Andrew Bolter started A. Bolter Co. in 1856 and became one of Chicago’s leading iron founders. After rebuilding his business following the Great Chicago Fire in 1871, Bolter garnered attention for the artistic steel designs produced by his renamed Illinois Iron Works while also gathering one of the country’s largest and most complete collections of exotic and North American insects.

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Introduction

Andrew Bolter (born Andreas Bolter on May 15, 1820 in Sigmaringen, Principality of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen; died March 17, 1900, in Chicago, IL) started A. Bolter Co. in 1856 and became one of Chicago’s leading iron founders. After rebuilding his business following the Great Chicago Fire in 1871, Bolter garnered attention for the artistic steel designs produced by his renamed Illinois Iron Works while also gathering one of the country’s largest and most complete collections of exotic and North American insects. From his humble origins in a small German principality, Bolter rose to prominence both in helping to rebuild a devastated American city and in his contributions to the study of entomology.

Early Life and Family Background

On August 23, 1854, the passenger ship Connecticut sailed into New York harbor from Havre de Grace, France. Although some French immigrants were aboard, most of the travelers came from the southern German states, typically as nuclear families. Andrew Bolter, along with his wife, Josephine, and young daughters, came from the Principality of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen (part of the modern German federal state of Baden-Württemberg) not long after the March Revolution of 1848 had shaken the region. Upon relocating to Chicago, Andrew Bolter flourished as a father, businessman, and amateur entomologist until his death in 1900. As he was part of a large influx of German immigrants to the U.S. during the nineteenth century, Bolter’s experiences and heritage speak to the historical question of how German immigrants’ ethnicity affected their transition into American life. Given the complexity of separating ethnic influences from individual personality traits, this question is difficult to answer precisely. While Bolter’s life story was in several ways characteristic of numerous German immigrants to the United States during this era, Bolter was hardly defined only by his ethnicity and heritage. Rather than allowing his German origins to supersede the influences of American culture or vice versa, Bolter maintained a German identity while still putting firm roots into the Illinois soil, embracing the American context of his new life in Chicago.
Andreas Bolter was born on May 15, 1820, to Thomas and Josephine (née Seelos) Bolter in the community of Sigmaringen, the seat of government of the small principality of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, which had become an independent state in 1806 and would later be annexed by Prussia in 1850 following the 1848-1849 revolutions. Reportedly young Andreas was exceptionally intelligent and after being released from compulsory school early at the age of thirteen, he began work in his father's factory. Though it is not explicitly mentioned, Bolter's apprenticeship as a locksmith around the same time suggests his father's factory's function. Following his father's death in 1845, Bolter became head of the firm and continued to operate the factory and pursue the locksmith trade until he entered the iron industry in the U.S.

In September 1846 he married Josephine Brandhuber, with whom he started a family. By the end of 1849 Andreas and Josephine had three daughters together, Agatha, Anna, and Caroline. Their two sons, Joseph and Edward, were born after the family emigrated to the U.S.

Further details about Bolter's life prior to his arrival in the U.S. are elusive save for the fact that he participated in the 1848 revolutions in the German lands, and that government pressure connected to his role in those revolutions damaged his business and motivated his departure from Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen. Beyond these details his exact role in the local revolution in Sigmaringen is not specified, however it seems likely that Andrew Bolter was a fairly prominent figure. One account of the Sigmaringen revolution describes a locksmith named Bolter (no first name given) as taking part in several demonstrations in support of the revolution. While this Bolter does not appear to have been a policymaker or major official in the revolutionary governments that formed briefly, he appears to have played a role in coordinating revolutionary movements and events in the city. On two separate occasions, first in support of a revolutionary politician's rise to power in the government, and second when the prince of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen was forced to abdicate in favor of his pro-revolutionary son, the "well known republican" Bolter helped lead a demonstration in support.

Generally speaking, Bolter's ideology during the revolution followed closely that of the prominent revolutionary Karl Otto Würth, who believed that ultimate sovereignty was derived from the people, and that when poverty and suffering became too great under an existing regime, upheaval and revolution were justified and lawful. Bolter supported actively Würth's efforts to align Sigmaringen with the revolutionary movements in nearby Baden and elsewhere, and in so doing probably tied his fate to that of the revolutionary leaders. On August 10, 1849, as Prussian troops began an occupation of Sigmaringen and the revolution seemed all but finished, revolutionary leaders and prominent supporters, including Bolter, fled the region under cover of darkness. Though many would soon return, it is unclear whether Bolter was among them.

