptism prospects. And remember, twenty-four of those were baptized. So the percentage is not really too bad, after all.

The remainder were extremely in-



Here are the German-speaking brethren who attended the Festival of Tabernacles this year. Mr. Schnee is on the extreme right-front, and Mr. Robert Neitsch, who is Dr. Hoeh's assistant in Pasadena, is on the extreme left, second row. Mr. and Mrs. Freibergs, who assist Mr. Schnee in the Düsseldorf office are seen at top-left.

which would be met on an ordinary baptizing tour in America. But this was not true.

These people have the *same kind of problems* and the answers to their problems are all the same no matter what language they speak.

Many we met were thrilled at the opportunity to hear God's Word expounded to them right in their own home *and in their own language*. Others were quite distraught and concerned about the Headquarters of God's work being in America instead of in Germany. But after talking with them,

interested listeners of the broadcast and readers of the magazine. They wanted to become better acquainted with us personally and asked many questions about the Bible. Quite a number of these will study and learn more of God's ways and very likely will be baptized *next summer* on the next baptizing tour.

These people were all *average people!* And yet to us, *each individual* was outstanding and had so many experiences in life to tell us that every visit was *jam-packed* with interest.

Many of the individuals who wrote

in were elderly widows who now lived alone in a small apartment way back in a small village in the hills of Germany. However, we were also pleasantly surprised to meet quite a number of young people of high school and college age. In fact, one young lady we met near Zurich, Switzerland, has been accepted for Ambassador College in Bricket Wood, England. She has studied English and hopes to make every effort to be a profitable student at Ambassador College there. Within the next year or two, three or four others we met this summer plan to enter Ambassador College.

Others we met were cleaning-women, nurses, housewives, common laborers, businessmen, retired elderly men, and even in one case a man who manufactured fine-quality wines—wine-making is a very important industry.

One interesting individual we met had been a member of the elite, brown-shirted, SA Corps during World War II and of course had also been a member of the Nazi Party. He personally knew many high Nazi officials. Yet, now, the same man is interested in the Work of God—and although he was not baptized this year, hopes to study and be ready by next year.

Almost all of the people we met who were old enough to remember World War II still had many tragic memories of the war. Some had lost husbands, sons, and loved ones. Their homes were bombed, they personally suffered from warfare, fire, cold, or hunger. World War II has left a bitter taste in their mouths, and many Germans still hold the Americans and the Allied forces responsible for the results of World War II and the poverty and hunger they had to suffer.

Even some individuals we met were displeased by the fact that I was an American coming to show them what the Bible said—after having bombed them to rubble in World War II. However, after I explained God's Word to them and after they learned that we really did care for them, that barrier was no longer a problem.

A Brief History of the Broadcast and Literature

The history of God's Work in this

modern era began when the door of radio opened for the first WORLD TOMORROW broadcast in January of 1934. *It began extremely small* and has taken many, many years to develop into *what is now the largest radio broadcast on the face of the earth!*

As the Work of God began the very smallest of all works and gradually grew to where it is one of the largest on earth, so the German edition of *The WORLD TOMORROW—Die WELT VON MORGEN*—began very small. In 1960 the giant, superpower station of Europe—Radio Luxembourg—opened its doors for the first German religious broadcasting made available to us. It began with one fifteen-minute broadcast a week very early in the morning—around six o'clock. It had "just so happened" that Ambassador College had a member of the student body who was born and reared in Germany prior to coming to America. He was just the man with the proper voice needed to be the voice of *Die WELT VON MORGEN*. So, under the direction of Dr. Herman L. Hoeh, head of the German Department, Mr. Erhard Klammer began making these fifteen-minute broadcasts weekly.

The response was extremely pleasing! It was *by no means* overwhelming, but at least people began to hear and letters began to come into our German Department offices.

There was a great need for *translating booklets* into the German language. Various members of the Church of God from around the world donated their time and efforts to begin this translation. Out of this, grew a German Department which now has a staff of *over twelve full-time employees*—translating literature, mailing out the magazine and booklets, and teaching German language students.

In the fall of 1961, the first German edition of *The PLAIN TRUTH* magazine—*Die REINE WAHRHEIT*—rolled off the presses. It began as a 24-page magazine, later was upped to 32 pages, and just this summer now has gone to a 40-page magazine every month.

The mailing list also started very small with just a few scores of people

in the United States and a very few in Europe. Now, it has grown to a monthly publication where 10,000 copies are printed monthly. So giant strides forward have been made in all departments of God's Work—and the German Department is keeping pace.

You can imagine what a thrill it is to be riding in an automobile in far-away Germany or France and turning on the radio to hear the very Truth of God being broadcast to the people of these nations! And not only that, in the evening over this same superpowered Radio Luxembourg, *The WORLD TOMORROW* broadcast is sent twice a week in English and the voices of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong and Mr. Garner Ted Armstrong blanket Europe for those who understand and speak the English language. And Mr. Apatian's voice is familiar to many thousands of French-speaking people.

Back to the Feast of Tabernacles

Special arrangements were made during the Feast of Tabernacles for *translation* of sermons. Mr. Frank Schnee and a member of the German Department at the college at Bricket Wood, Mr. Waldemar Rupp, sat in a soundproof room with earphones on listening to the sermon in English. *Simultaneously*, they translated into the German language speaking into microphones which relayed the message to the section of the room where the German-speaking people were sitting.

All fifty-eight of them sat in one special section of the room, *each wearing a set of headphones*. That way, they could *look* at the speaker on the stage preaching in English, but they *heard* only the voice of Mr. Schnee or Mr. Rupp through the earphones. That way, they could see and experience the feeling of the minister. They diligently sat and took notes and followed along in their German Bibles just like all of the other brethren did.

The ministers there jokingly said this reminded them of the account in the second chapter of Acts when the disciples were able to speak in tongues—that is, foreign languages—and be

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Above you see (from left to right) Mr. Garner Ted Armstrong—Director of the Foreign Offices—with Mr. Schnee—manager of the Düsseldorf office—Mrs. Schnee and Mr. Hunting—Business Manager of the Work in England—all standing in front of our office in Düsseldorf, Germany.

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able to be understood by all present.

All of these seventy or seventy-five people from Germany look forward with great anticipation to the time when they can once again return for the Feast of Tabernacles next year. And, God willing, they will be joined by many more who will be contacted and baptized or invited to the Festival during the course of the next year.

Looking to the Future

As God continues to prosper and bless His Work, there is a great deal in store for those who serve in the German Department as well as the French and Spanish Departments of God's Work. Next year, Mr. Frank Schnee anticipates that there will be *over two hundred different* individuals who possibly will be contacted by the baptizing tour. In the meantime, the mailing list from our Düsseldorf office continues to grow at a steady rate. Hundreds more will be receiving *Die REINE WAHRHEIT* every month. Which

will in turn lead to bigger and more profitable baptizing tours the following year after that.

God is sending this warning witness AROUND THE WORLD. Each one of us, no matter where we may be in the world, has an important part in praying that God will continue to bless and prosper His Work so that the commission of Matthew 24:14 will be totally fulfilled and the church will have fulfilled its commission by the time Jesus Christ returns.

All of us who are affiliated with the German work certainly want to beseech all of you who are members of God's Church to *PRAY DILIGENTLY* for these brethren. They are totally *alone* in the world! They have no local church. They have no minister in Germany to help direct them. All of their help and inspiration must come through the magazines—and they don't even receive *The GOOD NEWS*—plus what extra additional help God makes possible for them.

Members of God's Church are not concentrated in any one part of Germany—rather, they are scattered through every corner. It does not look like there will be a local congregation in Germany for yet some time. All of these brethren diligently need your prayers to help them remain faithful—to help them withstand the tribulations and temptations that come upon them in this present world.

If we do our part, we all will be able to meet and speak with those who remain faithful along with the brethren in France whom you read about last month in a place of safety in just a few years when the warning message of God is sufficiently completed and when the time is right to flee to a place of safety.

I know we're all looking forward to that time with great anticipation and pray that all whom God is calling will remain faithful and diligent so that all of these brethren around the world we have read so much about will one day be very close friends of ours for the final few years of our time on earth prior to being born into the Kingdom of God at Christ's return.