

#IMMIGRATION

Why So Many Germans Came to America?

Unlike other immigrant groups that came to America seeking fame or fortune, the Germans came for, land, opportunity, and safety



The mass migration of Germans to America is often reduced to mere footnotes in history books, overshadowed by other waves of immigration. However, the story of why so many Germans sought refuge in the New World is one of survival, freedom, and an enduring drive to rebuild lives from scratch. Unlike other immigrant groups that came to America seeking fame or fortune, the Germans came for something more fundamental, land, opportunity and safety.

The First Wave: Seeking Freedom in the 1700s

In the early 1700s, Germany was not the unified nation we know today. Instead, it was a fragmented land full of religious persecution, war, and political strife under the rule of the Holy Roman Empire. Entire families, farmers, and craftsmen were living in the shadow of poverty and constant warfare, with no sense of hope on the horizon.

As opportunities dwindled, many Germans saw America as a land of promise. It wasn't the gold rush or the allure of fame that attracted them, but the dream of a new beginning. Seeking freedom from religious restrictions, military conscription, and economic hardships, they packed their belongings, bid farewell to their homeland, and set sail across the Atlantic Ocean.

Pennsylvania became their beacon of hope. The region's fertile soil and welcoming policies made it an ideal destination for settlers, and it wasn't long before the first communities of German immigrants began to take root.

These immigrants, known as the Pennsylvania Dutch, established themselves as hard-working farmers and skilled craftsmen. They built barns, homesteads, and entire towns from nothing, bringing their European traditions, strong work ethic, and commitment to family with them.

A Second Wave: Political Refugees After 1848

Fast forward to 1848, a year marked by failed revolutions and political upheaval in Germany. The revolutions aimed at establishing a democratic system were crushed, leaving many Germans disillusioned and fearful for their futures. Faced with political repression and economic instability, another massive wave of Germans fled their homeland,

this time not just for land but for the freedom to express their political and social beliefs. This new wave was made up of intellectuals, teachers, writers, and political thinkers. They weren't just farmers trying to escape hardship; they were revolutionaries seeking democracy and justice at a time when Europe was struggling under monarchies and autocratic regimes.

Their contributions to the U.S. were profound. These German immigrants carried with them a belief in education, democracy, and progress, values that would later be woven into the fabric of American society.

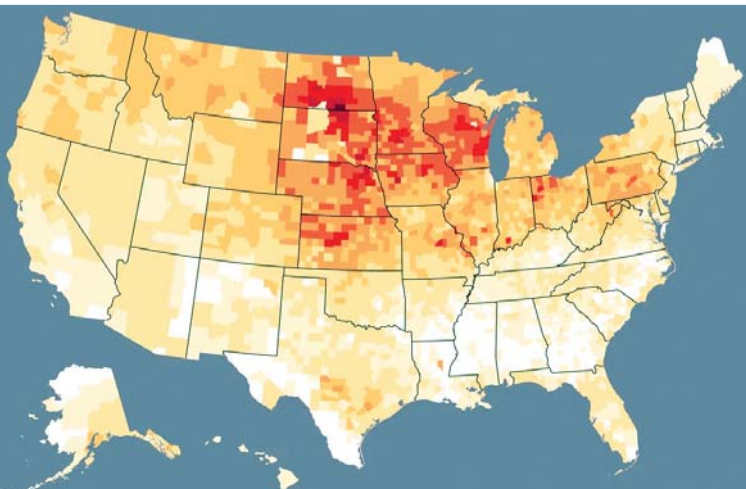
Germans Shaped the American Landscape

By the early 1900s, Germans had become the largest immigrant group in U.S. history. Their impact was felt far beyond agriculture and craftsmanship. They introduced important cultural practices that have since become deeply embedded in American society. The Germans brought beer brewing, transforming the U.S. into a nation known for its brewing culture. They also popularized the Christmas tree tradition, something we now associate with American holiday celebrations.