It is reasonable to assume that the Bolter mentioned in historical accounts of the Sigmaringen revolution was in fact Andreas Bolter. By the time of the revolution, Bolter would have been practicing his trade as a locksmith for several years and would likely have become part of a fast-growing generation of journeymen and master craftsmen across the German lands. Broadly speaking, craftsmen like Bolter were a large factor in the start of the 1848 revolutions. Though Bolter's specific economic circumstances are unknown, he established his livelihood during a time when both the general population and that of craftsmen in the German states were on the rise. Between 1815 and 1849 the population of the German states rose by more than fifty percent, with the number of skilled craftsmen often climbing at an even faster rate. Combined with the liberalization of trade laws, craftsmen like Bolter faced a growing "threat of social demotion" which helped drive them toward revolution. Meanwhile the nearby states of Baden and Württemberg, which were crucial to the start of the revolution, maintained a powerful and increasingly strict aristocracy. These regions, geographically surrounding Bolter's home in Sigmaringen, also maintained a population of craftsmen about ten times as large as that of factory workers.

However, neither industrial workers nor craftsmen like Bolter were in the vanguards of the revolutions that erupted across the German lands. A sharp spike in food prices throughout most of Europe in the years before 1848 greatly contributed to unrest among the lower classes, whose concern for their economic safety, as well as a growing "urge toward changed circumstances," drove revolutionary sentiment. Generally speaking, few craftsmen in the German lands engaged in widespread criticism of the government. This may explain why Bolter, without having played a major role in shaping and defining the parameters of his local revolution as Würth did, was worthy of mention as an enthusiastic supporter of the revolution in Sigmaringen. Despite his less central role, however, Bolter's involvement was clearly enough to compel him to leave his home when the revolution was put down by the ancien régime in 1849. It is unclear exactly what Bolter did between the end of the revolution in Sigmaringen and his 1854 arrival in the U.S. He may have been able to return home as did many revolutionaries in Sigmaringen or, like Karl Würth, he may have fled to Switzerland or somewhere similar and lived in exile.

One account suggests that Bolter's motivations for emigration were economic. Though Bolter "never got into direct conflict with the law, at least not to the extent to incur punishment," his business suffered greatly as a result of his revolutionary activity. However, Bolter deviates from other "Forty-Eighters" who traveled to the U.S. in that he does not appear to have remained politically active. German immigrants to the U.S., particularly following the Revolutions of 1848, were instrumental in American political development both leading up to the American Civil War and beyond. German immigrants with a diverse range of opinions formed cooperative organizations and contributed heavily to debates in America surrounding the economy and labor. Slavery was fervently opposed by republican-minded "Forty-Eighters," who became more actively opposed to the peculiar institution as the 1850s wore on. Ultimately, about two hundred thousand German immigrants would serve in the Union Army during the Civil War, with one Forty-Eighter claiming, "the spirit of 1848 has once more awakened." Yet, while Bolter's future business partner in Chicago, William Chenoweth, entered the military in 1862 to fight for the Union, Bolter neither served in the Civil War nor appears to have engaged significantly in any of the aforementioned political activities common to Forty-Eighters. While Bolter may have held any number of political positions, either with or against the grain of German immigrants as a whole, it is his silence in the remaining record that is most significant. However Bolter may have felt about American political issues and crises, his lack of activity which was considered significant enough to be recorded by his contemporaries indicates that Bolter did not continue his former role as a revolutionary leader or political activist.

Despite these anomalies, Bolter and his family were anything but unusual in their decision to immigrate to the United States, nor was
Business Development

Andrew Bolter remained in New York City until the spring of 1856 and then moved to Chicago, where he worked intermittently as a locksmith. After arriving, Bolter quickly showed interest in the iron industry, attaining a job at the Chicago Iron Works under the employ of Frederick Letz, an immigrant from Alsace-Lorraine. Letz's Works, which was located on Fifth Avenue between Randolph and Lake Streets in 1856, manufactured "all kinds of iron work for buildings, including railings, shutters, iron-fronts, etc," things that Bolter would later produce on his own. This is the earliest mention of Bolter's employment in the iron industry, and presumably where he learned the trade. This process was quick, for after six months working with Mr. Letz, Bolter had opened up his own small shop on Market Street. Business was reportedly slow. Bolter supplemented his iron work with locksmithing for the time being.[15] Given the size and state of Chicago's iron industry during this era, Bolter's initial trouble finding steady work is unsurprising. Nationwide demand for iron used outside the railroad industry declined during the mid-1850s, just as Bolter was organizing his business, and Chicago's iron industry was itself still in its formative stages. In 1850 only nine iron works were reported to exist in the entire state of Illinois. But both Chicago and its manufacturing sector were on the verge on enormous growth as Bolter began establishing himself, and the iron industry was no exception. By 1860 the industry was growing steadily, and the city's iron manufactures, rail and otherwise, produced a total of $881,000 ($23.8 million in 2010 U.S. dollars) in finished products.[16] By 1870 the iron industry in Chicago had grown immensely: an aggregate of only the thirty-eight largest iron manufactures in Chicago that year showed a combined manufacturing output of $4,869,227, produced by 2,540 workers who were paid $1,937,495 in wages, placing it about even with Baltimore's iron industry.[17] With this growth came enormous diversity for Chicago's iron industry; local ironworks produced railroad iron, iron casting, piping, railing, stove foundries, locomotives and railcars, steam engines and boilers, not to mention a variety of assorted goods manufactured by smaller firms.[18] Bolter's firm reflected a similar kind of diversity by manufacturing a variety of iron products including railings, safes, vaults, doors, and bedsteads.[19]

