


1989

Script for Joseph and Frau Edebrock (1859)

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Recommended Citation

Kendall, Robert D., "Script for Joseph and Frau Edebrock (1859)" (1989). *Communication Studies Faculty Publications*. 6.
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“Speaking Notes/Joseph and Frau Edelbrock”

These speaking notes regarding Joseph and Frau Edelbrock were written in preparation for an impersonation speech to be later developed by Dr. Robert Kendall. Joseph and Frau Edelbrock immigrated to the US from Germany originally living in Indiana and then moving to St. Cloud, MN in 1851, becoming one of the earliest families in St. Cloud. He was elected mayor of St. Cloud in 1861.

Impersonation speaking was developed by Dr. Robert Kendall who taught in the Communication Studies Department at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota between 1971 and 1992. Dr. Kendall described impersonation speaking in this way: “Each student chooses an historical character, does independent research on that person, writes a speech, locating it in a particular year of that person’s adult life, making it interesting and relevant to a [contemporary] audience, assumes that character through costume, attitude, worldview, and mannerisms, and delivers the speech to an open-invitation public.”

"Script" for Joseph & Frau Edelbrock (1859)

MAYOR
1861

Joseph & "Frau" Edelbrock came to St. Cloud in 1855 as part of a group migrating from Evansville, Indiana. Leading them was John W. Tenvoorde, who had scouted out St. Cloud the year prior, looking first at Kansas/Nebraska Territory and at Iowa, before deciding that Fr. Pierz' claim in an article written in the *Wahrheitsfreund* was accurate. Tenvoorde had been commissioned by the Evansville German community to do this investigating. Joseph's brother, Anton, had brought his family to St. Cloud in the fall of 1854, and was thus the first German settlers in St. Cloud.

At the time of the German migration from Evansville in 1854 there were but 6 houses in St. Cloud. The Germans more than doubled the population. In 1856 a large group of German immigrants from Cumberland, Maryland arrived, among them being Henry & Balthazar Rosenberger, Joseph Emmel, and Anton Schmitt.

By 1860, the population of St. Cloud had swollen to 1651, 670 of whom were foreign born (mostly German), 165 of these Germans were farming people while the rest were involved in the intellectual, professional, and trade ranks. Most of the farmers, in order to make a living for their families, also engaged in some trade in St. Cloud.

Some of the prominent German names of the time, besides those mentioned above: Rengel, Reichert, Vossberg, Hollenhorst, Fritz, Abels, Fandel, Boehm, Lahr. Most of these people had come from the Germanic States of Europe to escape the strife caused by political revolution, religious divisions, economic depression, and agricultural failures. These were hardworking, pious, strong-willed, and child-bearing families.

Joseph Edelbrock ran the first general store in St. Cloud. His building also doubled as the first Post Office (mail came across from Sauk Rapids via ferry usually once a day), as a School (run by Fr. Cornelius Wittman) for German Catholic children, and as a sometime Church for Mass (said by Fr. Cornelius Wittman and/or Fr. Francis Pierz and/or Fr. Bruno Reiss) which, the attic being the largest indoor room, sometimes posed a problem with its low ceiling when elevating the host.

Land around St. Cloud in 1860 was selling for \$1.25 an acre.

An example of the travel in 1855-1860: the German Catholics from Cumberland, MD left on April 13, 1856 via B & O Railway to Wheeling, Virginia, then via steamboat to Cincinnati, then changed steamboats and traveled down the Ohio river to St. Louis, changed steamboats again and came north on the Mississippi river to St. Paul, then traveled overland in farm wagons to St. Anthony, then on steamboat again to St. Cloud, finally arriving here on May 9, 1856---a 26 day trip.

A present concern: young Anthony Edelbrock, my brother Anton's son, just last June ran away from his responsibilities in his father's businesses (having been given 4 lots by John Wilson, he erected on them a small hotel called Central House; received the first liquor license in St. Cloud; operated a ferry boat between St. Cloud and Sauk Rapids), and insists on joining the Benedictines (he later becomes the second Abbott at St. John's Abbey). He's a headstrong young man; but we'll do everything possible to bring him to his senses---once we find out where he is. (He walked nine miles to the St. Cloud Priory, then took steamboat to St. Anthony.)