The concept of kindergarten, which focused on early childhood education, was introduced by German immigrants and became a cornerstone of American educational systems. The German dedication to order, education, and family values helped shape the nation's identity in ways that continue to be evident today.

The Blueprint of America: Immigrants Who Built the Nation

When we talk about America being built by immigrants, the German community's contribution cannot be overlooked. These immigrants came with the determination to build something lasting and meaningful. They found ways to thrive, even in the face of adversity, and in doing so, helped lay the foundation for a stronger, more prosperous nation. So, when people ask if German immigrants shaped America more than anyone realizes, the answer is clear: They played an essential role in shaping American culture, economy, and values. From the Pennsylvania Dutch to the political refugees of 1848, the Germans helped to mold America into the land of opportunity that we know today.



Battle of Dograi.



he Indo-Pakistan War of 1965 was a defining moment in the post-independence history of the Indian Army, which witnessed some of the most intense and strategically significant engagements.

Following Pakistan's audacious Operation Gibraltar and its subsequent attempt under Operation Grand Slam to capture Chhamb and sever the lines of communication to Rajouri, the Indian Army responded with carefully planned counteroffensives aimed at safeguarding territorial integrity and securing advantageous positions for potential post-conflict negotiations.

This phase, which saw Operation Riddle being launched by 11 Corps under Lieutenant General JS Dhillon and Operation Nepal by the newly raised 1 Corps under Lieutenant General PO Dunn, culminated in a ceasefire on 23 September by which time the Indian troops were knocking at the doors of Sialkot and Lahore, but more importantly, Pakistan's war waging potential had been degraded.

The Battle of Dograi

Dograi, a small village, of immense importance, lies astride the Grand Trunk Road only twelve kilometres from Lahore. Control of Dograi meant control of the Ichhogli Canal crossing. More than that, it meant India could threaten Pakistan's most important city. The Battle of Dograi was not a single action but a drawn-out contest over seventeen days on the Lahore front, fought



Battle of Dograi.

When Wars Were Fought Close To Hand

However, by the afternoon, ammunition began to run out, and resupply was impossible under air and artillery fire. For nearly twenty-four hours, the Battalion clung on against mounting odds, with no support and mounting casualties. On 07 September, the Jats were pulled back, bitter but intact. The first battle of Dograi had shown what bold infantry could achieve. Lieutenant Colonel Hayde's troops had surmounted against impossible odds and seized the far bank, and had even established a toehold inside Dograi. But unless success is exploited, it is unsustainable.

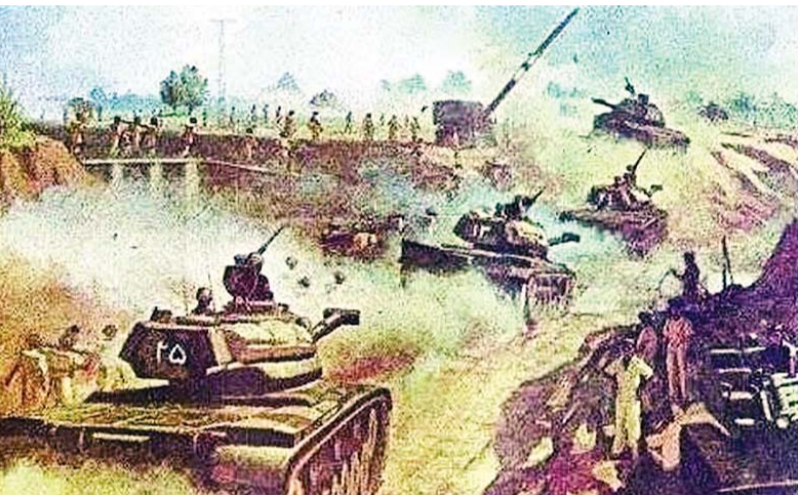
After the first attempt had failed, 15 Infantry Division fought a battle of attrition inside Pakistan territory for the next ten days and waited for an opportunity to capture Dograi again. The responsibility fell once more to 54 Infantry Brigade, now under Brigadier Nirinjan Singh, while Major General Mohinder Singh replaced Major General Nirinjan Prasad.