Bolter's work in the iron industry mirrored the industry's rapid rate of growth as a whole. Bolter's firm changed names periodically during his lifetime and sources conflict over the timing of these name changes. It appears, however, that the firm was originally called A. Bolter Co. From the very start of his business career, Bolter specialized in the production of "artistic wrought iron projects," though he later branched out into other types of iron work.[20] After landing his first major contract, the McIlroy Block on the corner of Dearborn and Randolph Streets, business began to improve. In 1858 Bolter expanded his firm, moving its location to 55 Washington Street and forming a partnership with William H. Chenoweth, who had worked as a foreman in Letz's Chicago Iron Works at the same time as Bolter. This partnership was formed sometime between 1858 and 1860. Chenoweth, of Welsh descent, was born and trained as a blacksmith in Baltimore and was described as a "large manufacturer of artistic architectural iron." Sources provide little specific information about Bolter's business dealings during the partnership but given Bolter's success and expansion in the following years, it presumably was profitable. The company's name changed during this period, appearing in the Illinois State Business Directory in 1860 under the name Bolter and Chenoweth, where they advertised themselves as manufacturers of "iron railings, doors, bank vaults, etc" in Cook County. In August of 1862 Chenoweth entered the military and his partnership with Bolter ended.[21]

From this point on Bolter was the sole owner of his firm until his retirement in 1891. Tax reports from late 1862 and early 1863 show that by this time Bolter had begun importing materials for his firm, likely from Europe. Bolter continued this practice at least until the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. Tax reports from December of 1862 and then from January, April, and September of 1863 show Bolter paying ad valorem taxes on "iron railings." Between December 1862 and April 1863 (the taxes are listed as void for September), Bolter paid three percent in taxes on an increasing volume of imported goods, a total of $15.45 on $515 worth of goods.[22] While these same reports occasionally show other firms importing iron or other manufacturing materials, none have the same regularity as Bolter. Such buying trips helped distinguish Bolter from other Chicago iron works and probably contributed to his later reputation for specialty and artistic works.[23]

Until the end of 1862, the real estate market was depressed throughout Chicago. However, largely as a result of the ongoing Civil War, demand for manufactured goods increased, taxes rose, and the value of currency fell. These factors caused an increase in real estate sales across Chicago, and it was during this time that Bolter chose to move his works for a third and final time during his tenure, to 172-176 Van Buren Street. Bolter's business likely began to pick up during this time. A business directory for the 1869-1870 year contains a full page advertisement for Andrew Bolter's Illinois Iron Works on the corner of Van Buren and Wells, indicating not only a name change but an effort to expand his business. The products advertised include iron railings, safes, bank vaults, iron doors, shutters, bedsteads, sash, grating, and "all kinds of building work and blacksmithing." A census record from 1870 indicates that Bolter's business (described as "iron manufacturing") performed fairly well during this time. As of that year, Bolter's combined real and personal estate totaled $18,000 (approximately $310,000 in 2010S). Considerably greater assets were invested in Bolter's business and the value of these assets can be estimated due to the unfortunate calamity which would come to be known as the Great Chicago Fire of 1871.[24]

The Chicago Fire took an enormous toll on the city, as well as on Bolter himself. In 1871, just before the fire, Chicago's estimated population was over 334,000 with a total property value of over $620 million.[25] Almost overnight, seventeen thousand buildings were destroyed...
across more than two thousand acres, leaving three hundred dead and ninety-eight thousand homeless. An estimate of the total costs to seventy-nine principal Chicago businesses (Bolter's not included) after the fire came to about $8 million (approximately $147 million in 2010$) with another $6 million worth of damages to public buildings, not including land values. The estimated total cost of all the damages in Chicago came to $196 million (approximately $3.61 billion in 2010$), of which $13 million was to "manufactures, including stock, machinery, and product." In addition to these damages, the north side of the city, containing a large proportion of German residents, suffered greatly from the fire. It is difficult to ascertain whether Bolter's home would have escaped the flames. One directory containing Bolter's home address comes from 1883, placing him at 1511 N. Halsted Street in the township of Lake View. If Bolter lived here at the time of the fire, his house would have barely escaped the flames. If not, it is possible that Bolter's home was destroyed in the fire and that he moved to Halsted Street as a result.\[26\]

