

Hermann-Victor Johnen

The Sutro Tunnel Project

A Chapter in the History of
a German-American Entrepreneur in the
U.S. West during the Industrialisation Era



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The Sutro Tunnel Project:
A Chapter in the History of a German-American Entrepreneur in the
U.S. West during the Industrialization Era

by
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Translated by: Mary-Joan Bluemich

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I wish to dedicate this work to

Anne Grodzins Lipow*
(1935-2004)

*Anne Grodzins Lipow had been my landlady during several stays in Berkeley.
Anne – and her husband Steve Silverstein- motivated me very much to write
(and finish) this dissertation about the Sutro Tunnel Projekt.

Preface

My interest in the life's work of Adolph Sutro arose during my business travels in the U.S. West when I heard about the Aachen origins of the Sutro Family. Prof. Dr. Clemens-August Heusch of the University of California in Santa Cruz gave me the first hints about the interesting history of the Comstock Lode and of the Sutro Tunnel; for this, I am very grateful to him.

I obtained the idea to write a scientific work about this topic from my former Marketing professor at the Westphalian Wilhelm University in Münster, Prof. Dr. Dr. hc. mult. Heribert Meffert—here, my special gratitude to him.

Moreover, I would like to especially thank my doctorate thesis advisor Professor Dr. Richard Tilly for his continuous and enthusiastic support during the creation of this work. Special thanks also go to the Haniel Foundation for their generous financial support of this dissertation.

Furthermore, I wish to thank the great-grandchildren of Adolph Sutro, Dip.-Ing. Carl Nussbaum, from Osnabrück, and Dr. Cynthia Soyster, from San Francisco, for lending me important documents of the Sutro Family.

I am also grateful to the managing director of today's Sutro Tunnel Company, Mr. Peter Leonhard from Virginia City, Nevada for his time and effort in taking me on diverse excursions in the Comstock Lode and to the Sutro Tunnel as well as for giving me important information about the Tunnel Project.

Special thanks also go to Dr. Bonnie Hardwick of the Bancroft Library in Berkeley and Patricia Keats of the Society of California Pioneers in San Francisco for their support in the viewing of the archive documents.

While I was preparing this work, Prof. Dr. Werner Kasig of the Geological Institute of RWTH Aachen University conveyed to me important details regarding the Comstock Lode and the Sutro Tunnel from a geological and mining point of view; for this, I am particularly grateful.

Finally, I wish to especially thank Doris Götting, Dr. Annekatrin Huber and Akos Sziraki.

Hermann-Victor Johnen

Aachen, January 2005

Editor's Preface

As the editor of the series, I welcome with great excitement the appearance of Dr. Hermann-Victor Johnen's dissertation in English. The author and I harbor the hope that the outstanding accomplishments as well as the very personal history of German immigrant and self-made man Adolph Sutro will thus be rendered accessible to a broad public in the USA. The outcome will be twofold: not only does this work represent a further piece in the mosaic of the economic, social, and technological history of the USA; it also sheds more light on the history of German-American relations.

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Paul Thomes
RWTH Aachen University

Short welcome from Prof. Jeroen Dewulf

As Director of the UC Berkeley Institute of European Studies, I was able to accompany Dr. Hermann-Victor Johnen's archival research in the Bancroft Library and the Judah L. Magnes Museum on the life of Adolph Sutro. It is my hope that this English translation of the author's dissertation will draw more attention to the remarkable career of this German-Jewish entrepreneur from Aachen, who became San Francisco's first Jewish mayor. The author's fine piece of biographical research illustrates the strong mark left by Sutro on the city of San Francisco.

Prof. Jeroen Dewulf

Institute of European Studies

University of California Berkeley, USA

**Short welcome from Prof. em. Richard Tilly and
Prof. em. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Heribert Meffert**

The English translation of Dr. Johnen's book on Adolph Sutro offers the U. S. public a welcome and enriching supplement to the country's history. In so doing, it also calls attention to the important role played by German immigrants in nineteenth-century American history.

Prof. em. Richard Tilly
University of Muenster, Germany

Prof. em. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Heribert Meffert
University of Muenster, Germany

Abbreviations

C	Celsius
ca.	circa
Cf.	Confer
Chapt.	Chapter
Ed.	Editor
e.g.	for example
f.	following
ff.	continuing
F	Fahrenheit
Fig.	Figure
i.e.	that is; namely
km	kilometer
l	liter
m	meter
STC	Sutro Tunnel Company
U.S.	United States
Vol.	Volume

Figure Legend

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Fig. 1: Adolph Sutro (1830-1898)¹

¹ Stewart, Robert, Jr., Stewart, Mary F., Adolph Sutro, A Biography, Berkeley, 1962, p. 190 ff.