The assault would now be two-phased. First, 13 PUNJAB was to secure Mile 13 on the Grand Trunk Road, opening the axis to the canal. 3 JAT once again became the lead Battalion and would then capture Dograi. Armour and artillery support were earmarked to prevent a repeat of the earlier failure.

However, intelligence reports showed that Pakistanis had reinforced the defences substantially with troops, pillboxes, wire obstacles and mines. On the evening of 21 September, 13 PUNJAB moved forward. They faced well-prepared Pakistani defences, with machine-guns sited along the road and heavy mortars covering the approaches. Fighting was intense but they pressed on, closing with the bunkers. At first light, Scinde Horse tanks moved with them. By 0700 hours, Mile 13 was secured. 13 PUNJAB lost thirty-one killed and over a hundred wounded. But the path was cleared for 3 JAT.

During the night of 21/22 September, 3 JAT began advancing silently through minefields and waterlogged ground. Close to midnight, the assault began. D Company stormed the North East flank of the village. They moved through trenches, clearing one bunker after another. The fighting was brutal. Pakistani defenders resisted fiercely. Mortars and recoilless rifles poured fire into the attackers. Indian troops answered with bayonet charges and grenades. By 0530 hours on 22 September, Dograi was in Indian hands, but counterattacks began almost immediately. Tanks from 23 Cavalry pushed forward, only to be beaten back by Indian anti-tank teams and supporting armour. Pakistani artillery shelled the village continuously yet the Jats refused to yield ground.

For two days, the struggle raged. House by house, street by street, Dograi was cleared and held. By 23 September, resistance had collapsed. Indian troops had captured more than a hundred prisoners. The Ichhogli line had been breached.



Battle of Khemkaran.

3 JAT paid heavily: 58 men killed, including four officers, and 157 wounded. The Battalion had been successful not once but twice and its determination and courage remain firmly entrenched in India's rich military history. For his leadership, Lieutenant Colonel Desmond Hayde was awarded the *Maha Vir Chakra*.

The Battle of Khem Karan

In contrast to Dograi's offensive thrust, Khem Karan was a defensive stand of immense strategic value. Across the fields of Punjab, Pakistan unleashed its boldest Armoured thrust. But the Indian Army cut it down, halting the advance and leaving the countryside littered with burnt-out Pattons, transforming the sugarcane fields around Asal Uttar into the 'Graveyard of Pattons.' Pakistan's plan was to break through towards Amritsar, cut the Grand Trunk Road, and possibly reach the Beas. The axis chosen was through Khemkaran, a small-town South-East of Amritsar. For this, Pakistan had concentrated its newly raised 1 Armoured Division under Maj Gen Nasir Ahmed Khan.

4 Mountain Division under Major General Gurbaksh Singh was positioned in this Sector, it had been tasked to advance along the Khem Karan-Kasur road. While 7 Infantry Division under Major General (later Lieutenant General) HK Sibal, responsible for the defence of Ferozpur, was tasked to capture Barki.

Pakistan had planned an offensive in this area with a view to get behind our defences and seize the bridge at Beas and cut off Amritsar. On 06 September, Pakistani 11 Infantry Division under Major General Abdul Hamid Khan pushed forward, aiming to secure Khem Karan as the springboard for launch of its 1 Armoured Division under Major General Naseer Ahmed Khan. 4 Mountain Division initially held positions forward of Khem Karan, but the pressure was mounting. However, Indian units kept fighting the enemy and bought

time. Khem Karan town fell by 08 September making Pakistan believe that the road to Amritsar lay open. What they did not see was a trap forming.