Illinois Iron Works was, unfortunately, right in the path of the inferno. Like so many other businesses, Bolter's firm was burned to the ground, costing him $40,000 (approximately $737,000 in 2010$) in lost property, a figure which included a large acquisition of patterns during a recent trip to Europe, for which the duties alone had exceeded $1,000. Deplorable as these events were, this is an example which illuminates the quality and strength of not only Bolter's character, but that of Chicago's business community as a whole. Rather than become disheartened, within two days the vast majority of Chicago businesses had secured temporary locations with which to restart their operations, or else had begun rebuilding at their original locations. Bolter was no different. Despite the setback, he immediately set to work rebuilding his business, salvaging one hundred tons of iron before it was "fairly cooled" and managing to get Illinois Iron Works fully rebuilt, stocked, prepped, and staffed within twenty-nine days. Even further amazement was the manner in which Bolter handled both his customers and workers throughout this process. Beyond simply fulfilling contracts made before the fire, he honored them at their original rates while still paying the increased rates demanded by his workers and suppliers due to fire-related scarcities. Naturally he incurred great loss in the process, which is indicative of a sense of honor and a desire not only to rebuild his business but also to maintain the relationships he had cultivated in the Chicago business community. Bolter's efforts appear to have paid off, for Illinois Iron Works and its proprietor would soon experience more prosperity than ever before\[27\]

In terms of monetary success, Andrew Bolter was neither a singularly successful German entrepreneur nor a major iron manufacturer in Chicago. In 1889, the German newspaper *Staatszeitung* published a list of German businessmen in Chicago with assets between one and five million dollars\[28\]. Bolter did not make the list, nor is there any indication that the value of his estate ever rose that high. In business, Bolter's firm was not unusually small but it hardly compared to some of his larger competitors. Census records show that other iron manufacturers of products like stoves or wheels could produce more volume, had more capital to invest in their operations, and employed far more people than Bolter could. In 1880, Bolter reported about $20,000 in real and personal capital invested in Illinois Iron Works.\[29\] Of the twenty other foundries listed on just that same census page, seven had more capital invested, ranging from $25,000 to $400,000.\[30\] Three more had the same invested as Bolter, yet they were able to employ at least twenty-five workers where Bolter only employed twelve. These same three foundries also managed to produce between two and three times the product value as Bolter. With regards to wages and shifts, workers were paid about the same per day, $2.50 for skilled and $1.50 for unskilled labor, to work the same ten hour shift that most other foundries demanded.\[31\] By these metrics, Bolter's business can be viewed at best as mid-sized; expanding this comparison to include more iron businesses than just foundries makes Bolter even appear below average in terms of production and capital.\[32\]

Production figures and business capitalization, however, were not where the success of Bolter's firm rested. Despite the above figures, Bolter is described in 1885 as "highly regarded" in the iron industry and was reportedly "well known to architects and builders as a man of great taste and skill," a reputation owed largely to Bolter's proficiency in specialty iron projects. Rather than producing simpler iron products like stoves or wheels and manufacturing them in volume, Bolter's focus appears to have been on high-quality custom work. Bolter's published advertisements, as well as other sources, show that his firm produced more common, practical items such as doors and safe vaults, but aside from such "common bulky work," Bolter's creations represented "the most difficult and scientific work, original in their designs, and [were] manufactured with reference to the present style of ornamental building." This artistic style of ironwork appears to have been a priority for Bolter dating to the very beginnings of his firm and may shed light on the purpose of the iron and patterns imported by Bolter during the early 1860s and in 1871.\[33\]

His reputation for this type of work appears to have taken some time to build. The 1870 census lists Bolter's occupation as "iron manufacturing," whereas the 1880 census lists it as "ornamental iron works." It is possible that the destruction caused by the Great Fire in part influenced Bolter's emergence by 1885 as an artistic iron manufacturer, whose expertise and services were routinely sought for "fancy iron work" projects. The types of work that Illinois Iron Works produced for public buildings, private residences, warehouses, and even breweries were seen as something "rare and odd" and highly prized for their workmanship. Notable examples of his work could be found on the Cook County Courthouse, the Bemis and McAvoy Co. Brewery, the First National Bank building, St. Luke's Hospital, the Chicago Gas Light & Coke Company, and the Staatszeitung newspaper building. In addition to the value of his final products, Bolter's business is portrayed as a well-oiled machine. Leading the production process was Bolter, described as an "expert draughtsman" who took active part in his contracts. Rather than as a businessman, Bolter is described as a "blacksmith and iron worker" by trade, even at the age of seventy-three, and his workers were described as both "practical" and "expert," and "with every facility and convenience...at hand, in tools and machinery and steam power." Whenever "good workmanship, durability and prompt execution of orders...were demanded, [Bolter] had no equal in the city."\[34\] Although Bolter only employed twelve men according to the 1880 census, he was able to hire more over the course of the next decade or so.\[35\] It is reasonable to assume, however, that this growth in his business and his commercial reputation for artistic projects are related.

The artistic element of Bolter's work is part of a broader indication of a sense of dedication toward Chicago that he seems to have developed. In addition to the specialty work already described, Bolter began placing emphasis on fire-proofing buildings and structural steel after 1871. While of course these activities might have been driven simply by market forces and Bolter's specific skillset, they could also indicate a vested interest not only in the growth and development (and recovery) of Bolter's business but also that of Chicago as a whole. The latter
seems more likely when, surprisingly, the fate of Bolter’s insect collection is taken into account. Following his death in 1900, Bolter’s large collection was given to the University of Illinois. The primary condition of this donation was that the collection be kept in a fire-proof building. The nature of this request, combined with Bolter’s reduced output and employment compared to his competitors (implying that pure maximization of production or profits was not the goal), gives credence to the idea that Bolter’s personal relationship with Chicago was not simply extractive and self-serving.\[36\]

Alongside Bolter’s connections to Chicago was his connection to European and German networks, which appeared periodically throughout his public dealings in the United States and likely contributed to his success in the iron industry. As has been mentioned already, his first job was with Mr. Letz, an immigrant from Alsace-Lorraine, and Bolter regularly imported materials from Europe. Bolter was also a paying member of Chicago’s Deutsche Gesellschaft (German Society), an organization committed to aiding German immigrants in Chicago, which included giving them employment assistance. Originally established in 1854, the Deutsche Gesellschaft provided a public voice, job placement services, and financial support for thousands of poor and recently-immigrated Germans. Around the time of Bolter’s known membership in the organization, the Deutsche Gesellschaft comprised around one thousand members and claimed to have paired around 3,450 employers with about as many workers.\[37\] Bolter also maintained professional network connections through the German community in Chicago. McAvoy Brewing Company, for whom Bolter had previously worked, and Otto Matz, prominent German-American architect, were also paying members of the Deutsche Gesellschaft alongside Bolter. Another prominent German-American architect in Chicago, Dankmar Adler, likely worked with Bolter to design the First National Bank Building in 1871.\[38\]

Finally, there appears to be at least one instance where Bolter’s business interests and associations with the German community may well have come into conflict. Broadly speaking, participation by Germans in labor unions was widespread in Chicago during this time. In 1886, for example, German workers made up almost two-thirds of the membership in the Metal Workers’ union in Illinois, far outstripping any other ethnic group, and eighty-eight percent of whom lived in Cook County. It seems near impossible that Bolter would not have had any contact with this group of Germans, and on several occasions German workers in Chicago campaigned for an eight-hour workday. Even though one such campaign took place in 1879, Illinois Iron Works, like most iron manufactures, maintained the ten-hour workday. Bolter’s willingness to pay for membership in the Deutsche Gesellschaft indicates at least some interest in promoting the employment and welfare of his fellow German-Americans, but his decision to keep a longer workday, not to mention standard wages, indicates that at some point in his reasoning, Bolter’s business concerns overtook the labor concerns shared by so many Germans in Chicago.\[39\] Thus, a combination of influences and leanings are apparent. Andrew Bolter, upon settling in Chicago, clearly drew upon his business experience and trade skills developed in Sigmaringen. By associating himself with immigrant networks through the Deutsche Gesellschaft and the German community at large in Chicago, Bolter developed both social and professional connections through his experiences as a German-American. Yet he clearly did not isolate himself through his ethnicity. Through his structural and artistic contributions to Chicago as a whole, especially in the aftermath of the Great Chicago Fire, Bolter demonstrated a vested interest in the growth and cultivation of his new American home.

### Social and Family Life

An examination of Bolter’s private life furthers the multi-ethnic connections seen in his business life. More than simply running a business, Bolter’s family life suggests a willingness to embrace life in the U.S as well as his German heritage. A few years after arriving in Chicago, Bolter and his wife Josephine had two more children: Joseph in 1859 and Edward sometime between 1861 and 1862. Bolter’s children are indicative of this cultural dichotomy. By 1870, Bolter’s daughter Caroline and son Joseph were both attending school in Chicago. Edward, who did not yet attend school, was nonetheless reported as being literate, indicating some amount of homeschooling by their parents.\[40\] Joseph, who would eventually take over Illinois Iron Works when Bolter retired in 1891, attended business school in Chicago, and both sons were taught to work in the iron industry by their father, ultimately receiving financial interests in Bolter’s company in 1885.

Of the Bolter daughters, Agatha and Anna would both marry Germans, taking the last names of Schneider and Zimmer, respectively, while Caroline would ultimately take the last name of Hunter.\[40\]

The Bolters also managed to join the upper echelons of Chicago society. As was previously stated, the Bolters appear in an 1883 directory of prominent Chicagoans, showing their address as 1511 N. Halsted St. in Lakeview Township. However, the Bolters do not appear in the earlier 1880 edition of the same directory, which offers an idea of when the Bolters reached such a noteworthy status in Chicago. The Bolters appeared in similar directories at least through 1890. A further indication of their social and economic rise appears in the 1880 census, where it is revealed that the Bolters had hired a live-in house servant, Gertrude Kalbaum, a German immigrant from Schleswig Holstein.\[41\]

Andrew Bolter was also involved in several organizations outside of his home and business. In addition to his membership in the Deutsche Gesellschaft, Bolter was a member of numerous scientific organizations, including the Washington Entomological Society, the Academy of Science of Philadelphia, the Entomological Society of New York, and was a charter member of the Chicago Academy of Sciences. In fact, it was in the field of entomology that Bolter’s chief interests and accomplishments outside of business took place. Bolter’s interest in insects endured “from boyhood until a few years before his death” and he toured the United States extensively over several decades looking for specimens, at times paying as much as $25 for a single piece.\[42\] Aside from the knowledge that Bolter’s collection was massive, containing tens of thousands of species and perhaps hundreds of thousands of individual specimens, its exact size is unclear.\[43\] Perhaps the San Francisco Call said it best when it described Bolter’s collection as containing “innumerable kinds” of beetles, butterflies, and other insects. Regardless of its size, however, Bolter’s collection was widely regarded as among the most extensive and valuable collections of insects at the time. \[44\] The Science magazine regarded the collection as “remarkable for the excellence of the material and for the exquisite care with which it has been prepared and arranged” and that it represented “all orders of insects and North America in general, and contains also a considerable amount of exotic material.” Obituaries for Bolter across the country described his collection as “said to be the finest on the continent, and one of the most complete private collections in the world.” These words were even echoed in the “Necrology” section of the Department of the Interior’s Annual Report in 1902.\[44\]
It is noteworthy that despite being one of America’s leading entomologists and containing perhaps its largest, most impressive collection, Bolter never published any works or otherwise contributed to the scientific literature. He did, however, write long letters in response to requests for information from researchers and students of entomology, such that his reputation was widespread. In May 1900, after Bolter’s death, the collection was donated to the University of Illinois on several conditions: that it be stored in a fire-proof structure, on or above the first story of the building; that it be kept together under the name “Bolter Collection of Insects;” that it be cared for responsibly by an “entomological instructor” of the university; and that it be of the most possible service to the science of entomology “so that it may in the fullest measure realize the purposes of its assiduous and generous collector.” In addition to the significance of Bolter’s emphasis on storing the collection in a fire-proof structure discussed previously, these desires also reflect the large attachment Bolter must have felt towards his collection. This passion also works to underline the probable sense of attachment toward his home in the U.S. which has been argued here. The focus of his collection on North American species, his participation in various scientific organizations and willingness to communicate with entomologists in the U.S., and his decision to donate his extremely valuable collection to an Illinois university all contribute to the idea that Bolter’s ethnicity was not a domineering force in his life, but rather that he came to consider himself an American as much as he considered himself a German immigrant.

Conclusion

Bolter retired from his firm in 1891. Though the exact details of his retirement are unknown, it is perhaps noteworthy that Bolter groomed his sons, both through their training in iron manufacturing and education in the operation of the company, to assume control of the firm, just as his father had done for him in Sigmaringen decades before. However, in many respects it would appear that Bolter’s work as an entomologist superseded his work in Chicago’s iron industry. His obituary in the Chicago Daily Tribune mentions his retirement from business and the renaming of his firm after his death, but spends an equal amount of time on his scientific pursuits in entomology. Obituaries outside of Chicago focus on his scientific pursuits without mentioning his business dealings at all. But whether or not it would receive wide recognition, Bolter’s firm continued to flourish after his retirement. A factory inspector’s report indicates that by 1894 Illinois Iron Works had expanded by moving to a new location in Chicago, Ward St. and Belden Ave., where one hundred men were now employed producing “architectural work and castings.” The inspector’s report for the next year lists the company as an “iron foundry” now employing 125 workers. Employment at Illinois Iron Works, renamed “A. Bolter’s Sons” following Andrew Bolter’s Death in 1900, would fluctuate between roughly seventy five and one hundred workers through the year 1901. It is certain, however, that the firm grew and continued to operate successfully after Bolter’s tenure. The company at the time of Bolter’s death would later be described as “one of the leading concerns in the West engaged in the production of structural steel,” indicating not only continued success but also a potential change in direction.