Generals Harbaksh Singh and Gurbaksh Singh had decided to fall back into a defensive box at Asal Uttar, just North of Khem Karan, rather than fight in the open. The box-shaped deployment placed infantry on three sides, anti-tank weapons hidden in sugarcane fields, and artillery batteries covering every likely approach. Engineers breached canals and flooded fields to bog down enemy tanks.

By the night of 08 September, 4 Mountain Division had pulled back and occupied the Asal Uttar position. 7 Infantry Brigade held the Northern and Western faces. 62 Infantry Brigade guarded the Eastern flank. In reserve, 2 (Independent) Armoured Brigade under Brigadier TK Theograj with Deccan Horse, 8 Cavalry and 3 Cavalry, its Centurion tanks, waited to strike. Theograj had planned his deployment in a manner to break the backbone of the enemy offensive, the timing of occupation and



Battle of Phillora.

#1965 WAR



locations occupied were both critical to success and it was a plan brilliantly executed.

Pakistan's 5 Armoured Brigade rolled forward, confident of its rapid success. At first, momentum carried them forward. But as the Pattons rolled into the Asal Uttar box, the ground betrayed them. Heavy tanks sank into the soft, waterlogged fields. Tracks bogged down. Visibility was poor and columns bunched up on narrow causeways.

On 09 September, Pakistan's 4 Armoured Brigade was tasked to breakout and attacked 18 Rajputana Rifles position (with two Patton Regiments), utilising moonlight and infrared equipment. But even after making a breakthrough, the Pattons were unable to get past the defences of 4 GRENADIERS commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Farhat Bhattay and were forced to withdraw.

The Pakistanis made another attempt during the night. But own troops held on and medium artillery and tanks, positioned in forward, defended localities and punished them severely. In this encounter Lieutenant Colonel

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Battle of Phillora.

being killed in action. He was posthumously awarded the Param Vir Chakra. The outstanding handling of the armour by Brigadier TK Theograj and by Lieutenant Colonel (later Major General) Salim Caleb, Commandant of 3 Cavalry, and Lieutenant Colonel (later General) Arun Vaidya, Commandant of Deccan Horse, prevented any enemy ingression and resulted in severe attrition of the attacking forces. All of them and Major General Gurbaksh Singh were decorated with the Maha Vir Chakra for displaying exceptional leadership.

The Battle of Phillora

Following the Indian responses at Dograi and Khem Karan, the focus shifted to the Sialkot Sector, the newly raised 1 Corps, under Lieutenant General P O Dhanan, and was tasked with launching a decisive offensive. Codenamed Operation Nepal, it aimed to penetrate the Shakargarh Bulge, thereby forcing Pakistan to divert forces from other critical Sectors.

1 Corps' composition mirrored a combined-arms approach, integrating Armoured and Infantry, formations for coordinated manoeuvre. 1 Armoured Division commanded by Major General Rajinder Singh 'Sparrow', MVC, 6 Mountain Division under Major General S K Korla, DSO, MC, 14 Infantry Division under Major General R K Ranjit Singh, and 26 Infantry Division under Major General (later Lieutenant General) M L Thapan were its major formations. The Corps' initial objective was to secure Pagowal, Phillora, Chawinda, with a view to advancing towards the Marala-Ravi Link

Pakistan's 1 Corps, under Lieutenant General Bakhtiar Rana, held the Shakargarh Bulge with 6 Armoured Division commanded by Major General Abrar Hussain and 15 Infantry Division. Their task was to protect Sialkot and counter an Indian advance.

The strike commenced on the night of 07 September 1965, with the 6 Mountain Division crossing the border. 99 Mountain Brigade captured Charwa, followed by 69 Mountain Brigade and 62 Cavalry, secured Maharajke and established a bridgehead by midday on 08 September. 1 Armoured Division now moved in, with 43 Lorried Brigade advancing North towards Bhagawal, and 2 Lancers following in the wake of 62 Cavalry.