Throughout all of his business, social, and scientific pursuits, Bolter remained in touch with his German heritage. This is most directly seen in his participation in the Deutsche Gesellschaft, his vocational proximity to other German immigrants in the city, and perhaps even his choice to hire a German house-servant. Several obituaries and biographical entries also refer to Bolter’s birth in Sigmaringen or even his participation in the 1848 revolutions. Had Bolter heavily downplayed his German heritage, this information might have been omitted or simplified to merely “German” origins. While circumstantial and unconfirmed, unfortunately, such evidence gives a measure of support to the reasonable assumption that a man like Bolter would not easily sever all personal ties to his cultural origin and home of thirty-four years.

On the other hand, it is also clear that Bolter did not shy away from the American society to which he immigrated. More than simply building a successful, mid-sized business in Chicago, Bolter contributed to the city’s broader development, shared in its losses, and through his ironworks worked to strengthen and protect the recovering city from future harm. Bolter meanwhile raised a family in the city, achieved a very prominent position within the country’s entomological community, and climbed the social ladder in Chicago, though he never made it to the top rungs. Given that Joseph Bolter, after taking over his father’s business, contributed significant time and resources to various art, historical, and other social organizations in Chicago, it is likely that Bolter encouraged his children (or at least did not discourage them) from embracing the American society in which they operated. While it is certainly difficult to determine the actual extent to which Bolter valued his heritage, it is nevertheless clear that Bolter did not arrive in the U.S. only to seek out a private corner where he could attempt to continue his German life as authentically as possible. Instead Bolter appears to have built his new life on the ashes of his old, retaining some of his heritage while embracing the new culture in which he lived.

Notes


[2] Eberhard Gönner, Die Revolution von 1848/49 in den hohenzollerischen Fürstentümern und deren Anschluss an Preussen (Hechingen: Druck von A Pretzl Buchdruckerei, 1952), 1-2. All passages in German cited for this publication were translated by the author.


The value of most manufacturing industries in Chicago, excluding railroad, machinery, and iron works, roughly doubled between 1854 and 1857. Capital in railroad, machinery, and iron works grew during this time, but more slowly. The value for these manufactures in 1854 was roughly $3.2 million; in 1856 the value had risen to almost $3.9 million. Chicago's manufacturing growth in general would suffer from the Panic of 1857, and the value of these manufactures reportedly remained around their 1856 levels. See A.T. Andreas, History of Chicago: From the Earliest Period to the Present Time, Vol. 1 (New York: Arno Press, 1975, reprint), 568-569, 571; Peter Temin, Iron and Steel in Nineteenth Century America: An Economic Inquiry (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1964), 21, Industrial Chicago, Vol. 3 (Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing, 1894), 615.

All monetary values in this work will be accompanied by an approximation of the same value in 2010 dollars using the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Calculations for these conversions were conducted via MeasuringWorth.

Approximately $83.9 million in 2010$ and $1,537,495 million respectively.

Approximately $277 and $9,230, respectively, in 2010$.
Approximately $22 to $110 million in 2010$.

Approximately $440,000 in 2010$.

Approximately $550,000 to $8.8 million in 2010$.

Approximately $55 and $33, respectively, in 2010$.


Reports vary over how many. One report from 1885 asserts that Bolter employed 30 to 50 men year round, while another from 1891 claims that Bolter employed 15 to 25 men at a time. See Origin, Growth, and Usefulness of the Chicago Board of Trade, 313; Industrial Chicago, Vol. 2, 653.

Industrial Chicago, Vol. 2, 653; Origin, Growth, and Usefulness of the Chicago Board of Trade, 313; Letter to the UIUC Board of Trustees from W. P. Hayes, Acting Head of Entomology Department, and L.A. Adams, Curator of the Museum of Natural History, Liberal Arts and Sciences Dean’s Office Papers, Series 15/1/9, "LAS President 1947-48 A-H," University of Illinois Archives. Jan 27, 1948. The author would like to thank Amanda Lawrence, Archives Undergraduate Assistant at the University of Illinois Archives, Urbana, IL.

"German Society," Illinois Staatszeitung December 6, 1891. News about the Deutsche Gesellschaft's efforts and accomplishments were regularly published in the Staatszeitung or similar newspapers throughout the Gesellschaft's existence. Articles regularly reported on efforts to protect German immigrants from fraud and on the number of families given aid or workers placed with employers. See, for examples: "Protection for Immigrants Efforts of the Deutsche Gesellschaft to Eliminate Existing Conditions," Illinois Staatszeitung, July 11, 1881, "Die Deutsche Gesellschaft," Illinois Staatszeitung, December 14, 1875, and "The German Society," Illinois Staatszeitung December 7, 1887.

Deutches Gesellschaft Chicago. 35. Jahresbericht der German Society of Chicago (1890), 24, 31, 32, 38. All passages in German cited in this publication were translated by the author. Matz submitted a prize-winning design for a new Cook County Courthouse, completed in 1893. This is not to be confused with the Courthouse built following the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, to which Bolter contributed. See Hofmeister, The Germans of Chicago, 252-3; Andreas, History of Chicago, 679. A further note must be made regarding the likelihood that Bolter worked on the First National Bank Building with Dankmar Adler. According to the Chicago History Museum, building permits from this era did not include information on specific contractors associated with a building's design (Chicago History Museum Research Center, email message to author, February 2, 2013). Thus the connection between Bolter and Adler on this project is based on the fact that both men are claimed to have worked on the First National Bank building around the same time. See Andreas, History of Chicago, 679; Rochelle Elinstein, "The Architecture of Dankmar Adler," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Vol. 26, No. 4 (Dec., 1967), 243.


Chicago Blue Book of Selected Names of Chicago and Suburban Towns 1890(Chicago: The Chicago Directory Company, 1890); 1880 United States Federal Census.


One source states that the collection numbered twenty-five thousand specimens. Science reported his collection as containing over fifteen thousand species represented by over seventy thousand specimens, "not including 30,000 duplicates." A study taken in 1920 of the University of Illinois, where Bolter's collection was donated upon his death years earlier, claims that the collection numbered over sixteen thousand species represented by over one hundred and twenty thousand specimens. The creation of a proper estimate is further complicated by the apparent holding of some four thousand species (ten thousand specimens) of the "Andrew Bolter collection" by the Chicago Academy of Sciences in 1902. See: White, The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, 186; American Association for the Advancement of Science. Science, Vol 11 No. 283 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1900), 878; and Higley, William Kerr. Historical Sketch of the Academy, Special Publication No. 1 (Chicago: Chicago Academy of Sciences, 1902), 45.
In the same year as this letter, Bolter's collection was moved from the university's Museum of Natural History to the Illinois State Natural History Survey (also at the university), where it was amalgamated with the Survey's collections at the recommendation of university officials and with permission from Bolter's heirs. To protect its identity, each specimen was labeled as part of the “Bolter Collection of Insects.” According to Dr. Chris Dietrich, Curator of Insects at the Illinois Natural History Survey, Bolter's collection remains a significant component of the Survey's holdings and is available for use by researchers to this day (Dr. Chris Dietrich, email message to author, March 4, 2013).

Chicago Daily Tribune, March 19, 1900; San Francisco Call, March 19, 1900; New York Daily Tribune, March 20, 1900; St. Louis Republic, March 19, 1900.


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The Emergence of an Industrial Nation, 1840-1893

THEMES
- First Generation
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He spent his time with foreign friends, and became involved in expensive wars supporting the pope in Sicily and also in France. Henry's heavy spending and his foreign advisers upset the nobles. Once again they acted as a class, under the leadership of Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester. In 1258 they took over the government and elected a council of nobles. Edward I brought together the first real parliament. Simon de Montfort's council had been called a parliament, but it included only nobles. It had been able to make statutes, or written laws, and it had been able to make political decisions. However, the lords were less able to provide the king with money, except what they had agreed to pay him for the lands they held under feudal arrangement.

With the fire across the river and moving rapidly towards the heart of the city, panic set in. Chicago soon developed one of the country’s leading fire-fighting forces. Business owners, and land speculators such as Gurdon Saltonstall Hubbard, quickly set about rebuilding the city. The first load of lumber for rebuilding was delivered the day the last burning building was extinguished. After returning from a long holiday, Fleming noticed that many of his culture dishes were contaminated with a fungus, and he threw the dishes in disinfectant. But subsequently, he had to show a what he had been researching, and so he retrieved some of the submerged dishes that he would have otherwise discarded. He then noticed a zone around an invading fungus where the bacteria could not seem to grow. GEORGE BERNARD SHAW (1856–1950) George Bernard Shaw was born in Dublin in 1856, although he left the city forever and moved to London when he was twenty. His early education was musical rather than (his mother was a) and it was as a music critic that he first became known. The Chicago Fire of 1871, also called the Great Chicago Fire, burned from October 8 to October 10, 1871, and destroyed thousands of buildings, killed an estimated 300 people and caused an estimated $200 million in damages. Legend has it that a cow kicked over a lantern in a barn and started the fire, but other theories hold that humans or even a meteor might have been responsible for the event that left an area of about four miles long and almost a mile wide of the Windy City, including its business district, in ruins. Following the blaze, reconstruction efforts began quickly and spurred great economic development and population growth. ...