Simultaneously, 1 Armoured Brigade under Brigadier (later Lieutenant General) KK Singh, with 16 Cavalry and 17 HORSE, headed Southwards to Phillora, while 4 HORSE, initially the reserve, conducted a pincer maneuver to isolate the town. By 10 September, Indian armour and infantry had successfully linked, consolidated bridgeheads, and secured supply lines, setting the stage for a decisive engagement at Phillora.

The Battle of Phillora unfolded on 10-11 September and is considered one of the most ferocious tank battles since World War II. Intelligence indicated that Pakistani forces had positioned a Squadron of Patton tanks near the Libbe-Phillora road. Lieutenant Colonel MMS Bakshi of 4 HORSE detected the threat at dawn on 11 September and responded with remarkable initiative. Engaging the enemy at close range, he destroyed two tanks. Despite sustaining four direct hits and his tank catching fire, he pressed forward through the Pakistani line, eventually reaching the Libbe-Phillora road, where his crew bailed out under intense fire. They were rescued after three hours by 17 HORSE, meanwhile 4 HORSE neutralized six additional enemy tanks.

17 HORSE secured the Southern approach, 16 Cavalry and 62 Cavalry guarded against flank attacks, and 43 Lorried Infantry Brigade prepared to exploit breaches for the final assault. Indian tank gunners demonstrated superior marksmanship and battlefield awareness, neutralizing Pakistani armour even in direct confrontation.

The subsequent tank clash unfolded between moving tanks at a range of only 100 yards. In this battle, the Pakistanis lost a total of 28 tanks as against one by 17 HORSE. Two tanks were knocked out by Lieutenant Colonel Tarapore. With the defeat of enemy armour, the defences of Phillora was breached. Cross-roads was secured.

Following the victory at Phillora, the maintenance axis was opened, and replenishment and repairs were carried out. Mirzapur, Zafarwal was also captured. The next objective was Chawinda which was heavily fortified. 43 Armoured Brigade had also by now reached Pagowal. Chawinda held out though surrounded from three sides by 4 HORSE, 17 HORSE and 16 Cavalry. The Armoured Division was now leaning on Railway line Sialkot-Chawinda-Pasrur. The Battalions of 43 Lorried Infantry Brigade, including 5/9 GORKHA RIFLES, 8 GARHWAL RIFLES, 9 DOGRA and 5 JAT, all fought valiantly. While on the 26 Infantry Division front, the tanks of 18 Cavalry were on the outskirts of Sialkot. The Indian suc-

cess at Shakargarh in suboptimal manoeuvre terrain achieved multiple strategic objectives. By decisive-ly engaging and defeating Pakistani armour in the Shakargarh Bulge, India relieved pressure on Chhamb, safeguarded key communication lines, and forced Pakistan to divert resources from other fronts. The Battle of Phillora remains a defining engagement of the 1965 war. Its significance lies not only in the destruction of enemy armour and capture of strategic objectives but also in the demonstration of courage, and operational foresight. Lieutenant Colonel Tarapore made the supreme sacrifice, earning the Param Vir Chakra posthumously. Major General Rajinder Singh Sparrow, Brigadier KK Singh, and Lieutenant Colonel MMS Bakshi were awarded Maha Vir Chakra for their decisive roles.

Conclusion

These decisive battles remain a testament to the Indian Army's grit and indomitable spirit. At Dograi, it was raw courage and swift infantry action that carried the day and proved that initiative and courage matter more than numbers. Khem Karan told a different story. Here, terrain and preparation turned the tide. Flooded fields, superior gunners, and resolute armour crews destroyed a stronger enemy. Phillora was different altogether. It was tanks grinding forward across open ground. Tank versus tank, Brigade against Brigade, it was a battle where professionalism, commitment, courage and leadership tipped the balance.

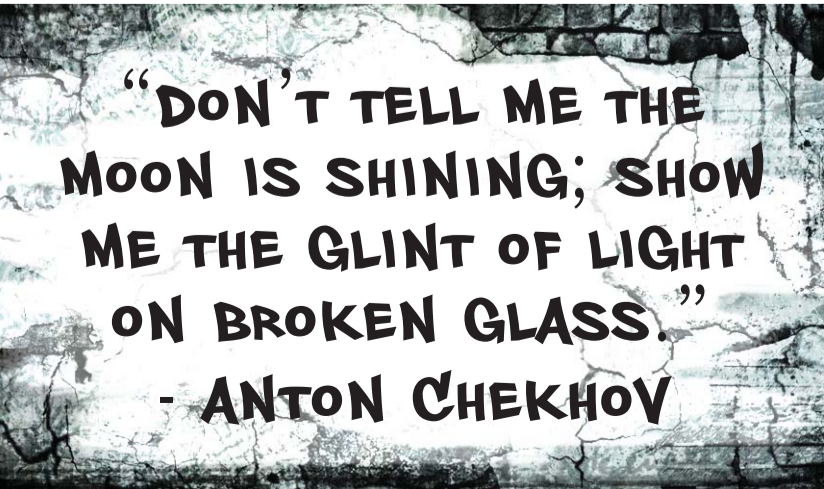
Collectively, these battles blunted Pakistan's operational objectives in the Punjab. They drained its strength, and by the end of the conflict, the Indian Army stood tall and the debacle of 1962 was now firmly behind them. Pakistan had failed to achieve any of its operational and strategic objectives and its discourse defeated. Six years later, a resurgent and confident military would deliver a crushing blow to Pakistan leading to the creation of a new nation state.

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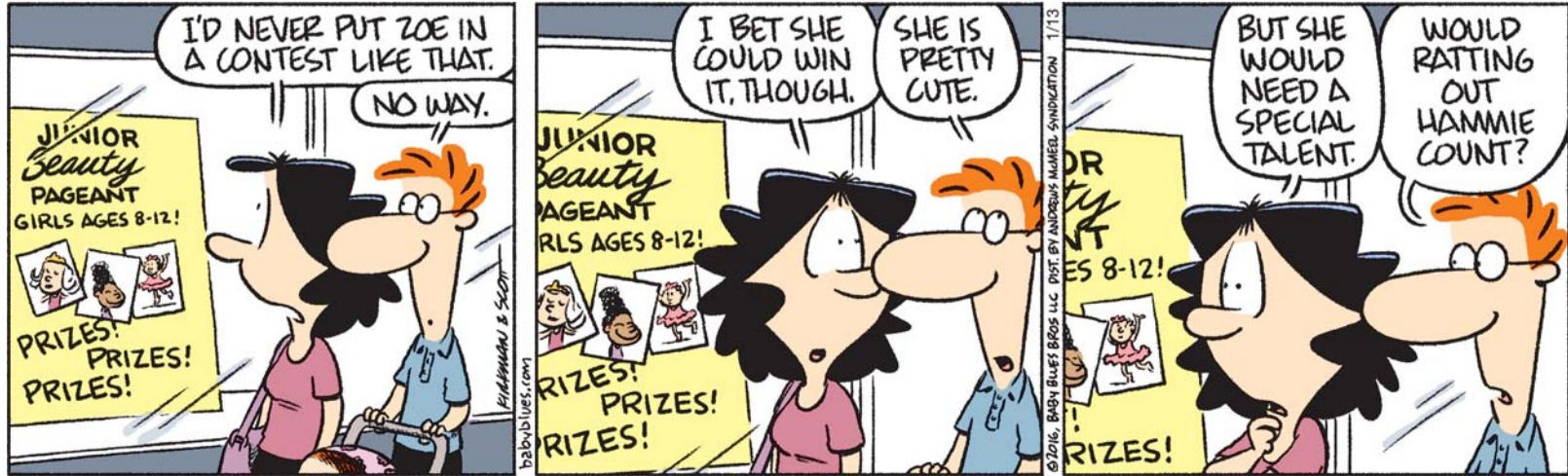


Battle of Phillora.

THE WALL



BABY BLUES



ZITS



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman