

Journal
Of the
American Historical Society of
Germans from Russia



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	
<i>Adam Giesinger</i>	i
THE JACOB MITTELSTADT FAMILY	ii
RESEARCHING IN THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES	
<i>Emma Schivabenbnd Haynes</i>	1
FLIGHT ACROSS THE AMUR INTO CHINA	
<i>John B. Toews</i>	7
CAN YOU HELP? SPECIAL QUERIES FROM GERMANY.	11
THE 1915 DEPORTATION OF THE VOLHYNIAN GERMANS	
<i>Alfred KrUger Translated by Adam Giesinger</i>	12
THE HOMELESS: THE TRAGEDY OF VOLGA GERMAN FARMERS	
<i>Translated by Roger Welsch Introduction and Notes by Adam Giesinger</i>	15
METAL GRAVE MARKERS IN GERMAN-RUSSIAN CEMETERIES OF EMMONS COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA	
<i>Lewis R. Marquardt</i>	18
EARLY CHRONICLERS AMONG THE VOLGA GERMANS	
<i>Translated by Adam Giesinger</i>	27
FOLKLORE FORUM: PROVERBS AND PROVERBIAL EXPRESSIONS AMONG THE GERMANS FROM RUSSIA	
<i>Timothy J. Kloberdanz and Mary Koch</i>	29
LIMESTONE LANDMARKS	38
THE IMMIGRANTS	
<i>A Poem by JoanMcAfee</i>	39
VILLAGES IN WHICH OUR FOREFATHERS LIVED; GRUNAU, TIEGENHOP, KAISERDORF, EICHWALD	
<i>Adam Giesinger</i>	40
AMBASSADOR DUBS SLAIN IN SHOOTOUT	45

Continued on back cover Published by

American Historical Society of Germans From Russia

63 ID Street • Lincoln, Nebraska 68502 Editor: Nancy Bernhardt Holland ©Copyright 1979 by the

American Historical Society of Germans from Russia. AU lights reserved.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members of [AHSGR](#):

Our editor has again assembled for us an interesting assortment of articles on the 200-year history of the Germans in Russia and of their kin in America. Most noteworthy in this issue is the variety with respect to place and time; all the main settlement areas in Russia are represented and all periods of colonist history.

Earliest in time are the reminiscences of a Volga settler of the 1760's, presented in "Early Chroniclers among the Volga Germans." Connected with the same region, we have in "The [Starkel](#) Letters" interesting details about a pioneer [Norka](#) family, two of whose members made history, each in his own way.

The settlement era in the Black Sea region is dealt with in three articles. "A Note on Catherine's Signature" gives information about the founding, in 1794, of the city of Odessa, near which many German colonies were established in the years 1804-1810. A translation of an article by Lew [Malinowski](#), which appeared in the Soviet German newspaper *Neues Leben*, describes episodes of the period of settlement, with a Communist interpretation. Then "Villages in which our Forefathers Lived" gives chronicles of 1848 for the most easterly of the early Black Sea colonies, those in the region northwest of [Mariupol](#), whose people spoke the Low German dialect of the [Mennonites](#), although they were Lutherans and Catholics.

The Second World War and its aftermath were characterized by mass deportations of peoples from areas in which some of them had lived for centuries. The first such deportation in modern times, one that has not received so much attention as the more recent ones, was that of the [Volhynian](#) Germans in 1915, which is described in this issue. We have members in AHSGR who were among the deportees.

More cruelly carried out than this [Tsarist](#) deportation were those perpetrated by the tyrannical Stalin, beginning about 1928. German colonists in general did not submit meekly to [Stalinist](#) oppression- Many of them attempted to leave the country and some of them succeeded. We have in this issue two articles on Germans who escaped. One group, whose story is told in "The Homeless . . .", fled from their home areas to Moscow and were fortunate enough to obtain exit visas. The other group left Russia without permission, fleeing across the ice of the Amur River into China.

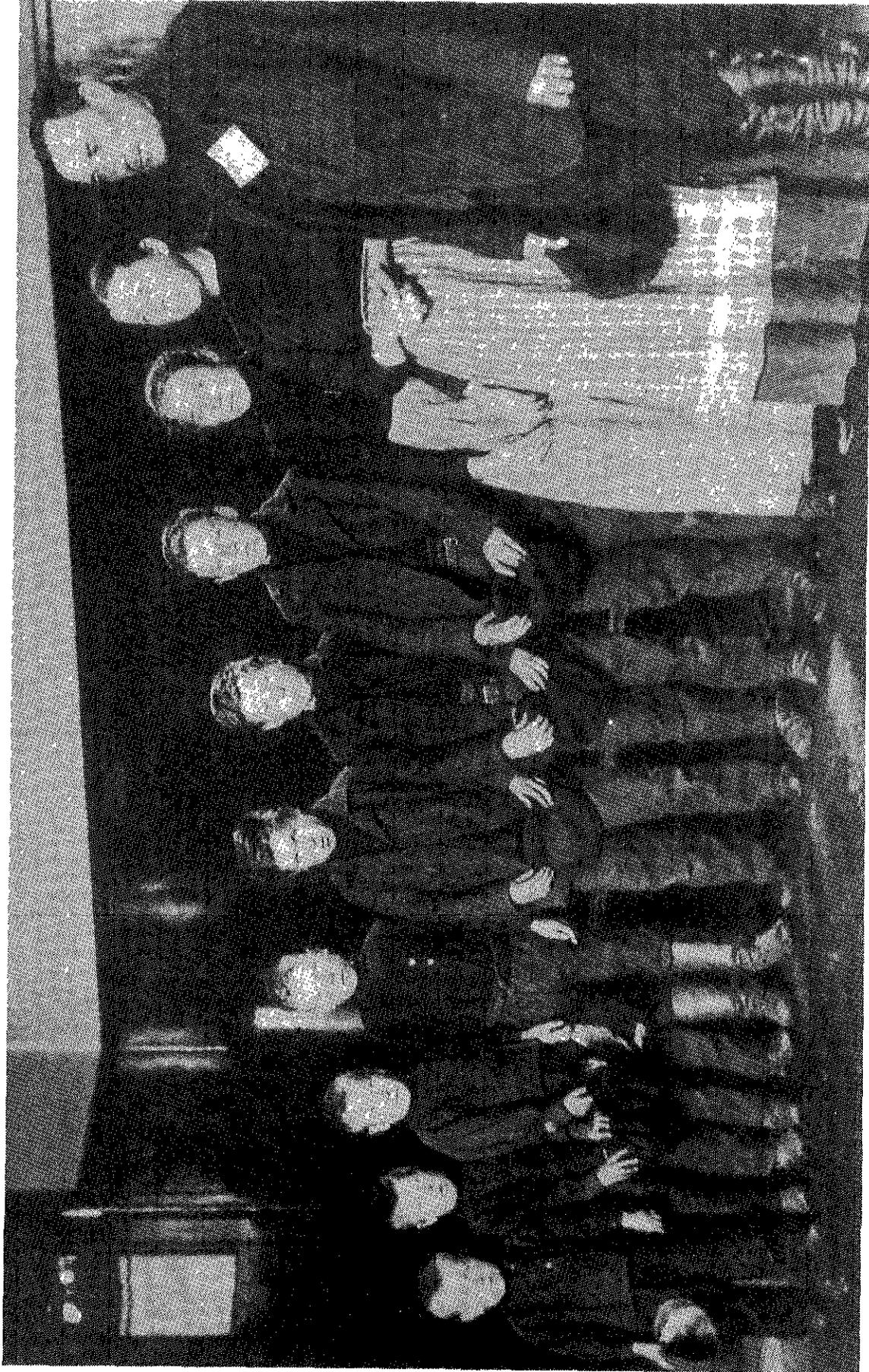
Our indefatigable researchers, Tim [Kloberdanz](#) in folklore, Lawrence [Weigel](#) in the songs of our people, and Emma [Haynes](#) in the records of the National Archives in Washington, provide their usual valuable contributions. Lew [Marquardt](#) in "Metal Grave Markers . . ." shows us that interesting research can be done close to home, in the cemeteries in which our pioneer forefathers are buried.

We have several reviews of recently published books and an article by [Ingrid Rimland](#) explaining what is fact and what is fiction in her widely read book. *The Wanderers*. And finally, we have passenger lists, of particular interest to our genealogists.

On your behalf, I want to thank all the contributors who made this issue of the *Journal* possible and most particularly our dedicated and efficient editor. Nancy Holland, who put it all together.

Sincerely,

Adam [Giesinger](#)



The Jacob Mittelstadt Family, Black Sea Germans, who arrived May 9, 1905 on the SS Pretoria in New York and were admitted to go to Kulm, North Dakota.

This photograph has been reproduced more often than any other picture taken at Ellis Island of Germans from Russia. It appeared in Ann Novotny's Strangers at the Door in 1971, and in 1976 it was part of an exhibition on immigration which was held in the Hirschhorn Museum of Washington D.C. Mrs. Novotny tells the story that the German Consul in New York signed, "Seven soldiers lost to the Kaiser" when he saw the photograph. Actually, it was the Tsar of Russia, not the German Kaiser, who lost the seven soldiers.

Photo courtesy of the American Museum of Immigration, Statue of Liberty National Monument; National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

RESEARCHING IN THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
A Report Given at the
10th Anniversary Convention of AHSGR at Lincoln in 1978
Emma Schwabenland Haynes

The National Archives in Washington D.C. contain a vast store of materials connected with American history, including microfilms of practically all passenger lists from ships bringing immigrants to the United States between the years 1820-1929. The only exceptions to this rule are passenger lists from Galveston, Texas, after 1871, and of Baltimore, Maryland, after 1909. Nobody seems to know where the Galveston records are, but information on the Baltimore shipping lists may be obtained by writing to the Verification Section, Bureau of Naturalization and Immigration in New York City. The reason all records stop with the year 1929 is that passenger lists must be more than fifty years old before they can be made public. Next year, for example, it will be possible to examine them up to 1930.

One would think that anything which is kept on file in the National Archives would be absolutely correct. But I am tempted to repeat that well-known phrase, "It ain't necessarily so." The first deviation from the truth lies in the spelling of many passengers' family names. Evidently the clerks who recorded these names simply wrote down what they sounded like to them. Thus Jassmann becomes Sassmann; Serr is Fehr; Will is Vill; vom Feldt becomes Montfcllet; Meuser, Meiser; and Voeller, Feller. To make matters worse, shipping clerks were often in a great hurry, and as the names go on, the handwriting becomes less and less legible.

Given names also create a problem. Our people had the practice of putting a Johannes or Hannes before the name by which a person was often known. You may be looking for a passenger named Conrad or Wilhelm, but instead you will find a Hannes. In some cases, two brothers are both listed as Hannes, although they were called by entirely different names.

Secondly, the age of the passenger doesn't always agree with his actual birth date. Nicholas Schamne, a Volga German Catholic scout was listed as being 29 years old when he came to the United States in 1874. But in 1875, when he accompanied the first group of Catholic settlers to America, his age was given as 28, not 30. Mrs. Pauline Dudek says that Franz W. Scheibel, a scout from Kolb, could not possibly have been 39 years old in 1874, since he was 60 in 1876.¹ Reuben Goertz tells that among his pious Mennonite forbears, hardly any parents listed their children as being thirteen years old, the age at which a full fare was required. Instead, they almost always claimed that the child was twelve. Infants under one year came free of charge. It is simply amazing how many women had eleven-month-old babies!

The sex given for a person isn't always correct either. My mother, who was a four-year-old child when her parents came to America in 1887, had been christened Dorothea, but was usually called Dora. But she is shown as a boy named Otto, both in the Hamburg and in the New York passenger lists. Another example is that of a Frick family which came to Kansas in 1876. The oldest boy, whose first name was Hannes, is given as a girl, and the baby, whose name was Anna, is shown as a boy.

A fourth difficulty is caused by those passengers who claimed an erroneous place of origin. For example, five of the Catholic scouts from the Volga gave Poland as their native country when they left Hamburg, but when they reached New York,, they said that they were from Prussia. The same thing was done by Johannes Krieger, one of the scouts from Norka. He emigrated to the United States in 1890 and also claimed that he was from Poland. But the most extreme case that I have found so far is that of 164 Mennonites who arrived in America July 15, 1874 on the steamer *City of Brooklyn*. Not one of these 164 people said that he was from Russia. The big majority claimed Germany as their native country, but Jacob Wiebe, their leader, said that he had come from Sweden and several others said that they were from Denmark or Norway. It has always puzzled me why this was done. Were people afraid to tell that they were from Russia? Or did they think that there was more prestige in claiming a West European country? Or was it a simple case of misunderstanding? The big majority of our people did say, of course, that they came from Russia.

In the winter of 1977-1978, I embarked upon a rather ambitious program: to compile the names of all Germans from Russia who came to the United States between the years 1872 through 1876, regardless of whether they were Mennonites, Black Sea Germans, or Volga Germans. What made my task extremely difficult was that the passenger lists in Washington D.C. seldom give the names of the colonies from which people came and in many cases it is almost impossible to determine their location. The names Lorenz, Schmidt, Schaefer, Fink, Abel, Braun, and Mueller, to name just a few, can be found among Volga Germans, Mennonites, and Black Sea Germans. Karlin may be the family name of a Volga German Catholic or of a Black Sea Protestant. And people named Beltz can be found both on the Volga and the Black Sea.

The confusion is made even greater by Jewish, Polish, or Ukrainian immigrants who also came to America from Russia. The names Koch, Ehrlich, Block, Penner, Hoffman, Strauss, and many others can be found both among Jews and Gentiles. There were also Germans who had Slavic-sounding names. A Socolofsky family was found among Volga Germans, and a Dembowski and Malinowsky family among Black Sea Germans. It is only by looking at the first name of a given individual that one has a possibility of determining his background.

The Mennonites have already compiled shipping lists of their people. One list was made by Jacob A. Duerksen of Washington D.C. with the help of John F. Schmidt of Newton, Kansas.² A second was printed by Clarence Hiebert in his beautiful book, *Brothers in Deed to Brothers in Need*. In general the two lists agree with one another, but they seldom give exactly the same number of people who arrived on a particular ship.³ There is always the question whether certain families are Mennonite or not, and it is only natural that some mistakes were made. Hiebert, for example, includes four families named Walter whom he said arrived July 29, 1876 on the steamer *Gellert*. But Father Blaine Burkey of Hays, Kansas, who is currently working on passenger lists of Volga German Catholics, proves that these people were not Mennonites at all. Instead, they were devout Volga German Catholics who settled in Catherine, Kansas. In the same way, people named Abel, Teske, Schafer, and Ehresman who came to the United States October 28, 1874 on the S.S. *Schiller* are shown in the Hamburg shipping lists as having come from Neudorf, a Protestant village on the Black Sea, and are not Mennonites, as Hiebert says.

It is only in shipping lists from Hamburg, that the names of the colonies in Russia are usually given. However, even here, mistakes can be found. In *Work Paper* No. 14 for April 1974, the S.S. *Frisia* is mentioned as having brought 123 passengers from Kratzke, a Protestant village on the Volga. Included with these passengers were a family named Appelhanz and four families named Basgall. As Isadore Appelhanz of Topeka, Kansas, can testify, these people did not come from Kratzke, but instead were Catholics from Rothammel. Evidently the first people who were questioned gave Kratzke as their place of origin and the shipping clerk assumed that everyone else came from there as well.

For all of these reasons, it is obviously impossible to tell with complete accuracy how many Germans came from the various geographic areas of Russia. There were many cases in which it was necessary to resort to guess work. It is also possible that some ships bringing Russian Germans to the United States are still unknown. However, certain trends can be observed.

The first German from Russia to arrive in the United States in 1872 was Bernhard Warkentin, a Mennonite. He came with three other young men on the steamer *Holsatia* which reached New York on June 5. The other three men soon returned to Europe, but Warkentin established a prosperous milling business in Halstead, Kansas, and is credited with helping to introduce the well-known hard red winter wheat from Russia.

During this same year, 173 Black Sea German Protestants arrived on four different ships between October and December.⁴ One of the ships on which they sailed was the *Silesia* which went directly to New York, arriving on December 3. But three of the four groups journeyed to England where they transferred to second ships at Liverpool. Until now, nobody has identified the names of these second ships. I thought that it would be relatively easy to do so because the dates when the passengers left Hamburg are known, so I examined all ships arriving in the United States between October 15 to December 15, 1872, looking for people who had come from Russia. But in spite of repeated attempts, I wasn't successful. I then went through the microfilms once more, this time looking at the names of every single passenger. Finally I discovered the members of the third group. They had sailed on the *City of Antwerp* from Queenstown, Ireland, and had arrived in New York, December 14, 1872. The reason why I had not found their names earlier was that thirty of the passengers from Russia had claimed that they came from Germany and the remaining twenty-seven, including the Jacob Mutschelknaus family, said that they were from Austria.⁵ It had taken these people thirty-eight days to arrive from Hamburg. After they left Liverpool, a terrible storm had injured their ship so badly that they had to return to Ireland and wait for the *City of Antwerp*.

That makes a score of one Mennonite and 173 Black Sea German Protestants who came to the United States in 1872.

In the summer of 1873 twelve Mennonite scouts in three different groups traveled through the American Midwest and Canada. A few settlers came on the same ships with the scouts. Then on August 15, 1873, eighty Mennonites from the Crimea arrived on the S.S. *Hammonia*. A journalist from the *New York Post* interviewed three of their leaders. He reported that they spoke German, the language of their forefathers, with purity and distinctness, and that they planned to leave the following Monday for Elkhart, Indiana, where they had acquaintances.⁶ Additional small groups arrived that same year, making a total of 149

Mennonites, not counting the scouts who returned to Russia.

On May 8, 1873, the *Hammonia* arrived with forty-six Black Sea German Protestants from Bessarabia. Ludwig Hildebrand, his wife and six children were members of this group. In looking at the passenger list, I noticed that Mrs. Hildebrand was described as a lady, whereas other women were simply called wives. The reason is that there was still much class distinction in the year 1873. Mr. Hildebrand had bought cabin or first class accommodations for his family, whereas the other Black Sea Germans had come in the steerage. Hence, Mrs. Hildebrand was a lady! However, the Hildebrands were a notable exception to the general rule. I would guess that over ninety-nine percent of all our ancestors, whether they were Mennonites, Black Sea Germans or Volga Germans, came in the steerage, or "Zwischendeck" as the steerage was called on German vessels.

The *Hammonia* was followed by four other ships bringing Black Sea Protestants to the United States. The story of the passengers who arrived on the last two ships has been told by Heinrich Griess in the *Dakota Freie Presse* for November 18, 1909. They stayed briefly in Burlington, Iowa, before leaving for Lincoln, Nebraska. While in Burlington they were warned of the dangers of the Wild West and were advised to buy adequate supplies of guns and ammunition with which to defend themselves. Upon arriving in Lincoln, the poorer people were put up in the Emigration House of the Burlington Railroad whereas the wealthier members rented small houses. Eventually, they either bought land near Sutton, Nebraska, or left for Yankton, South Dakota.

That leaves the score for 1873, about 149 Mennonites and 770 Black Sea German Protestants.⁷

The year 1874 definitely belongs to the Mennonites. I doubt if any other group of Germans from Russia ever surpassed their record of 5,200 immigrants in a single year. The *Hammonia* arrived on July 17 with 517 passengers, 370 of whom were Hutterites. These people also came to Lincoln and lived for four weeks in the Emigration House while their men searched for suitable land. Due to overcrowded conditions, dysentery broke out and thirty-six children died. The group then left for South Dakota, where they established communal farms called "Bruederhoeft."

The *S.S. Cimbria* arrived on August 27 with 586 Mennonites primarily from the wealthy colony of Alexanderwohl. These people also came to Lincoln while their men looked around. A third ship was the *S.S. Teutonia* which reached New York on September 3, with 994 Mennonites. The majority went to Kansas, but sixty-seven families joined the first group in Nebraska. Lincoln was now inundated with Mennonites. The Emigration House was far too small to accommodate everyone, and a large frame structure was hastily erected on the fair grounds. Eventually, a majority of these people left for Kansas, much to the discomfiture of the Burlington Railroad which had been housing them free of charge. Only thirty-five families bought land in York and Hamilton counties, Nebraska, where the town of Henderson eventually arose.

On August 31, the *City of Richmond* brought 429 Swiss Vblhynian Mennonites, who either settled in Moundridge, Kansas, or joined friends and relatives in Freeman, South Dakota. Then on December 26, the *Vadcrland* arrived with 620 of the poorest of all Mennonites from Voihynia. About half had to borrow money from Mennonite Relief Societies to pay their passage.⁸ Thus five ships brought 3,156 Mennonites to the United States. The remainder came on twenty-five different vessels.

Black Sea Protestants are again ahead of the other non-Mennonite groups. The *S.S. Herman* which arrived on May 13, 1874, brought 184 passengers including Immanuel Jose, the well known teacher and minister who helped establish the Congregational Church among Germans from Russia. Other ships were the *Silesia* and the *Schiller*, the latter of which brought 363 people, particularly from Worms.

And now finally come the Volga Germans! Eight Protestant and six Catholic scouts came to the United States on July 15, 1874.⁹ As soon as they returned to Russia, Protestant Volga Germans began to emigrate. We still do not know who all of them were, but on December 9, a group of twenty-seven people, including the families of Johann Steinbrecher, Heinrich Nazarenus, Andreas Hanhardt, and Friedrich Mohr, plus two unaccompanied men named George Heinrich Thill (Thiel?) and Jacob Brotzmann came to the United States on the *S.S. Schiller*. It is presumed that they settled in Kansas.

The score for 1874, therefore, is;

Mennonites	about 5,200
Black Sea Protestants	about 1,145
Volga German Protestants	about 27

In 1875 the Mennonites were still running ahead with a total number of approximately 1,820 settlers. Of these, 273 Mennonites from Voihynia arrived January 9 on the *S.S. Kenilworth*; 462 Mennonites from the Molotschna came July 26 on the *S.S. Nederland*; and 570 were brought by the *State of Nevada* on

August 4, 1875. Ninety-five of the families on the last ship went to Minnesota, sixty-five to Kansas, and twenty each to Dakota and Nebraska.¹⁰

Ships with the largest number of Black Sea Protestants were the S.S. *Suevia* which arrived in New York, June 17, 1875, bringing 133 people from Rohrbach, Neu Freudenthal, Hilgendorf, and Kassel, and the S.S. *Cimbria* which brought 108 Germans from the Mariupol colonies on August 18, 1875, Some of these may have been Mennonite. (See passenger lists in this issue of the *Journal*.)

Catholic Volga Germans now appear for the first time. On November 23, 1875, the steamer *Ohio* brought 310 Catholics to Baltimore. Three members of the Martin Basgall family evidently missed the boat and arrived December 6, with a group of Protestants, thus making a total number of 313 Volga German Catholics.

In AHSGR *Journals* Number 1 and 3 and in this issue, I list the various ships bringing Protestant Volga Germans in 1875. These include the *City of Richmond* which arrived on August 23 and again on December 13; the *City of Brussels*, June 28; the *Mosel* on August 23; the *Oder* on December 1; the *City of Berlin*, December 6; and the *Leipzig* on December 7. As a result, 348 Volga German Protestants came in 1875, leaving the score:

Mennonites	about 1,820
Black Sea Protestants	about 612
Volga German Protestants	about 348
Volga German Catholics	313

In 1876 there was a dramatic change in the immigration picture. Volga German Protestants are now in the lead and they usually kept this place from that year on.¹¹ One of the reasons for the increased emigration from the Volga was an evangelistic movement that had started in the early 1870's. Most of the converted brethren remained in the Lutheran Church, having their own prayer meetings on the side. But a minority, influenced by Mennonite Brethren and Baptist missionaries, broke entirely away from the mother church. This aroused the anger of Lutheran ministers because the Baptists insisted that it was only through immersion of adult members that one could be saved. A certain George Burgdorff, whose family came from Stahl, joined the minority group and was baptized by A. Handardt of Kutter in 1871. He thus became an object of ridicule and persecution.

Mr. Burgdorff tells in his autobiography that he lost his job as a schoolteacher in Kutter and was expelled from many colonies on both sides of the Volga. In Eckheim, where he insisted on preaching the gospel according to his own beliefs, the court subjected him to twenty lashes, and when a bystander, Heinrich Georg Grim objected, Mr. Grim was also flogged. One evening when Burgdorff was eating dinner with a family named Rothe, shovelfulls of manure and sand were thrown through the open windows onto the food which had been prepared.¹²

This attitude of intolerance was sometimes also extended to those brethren who had remained in the Lutheran Church. Consequently, hundreds of individuals decided to emigrate to America. On January 6, 1876 the *City of Montreal* came to New York with 171 Volga German Protestants who were accompanied by the Mennonite elder, Peter Ekkert. Some of these people did join the Mennonite Church in Gnadenau, Kansas, but others became Baptists or joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Still others remained brethren in the Lutheran, Methodist, or Congregational Churches.

The exodus continued with the *City of Berlin* which, in the summer of 1876, brought a shipload of 249 pietistic Volga Germans, all of whom claimed to be Mennonites according to the ship's roster. This has been puzzling me for some time. Perhaps the Volga Germans wanted to take advantage of the cheaper fares that were offered Mennonites because they traveled in such large groups. Or perhaps they hoped to get aid from Mennonite Relief Societies. It would be interesting to know. Incidentally, Lutheran ministers in Russia usually welcomed the departure of the *Bruderwhom* they considered dangerous trouble-makers.¹³

Black Sea Protestants will be particularly interested in the S.S. *Leipzig* which brought people named Schnabel, Rich, Reich, and Rath to the United States on May 19, 1876.

Meanwhile the bulk of Volga German Catholics arrived in July and August. They came primarily on the *Main* which brought 146 people, the *Mosel* with approximately 360, and the *Suevia* with 306 passengers.

Mennonites were also still coming. The two ships bringing the largest number were the *Kenilworth* which sailed from Antwerp with 354 people from the Molotschna, and the *Vaderland* which arrived in Philadelphia from Antwerp with 529 passengers.

And so, the final score for 1876 is:

Volga German Protestants	about 1,690
--------------------------	-------------

Mennonites	about	1,498
Volga German Catholics	about	1,092
Black Sea Protestants	about	518

As I stated earlier, these figures are by no means final. I shall keep looking for new ships and will report on them as they appear. Readers may also have noticed that until now, no Black Sea Catholics have been mentioned. Sallet tells us that a few did arrive in these early years, but neither Dr. Karl Stumpp nor Dr. Adam Giesinger could find any in the lists collected so far. Nevertheless, although Black Sea Catholics were the last of the various groups to come to the United States, they eventually (in 1920) had more than twice the number of Volga German Catholics. In the same way, the Volhynian Germans did not seem to have come in appreciable numbers before 1876.

This means that the Black Sea Protestants have the honor of ranking first in 1872 and 1873. Mennonites were number one in 1874 and 1875, and Volga German Protestants forged ahead in 1876.

I have been very pleased with the response so far from the passenger lists. Many people have written to tell me that they have found the names of their grandparents. Others have pointed out errors in spelling. On page 71 of *Journal* No. 3, the family name "Bieger" should have been written "Bieker." This was a mistake of the shipping clerk who wrote the name wrong. And on page 73 of the same issue, the name which was written "Ambricht" should have been "Arnbrecht." The handwriting was so bad that I mistook "Am" for "Am." In this issue of the *Journal* the name "Huenegradt" appears. It is spelled "Hindergrath" on the shipping list, but I happened to see a *Huenegradt Family History* in our Greeley archives and was thus able to correct the mistake.

Few shipping lists contain as many errors as the one for the *City of Berlin* which is repeated in this issue. The recording clerk must have been very absent-minded when he wrote the names of the passengers. Thus Gottfried Hoffmann who is mentioned in the first column is shown as a wife. Catherine, who presumably would be his wife, is given as a spinster. Their daughter, Catherine, who would normally be called a spinster, is shown as a child, and the baby, Conrad, who is less than twelve months old, is a mason! Similar mistakes are repeated throughout the roster. I felt that the original genders should be given, although I followed them with the word "sic" as in the case of other obvious errors.

I shall be waiting for more letters adding information on these passenger lists.

Address correspondence to Emma S. Haynes, 5550 Columbia Pike, Apt. 675, Arlington, VA 22204.

NOTES

1. Another example is that of Heinrich Schwabauer who was shown as being 28 in 1874 when he came as a scout to America. However, recent evidence proves that he was the same person who came to Iowa in 1875 at the age of 48!
2. This list is in typewritten form. A copy was very kindly sent to me by John P. Schmidt.
3. For example, Duerksen and Schmidt give 300 Mennonites as coming on the *City of London*, Nov. 18, 1874; Hiebert in his book *Brothers in Deed to Brothers in Need* (Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press, 1974), gives 314. Duerksen and Schmidt say that 150 Mennonites arrived on the *City of Montreal*, Nov. 27, 1874; Hiebert gives 144.
4. Gwen Pritzkau deserves credit for determining that there were four groups instead of three, as Heinrich Mutschelknaus reported in the *Dakota Freie Presse* of Nov. 11, 1924. I am particularly indebted to her for the passenger lists of Black Sea Germans between 1872-1876 and for the names of ships which arrived in 1876 bringing Volga Germans to the United States from Hamburg.
5. The New York passenger list indicates that the youngest Mutschelknaus child must have died after leaving Hamburg. Prof. Rath in his book, *The Black Sea Germans in the Dakotas* (Freeman, South Dakota, 1977), p. 73, says that Jacob Mutschelknaus, aged two, was a member of the party, but his name does not appear when the group reached New York.
6. Clarence Hiebert, *Brothers in Deed to Brothers in Need*, p. 60. The date of the *New York Post* article is given as "probably July 17, 1873." Actually, it must have been August 16, 1873, since the *Hammonia* arrived on August 15, as is shown on p. 68.
7. Gwen Pritzkau gives 161 Black Sea Protestants as coming to the United States on July 16, 1873, but I suspect that about thirty of these were actually Jews. There are also differences between Prof. Path's list for the *Thuringia* (arrival date July 30, 1873) and the passenger list given by Mrs. Pritzkau. See Rath, *The Black Sea Germans in the Dakotas*, pp. 385-392 and Pritzkau, *Heritage Review*, Nos. 5-6 (June 1973), pp. 43-47.
8. Abe J. Unruh, *The Helpless Poles* (By the author, 1973), p. 97.
9. Several historians including John Hoelzer, translated by Arthur Flegel in *Work Paper* No. 16 (Dec. 1974), pp. 16-19, say that Volga German scouts came in 1873. So far, I have found no proof for this. 10. C. Henry Smith, *The Coming of the Russian Mennonites* (Berne, Ind.: Mennonite Book Concern, 1927), p. 125.

11. Richard Sallet, *Russian German Settlements in the United States*, translated from the German by LaVern J. Rippley and Armand Bauer (Fargo: North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies, 1974). On page 112 there is a chart showing that Volga German Protestants were ahead of all other groups in 1920.
12. George Burgdorff, *Eriebnisse als Missionar oder Reiseprediger in Russland* (Hillsboro, Kansas: M.B. Publishing House, 1924). The flogging of Mr. Grun is mentioned on page 93 and the incident at the Rothe house on page 151.
13. Johannes Kufeld, who was himself a Lutheran pastor in Reinhard on the Wiesenseite of the Volga, wrote an unpublished book before World War I, *Die Deutschen Kolonien an der Wolga*. In it he devotes a chapter to the various sects found on the Volga, and expresses the utmost contempt for them. He mentions George Burgdorff specifically, and accuses him of "Frechheit" (insolence). He then says that emigration to America which "vorziigHch viele Sektierer mil sich fuhrte, die Luft gehorig reinigte." (Emigration to America, which fortunately carried away many members of the various sects, cleaned the air magnificently.), pp. 176-177 of the typed manuscript.

ERRATUM

In her introduction to the article by Maria Mahlsam in the spring 1978 issue of the *Journal* ("At Home Once More," *AHSGR Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 20-24) the Editor described the setting as the *Bessarabian* daughter colony of Neu-Nikolajewka. Professor Adam Giesinger has pointed out, however, that the Neu-Nikolajewka that Maria Mahlsam lived in could not have been the one in Bessarabia, because there were no German villages left in Bessarabia when the Nazis invaded Russia in 1941. All the Bessarabian Germans had been evacuated to Germany in the fall of 1940 by Nazi-Soviet agreement. (See Giesinger, *From Catherine to Khrushchev* [Winnipeg, Manitoba: Published by the Author, 1974], pp. 301-302.)

Where, then, was this Neu-Nikolajewka?

Professor Giesinger provides the answer:

The date of evacuation of the German inhabitants of the village by the Nazis gives us the clue. Maria Mahlsam says it was 15 March 1944. We know that this was the date when the villages in the *Beresan* region were evacuated. We must therefore look for it in this region. The Stumpp map of Gebiet Odessa shows a Nikolajewka in D6. This is probably the place where the Mahlsams lived. (The omission of the Neu- on the map is not too significant.)

Gertrude, the woman from Germany mentioned on page 22 of the Mahlson article, was Gertrud Braun, active in the *Landsmannschaft* der Deutschen aus Russland in German for some years after the war. She is still living (or at least was when I was in Germany two years ago). There are three articles by her in *Heimatbuch 1966*. One of these mentions that she was in the *Beresan* region in the early months of 1944.

It is also interesting to note that Maria Mahlsam's ancestor, Johann Mahlsam, came to Russia in 1804 from Gelnhausen/Wiesbaden, Hesse, and became one of the founders of the Catholic village of Kleinliebental near Odessa. (Family No. 40 in the 1816 census list given in Karl Stumpp, *The Emigration from Germany to Russia in the Years 1763 to 1862* [Tuebingen: Published by the Author with the cooperation of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, 1972], p. 608.) One of his descendants obviously moved to this daughter colony Neu-Nikolajewka.

FLIGHT ACROSS THE AMUR INTO CHINA

John B. Toews

The letter translated below from N. P. Janzen, then in Harbin, China to H. P. Krehbiel of the Mennonite Settlers Aid Society in the United States¹ reflects the beginning of an incredible saga during which hundreds of colonists in Russia fled across the Amur River into northern China between 1929 and 1934 to escape the upheaval generated by revolution, civil war, and Stalinist totalitarianism.

Mennonite interest in the Amur River area had emerged as early as the 1860's, but settlement there began only after the Revolution. When Japan withdrew from the Chinese mainland in 1922, the Far East Republic, a buffer state established in 1920, joined the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. Nevertheless its immense distance from Moscow guaranteed some local autonomy for several years and the new state promoted tsarist type colonization programs featuring land grants on a per capita basis; a cash grant of 400 rubles per family; reduced railway rates for the shipment of cattle and farming inventory, as well as special tax exemptions.

The news of possible Amur River settlement based on private land ownership apparently reached both the Siberian and South Russian Mennonite settlements as early as 1926. Special delegations traveled to the administrative center of the Amur Oblast, Blagoveshchensk, to investigate the terms of colonization. All returned with favorable reports. In March 1927, the first group of Mennonite migrants left Slavgorod for the Far East. These constituted the nucleus of the Usman settlement, located on the Topkochna River, some thirty kilometers from the Amur. Eventually the colony consisted of five villages with a population of just under 600. Shumanovka, with its eight villages and 867 people, was the largest Mennonite settlement on the Amur. A third significant colony was Savitaya, its five villages having a total population of 520. Nevzorovka was settled in the spring of 1928 and four villages -were planned. Forced collectivization, however, did not allow any further colonization.

The settlers in the Amur Oblast who had erected new villages based on private land ownership during 1927-28 began to feel the pressure of collectivization by 1929. Janzen's letter clearly documents the sequence of events. Excessive demands for grain deliveries were levied upon ministers and so-called wealthy settlers. This was followed by arrest, trial, and northern exile. In most cases the victims' property was confiscated. Janzen escaped in the early spring of 1930. When the Amur again became crossable late in 1930, group flights became widespread. The clever strategy deployed by the Mennonite village of Schumanovka enabled all the 217 inhabitants to escape during the night of December 16, 1930. Others followed. By this time a method for dealing with the flow of refugees in China had been successfully negotiated, though the refugees still faced innumerable hardships. Many refugees brought little or no cash with them. Banks offered low exchange rates because they had little confidence in the Russian ruble. The many horses and sleighs arriving in north China plus the knowledge that the escapee had to sell, severely depressed the prices for these items. Chinese villages often demanded exorbitant fees for local accommodation while inns or hotels threatened eviction unless rooms were paid in advance. It was only after the formation of the Committee of German Refugees in Harbin that refugees of Catholic, Lutheran, and Mennonite persuasion were easily "redeemed" from local villages and transported to Harbin. This city became a clearing center from which refugees left for South and North America as well as Europe.

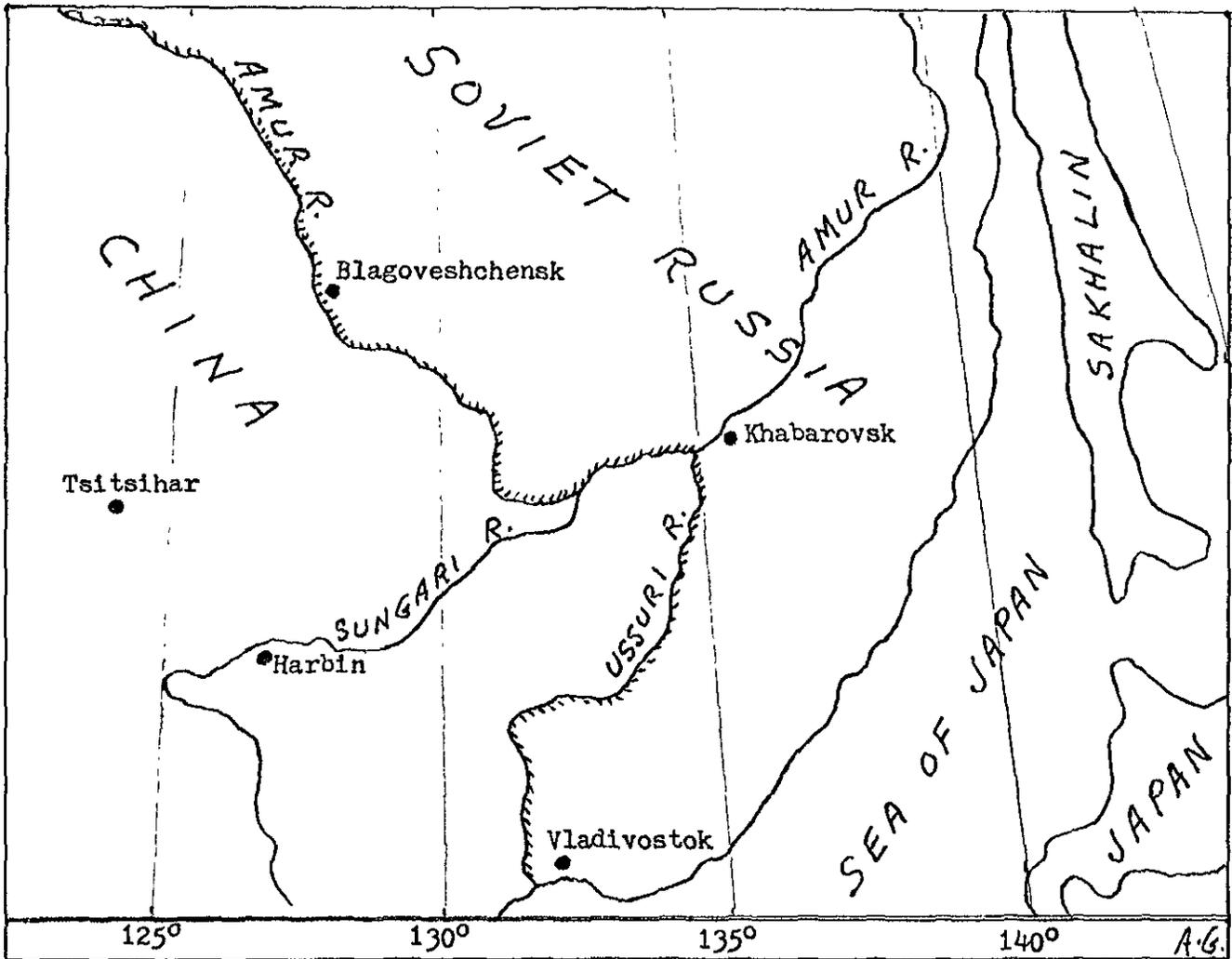
The number of escapees increased substantially towards the end of 1930 and early in 1931. A surviving Mennonite list of March 15, 1931, for example, lists 554 people living in Harbin. Life in Harbin was difficult from the very onset. Many reached Harbin totally destitute and depended entirely upon the benevolence of the Committee. While many of the men possessed special training as craftsmen, the labor supply far exceeded demand. On occasion the women and girls were more fortunate and served as domestics in wealthier Chinese homes. There were other problems: rental accommodations were difficult to find; crowded living conditions and primitive sanitation facilities affected health and hygiene; communicable diseases, especially those affecting children, spread easily; lack of adequate foodstuffs led to widespread malnutrition; school facilities, a hastily improvised school notwithstanding, were extremely limited; local authorities frequently threatened deportation back to Russia or demanded the renewal of individual residency permits, at substantial cost, every three months.

Initially during 1929-30 immigration to Harbin was somewhat matched by a quota emigration to the United States. Early in 1930, for example, the American consulate in Harbin gave assurance that some 150 people would be able to enter the U.S. in the coming year. By 1931 consular offices received special orders to refuse visas to people likely to become a public charge. Now began a flurry of diplomatic activity aimed at removing over 500 Mennonites and some 200 Lutherans and Catholics from China. For a time each

refugee group carried on its negotiations with its parent church, but later worked together with the Committee for German Refugees. The first break in the often complicated negotiations came early in 1932 when the first large group left China for Marseilles, France. The majority of the Mennonites on board eventually settled in Paraguay.

A long and frustrating vigil awaited those refugees who remained in Harbin following the departure of their Paraguay-bound brethren. Two problems eroded the likelihood of an imminent evacuation. Adequate funding, thanks to the economic depression in Europe and the United States, could not be found. Meanwhile in South America, a military conflict between Bolivia and Paraguay made it impossible for the Mennonites, who constituted by far the largest majority, to join their coreligionists in the Chaco. Finally after long delays the second transport finally left Harbin in April, 1934.

Janzen's letter tells only the beginning of the story. The varied accounts which survive, including Janzen's, reflect high adventure, a crisis of faith, years of poverty and frustrating vigil, and finally the hardships of a new frontier in Latin America.



Harbin, May 30, 1930

When the first Five Year Plan was announced in the Molotschna in the fall of 1927, it became clear that we must do everything possible to leave Russia. All our efforts to obtain an exit visa had proved futile. We decided to move to the Amur region, and if our sojourn there became intolerable, we planned to cross the nearby border [into China]. We formed a group of five families: ourselves, Jacob Isaaks (our children), Peter Mantlers, David Stobbes and Nicolai Penners. Counting the children we numbered thirty-seven persons. We sold our belongings and left for the Far East on March 26, 1928. On the trip we felt and experienced the gracious and protecting hand of God, especially in a derailment on this side of Samara. It was

night and everyone except our guard was sound asleep. The train was traveling at full speed. I awoke to a terrific jolt. It seemed as if our coach had jumped over something or rolled over something very hard. Many of the sleepers were thrown from the benches. After severe shaking and bumping the train came to a halt. "Derailment!" they shouted. I stepped out and saw the following: the second coach stood on the left rail, ready to tip over, but without wheels or axles. The couplings had not torn, which prevented the coach from tipping. One wheel had come to rest under our coach. Axles and bearings lay scattered. The ties between the rails were torn up for a long stretch. Our coach had plowed into the one ahead and had run it into the leaning one. The iron carriage of our coach was severely bent, while the two others were virtually wrecked. A number of the passengers sustained injuries. They were taken out through the windows, since the doors were jammed. We continued our journey after twelve hours.

When we arrived in Blagoveshchensk we received a rather good land allotment of six and one-half *dessiatines* per person. We were free to divide this land among ourselves. We called our village *Friedensfeld*. It suffered little from flooding. After working the soil for two years our crops reflected the input of each farmer: the better the farmer, the better the crop. We were not harassed by officials, in fact were frequently aided. During our second year in the Amur region the situation changed. We were awe-struck at the *ruthlessness* with which the Five Year Plan was implemented. During the past winter the purging, as they called it, began with the Russian population. Exorbitant taxes and grain requisitions were levied upon every reasonably wealthy inhabitant and upon every preacher. If the demands were met, new levies soon followed until it became impossible to meet the demands, because nothing was left. Then the farmers were arrested, brought before a court and sentenced to various terms of forced labor or exile to the northern regions of Siberia. In each case all possessions were confiscated. Family members who remained behind, such as wife and children, were driven from their homes. Whoever gave sustenance to such people was severely punished. There were instances in which such people froze to death during the night. The Soviets were determined to eradicate all opposition to the implementation of the Five Year Plan for the collectivization of the land and its inhabitants. All those who were not poor were branded as kulaks. As the purging of the Russian population was progressing, articles appearing in the papers accused the German settlers of being entirely under the influence of kulaks and ministers, which made purging absolutely essential. Simultaneously the papers reported how the population pressed to enter the collectives. It became necessary to fulfill the Five Year Plan in four years.

We were told to join a huge collective called *Gigant* which was organizing. Collectivization in and of itself would not have been the worst, if we had not known what was connected with it, namely the rejection of a godly training for our children and the substitution of an *antireligious* soviet one; the advocacy of free love, and so on. Because of this we hesitated to join. Thereupon we were so to speak "set aside" for this year. We were informed that we could plant and harvest during this year, but would be resettled next year. We were allowed to settle on the swampy areas which were of no use to the collective. Then the panic-like movement to Moscow began.² A number of families from our settlement also left, but to my knowledge only one, namely the Peter *Mantlers*, got to Germany. The others were sent back.

On March 18, 1930, three heavily armed men from the GPU came to us (as my son Jacob was the village chairman) and arrested *K. J. Klassen* from our village and a minister, *B. Doerksen*, from the neighboring village of *Kleefeld*. They selected these two from a long list of names. An additional twenty men were taken from other villages. These were taken on foot to Blagoveshchensk, where they were probably sentenced to various terms of forced labor or exiled to the northern regions of Siberia. This time I had escaped, but I was convinced that my name was also on the long list, which they did not allow us to read. Soon thereafter the rumor spread that they planned to arrest some 100 men in the settlement. That averaged out to five men per village. The ministers were probably all included. What was to be done? Stay at home like a chicken on a roost waiting to be snatched for the slaughter? I certainly had no interest in that! During the upheavals in the south I had escaped the meshes of the scoundrels time and again and why shouldn't I succeed here as well? Some 230 rubles from my old home had arrived for me at the post office, which I did not bother to pick up. How should one flee — alone or with the family? Such enterprises are usually undertaken with a Chinese guide, but he could not be found in such a hurry. In order to prevent the arrest of the entire family (wife, three sons, and a daughter) in the event our flight failed, I and our youngest immediately sent back a guide for the others. In the evening we read from the Word and united together in prayer, beseeching God for His help and protection, asking that if His face did not go before us not to lead us from here. We took leave of each other. Then I and son *Isaak*, together with *G. T. Koop*, who also left his family behind, left on foot. All that the family had brought from the old home, *Lindenau*, and what we accumulated after two years of hard work on the Amur, was left behind. I stopped on the street and with a sad glance said goodbye to our new home. Then we left our village forever.

The difficult moment of parting was over. Now we moved towards danger with courage and utmost caution. It was a difficult walk at night through very uneven fields. Because the Amur makes a great bend we only reached the river at 3 a.m., under bright moonlight. No guards could be seen. We covered ourselves with white sheets. Then with pounding hearts we started over the river. It was a large sheet of ice, glittering in the moonlight. We forged ahead with rapid steps. At 4 a.m. we were on the other side of the river. I estimate the river was two and one half *versts* wide at that point. We breathed more easily, knelt down and thanked God for his protection and help. After wandering for some time we reached a Chinese village and rested for a bit. The Chinese were not hostile. Their object was rather to exploit us helpless refugees as much as possible, which they succeeded in doing.

It is hard to describe the kind of feelings which came over us when we could say, "We have left Russia and are now in China." It seemed as if a burden had been lifted, though we knew that many troubles and deprivations still awaited us. Many of the Chinese near the border are smugglers and so it was not difficult to find one who, for a goodly sum, would guide our family. In the meantime, however, our son Jacob had met a Chinese man and negotiated with him to bring our family the second night after our departure. The matter was of some urgency for Jacob. If the authorities had discovered that *Isaak* and I had fled, Jacob as village leader (*Friedensfeld*) would most certainly have been arrested for allowing this to happen in his own household. Three families and a single young man joined our family at the last minute. On the evening of March 22 they left on sleighs and a two-wheeler. They crossed safely but we were thirty *versts* apart. Travelers informed our family where we were. Jacob came and got us the next night and so after two days we were united.

Now a new group composed of thirty-three persons was organized. This group followed the same route as the previous ones, but was delayed by bad roads and at daybreak found themselves between two Russian villages next to the border. The sun rose clear and bright. What to do in this crisis? The border patrol was probably in the vicinity. There was no turning back. A few prayers, then forward! Unexpectedly a ground blizzard struck and fine snow completely obliterated the view. All crossed safely.

What happened at home? A new group quickly formed, consisting of sixty-five persons from the *Usman* villages. The following night these too crossed safely. Before the authorities became aware of what was happening half of the people of *Friedensfeld* and *Usman* had disappeared. Later we learned that decisive measures were taken to prevent further escapes. We sold our escape conveyances and rented two-wheeled Chinese carts. We drove off to *Sachalian*, directly opposite *Blagoveshchensk* on the Amur River. It was a strange sensation to see our pursuers so near and yet they could not touch us. Here Chinese authorities questioned us. We were thoroughly fleeced and robbed by the investigating police.

After several days we obtained our Chinese visas and could continue our journey. A few in our group had managed to save some money and so we were in a position to hire a bus. We changed our money into Chinese currency and received about thirty-five cents for one ruble. The money that we had brought along meant very little here. It was 500 *versts* from *Sachalian* to the railway station at *Tsitsihar*. Winter was coming to an end and the roads, especially in the mountains were becoming worse every day. Regularly we exchanged our energies with that of the bus, sometimes pulling the bus, then letting the bus pull us. There were twenty-four people in the bus, counting the children. After a wearisome five-day drive we arrived in *Tsitsihar* without mishap and in good physical condition. We purchased rail tickets and traveled to *Harbin*, where we arrived safely, though chilled, at 7 a.m. on April 6. Here we were cordially received by the representative of the Committee for German Refugees from Russia, Mr. John A. *Bekker*, and brought to the quarters which they had rented. Because they lacked funds, the other groups were unable to leave *Sachalian*. Money was sent through the auspices of Dr. J. J. *Isaak*. Chinese carts were hired and the caravan covered the precarious trek of 500 *versts* in fourteen days via bad roads and in incredibly cold weather. One after another the contingents became stranded in *Tsitsihar* because of lack of funds. The last of these finally arrived here on May 5. The later groups arrived in a rather sorry state because most of them had left home without any money.

A child died in the second group in consequence of the difficult and hazardous journey. Three more children died soon after their arrival here, ranging in age from one to two and a half years. But these were not the only victims which the difficult journey claimed. On April 23 my dear wife *Helena (nee Reimer)*, aged sixty, contracted pneumonia. Though she survived this crisis, she died on May 6 from heart failure. It was an unexpected shock for us. We had lived so many years together, experienced and successfully overcome so many hardships in all our travels and now this! We know, of course, that nothing happens without God and that he has led in this fashion. But we do not understand why exactly this way.

In conclusion I would like to say a few words about the state of things here in Harbin. We are naturally thankful to God that we are safely out of Russia. But our condition here is not enviable. Work is difficult to find and the wages are low. The accommodations are paid for one month by the committee. For some the month has already expired and now these people are to pay for their accommodation themselves. Authorities are insisting that passes be renewed. Money is very hard to come by. Only now and then does one have a day's work, which is not even sufficient for food. This is the situation now in spring. What will happen in the fall and winter when almost total unemployment will set in? Unless help continues to come from abroad we can expect the death of many refugees. Until now our faithful God has helped us wonderfully. He will also know how to work in the hearts of his children so that they will continue to show mercy. For me personally it is difficult to beg for help for [until now] I have never suffered deprivation and perhaps now I'm too proud [to beg]. Believe me, it is a strange feeling to have lived in reasonable comfort until now, and now suddenly have nothing.

There are currently 194 Mennonite refugees in Harbin.³ It would be very desirable if these could leave in monthly groups of fifteen. Some thirty-one German Lutherans have just arrived. In the name of all the German refugees here may I express a heartfelt thanks to all you dear helpers over there. May the faithful God reward you, for we will hardly be able to.

NOTES

1. The original letter is in the H. P. Krehbiel collection of the Mennonite Library and Archives, North Newton, Kansas, folio 85.
2. The writer is referring to the flight, in the fall of 1929, of thousands of German colonists to Moscow to seek exit visas. Some five thousand succeeded in getting permission to leave, but the majority of the would-be emigrants were forced to remain in Russia.
3. By 1933 there were more than 1300 refugees from Russia in Harbin. The majority were Mennonites, but there were also Lutherans and Catholics. Most of these refugees were eventually settled in South America; some were accepted in the United States.

CAN YOU HELP?

Special Queries from Germany

EMMA TOMILOVA nee LANGOLF, b. 1904 Saratov, Volga Reg; fa, DAVID LANGOLF of Kind, *Wiesenseite*; mo, ANNA KATHERINA nee RIEDEL of Beideck, *Bergseite*; sis. Theresa; childhood in Kind & Beideck; 1921 bakery saleslady at Mitrofan Market, Saratov; Fa, prof. baker, worked var. in Saratov; 1914-18 owned bakery on Zigeunerstrasse in Volsk; also searching for mat. RIEDEL cousins: (1) HERMAN (surname unk) b. ab 1904, emig with par fr Beideck for USA ab 1913; (2) PETER RIEDEL, b 1910, father FRIEDRICH RIEDEL; emig for Newark, NJ ab 1910; Please contact:

EMMA LANGOLF, Kiesacker 43, 7070 Schwabisch Gemund, West Germany.

ALEXANDER SCHWINDT, b. 1 Sept 1923 Morgentau, Kanton Pallasowka, *Wiesenseite*, Volga Reg. neighbor, villages: Kana, Blumenfeld, Strasburg; fa, SAMUEL SCHWINDT, mo, nee SCHNEIDER, grfa FRIEDRICH SCHWINDT, lived at Kirchenplatz, Morgentau; since 7 June 1975 liv. in West Germany, anxiously seeks info re relatives in USA. (1) EMANUEL SCHWINDT, cousin of fa, Samuel Schwindt; (2) Fam. SCHNEIDER, nickname "Kartofels Jaker" w 2 sons, 1 dau emig 1910-12, one son presum. b 1912; (3) Uncles DIETRICH & JAKOB SCHNEIDER, fa nickname "Schlosser Schneider" emig dur or shortly after WW I; Jakob's dau OTTILIA remained in Russia; one rep. d. enroute; inquirer's mother rec. packages fr other throughout 1920-30 period. Please contact:

ALEXANDER SCHWINDT, Raidwinger Str. 11, 744 Nurlingen, Neckarhausen, West Germany.

If you have any information on any of the above-mentioned people, we would appreciate it if you would also inform AHSGR Headquarters, 631 D Street, Lincoln, NE 68502.

THE 1915 DEPORTATION OF THE VOLHYNIAN GERMANS

Alfred Krueger

Translated by Adam Giesinger

The deportation described here, which was carried out by the tsarist regime during the first world war, was the earliest of the mass deportations which became so commonplace during and after the second world war. It was the summer of 1915 when more than 150,000 Volhynian Germans were forced to leave their homes to travel eastward thousands of miles to Asiatic Russia, where they were left to shift for themselves without means among alien peoples. A brief description of this deportation, written by one of the deportees, is given in translation below. The description in German is on pages 234-242 of Uie Fluchtlinge von Wolhynian by Alfred Krueger, written in Rozyszcze, Volhynia, in 1937 and published in Germany by Guenther Wolffzu Plauen im Vogtiand.

In 1914, when the world war broke out, the Germans of military age in Volhynia were called to the colors along with all other Russian citizens. At first they were sent to the German front, where they had to fight against their German brothers, but later they were withdrawn from there and sent to the Turkish front. When the armies of the Central Powers were approaching Volhynia in 1915, the Russians thought that the time was ripe for a final solution of their Volhynian German problem. It was alleged that the Germans here were carrying on espionage for Germany behind the Russian lines and at the end of June an order came from Nicolai Nicolayevich, the Russian commander-in-chief, that Germans were to be evacuated from this region. This was a blow that hit all Volhynian Germans, with the exception of the few who had given up their German identity and become russified and German women living in mixed marriages with Russians. Allowed to remain also were wives whose husbands and parents whose sons were serving in the Russian forces. At the end of June western Volhynia had to be evacuated, at the beginning of July central Volhynia, and by the middle of July eastern Volhynia. Once the deportation order arrived in a place, the inhabitants had to move out in just a few hours. They were not given time to sell their farm equipment and livestock even at sacrifice prices and to make the needed preparations for the journey. Only a few German families in western Volhynia succeeded in hiding themselves in the dense forests to await the arrival of the armies of the Central Powers from Galicia. These surfaced again behind the German lines and were taken to Austria or East Prussia, where they spent the war years.

The Russians had not counted on the German colonists submitting so meekly to the cruel deportation order. They had therefore previously arrested the pastors, teachers, village mayors, and other leading men and put them into prison as hostages. This appalling injustice had so stunned the Germans that the thought of resistance never occurred to them. They were not conscious of any treasonable acts against the Russian state. By years of laborious effort they had converted forest and swamp into productive farmland. They had taught the Ukrainian peasant the use of an iron plow and of a wagon with iron axles, and much else. They had always punctiliously carried out their duties toward the state. They paid their taxes regularly. The men did their military service and were now serving in the wartime forces. They taught their children the Russian language. Originally called by landowners into what was then a barren wasteland, they had been welcomed by the Russian government. They felt that they had earned the right to call this their home.

No one had told them where they were to go. They had to start their journey on their own wagons. After weeks, sometimes months, of this kind of travel, they looked forward to being allowed to go by train. They traversed swampy and sandy regions to the Pripet river, where they were put into river freighters, in groups of hundreds, and taken downstream through the most desolate regions of Poesia. Only when they reached Kiev were they finally allowed to travel by train.

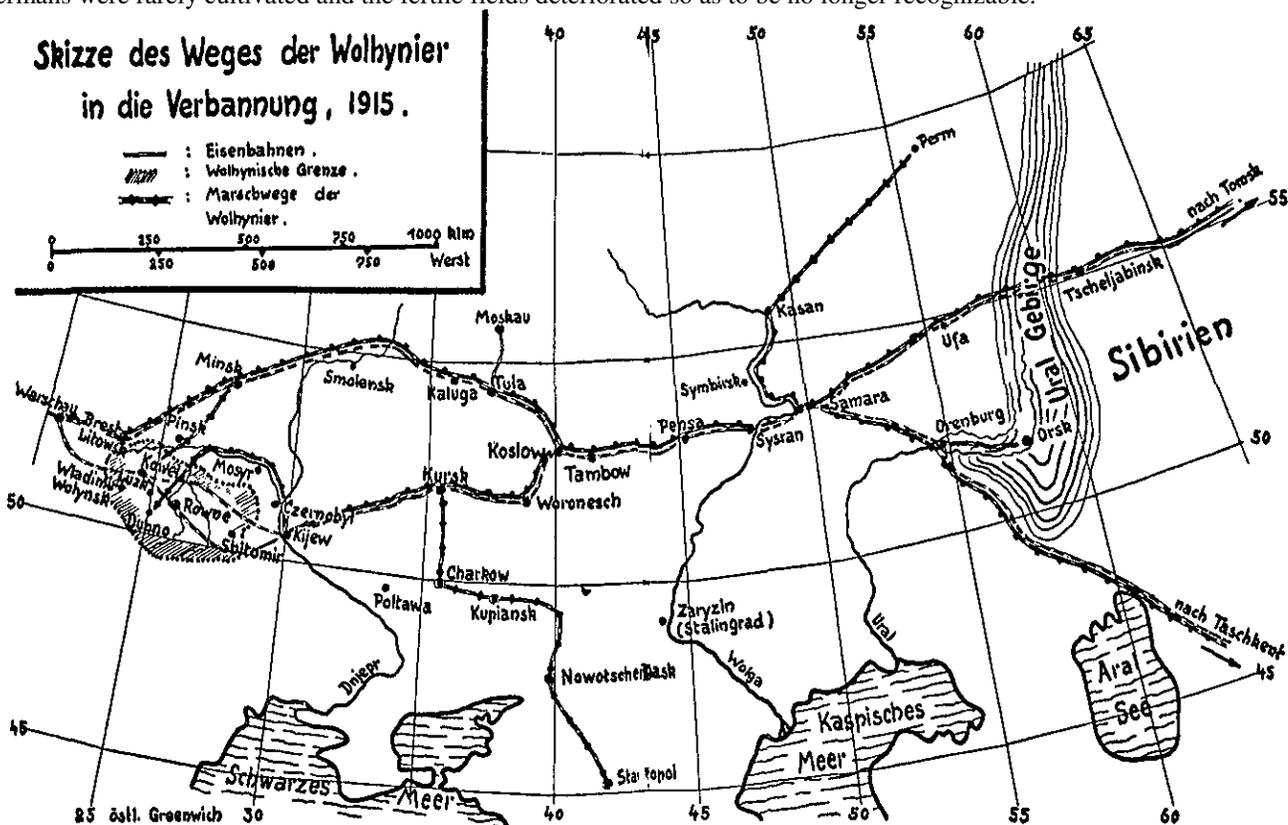
Thousands died under indescribable hardships and deprivations; typhus and other diseases carried off large numbers. There was scarcely a family in which half the members or more did not die on the journey or suffer damage to body and mind. The dead had to be buried along the route, in the forests or along the river banks; large cemeteries grew up at the halting places. The official rest stations lacked even the most primitive hygienic arrangements, making the danger of typhus spread by insects all the greater. Only at a few of the official rest stations were medical care facilities available; elsewhere everyone was on his own. Beyond Kiev, although they were traveling in dirty cattle cars, they were happier because they were at least sheltered from the weather.

The deportees were transported over many thousands of kilometers and eventually unloaded in areas occupied by a variety of Asiatic peoples in Siberia, Central Asia, and the Ural region. Best accommodated

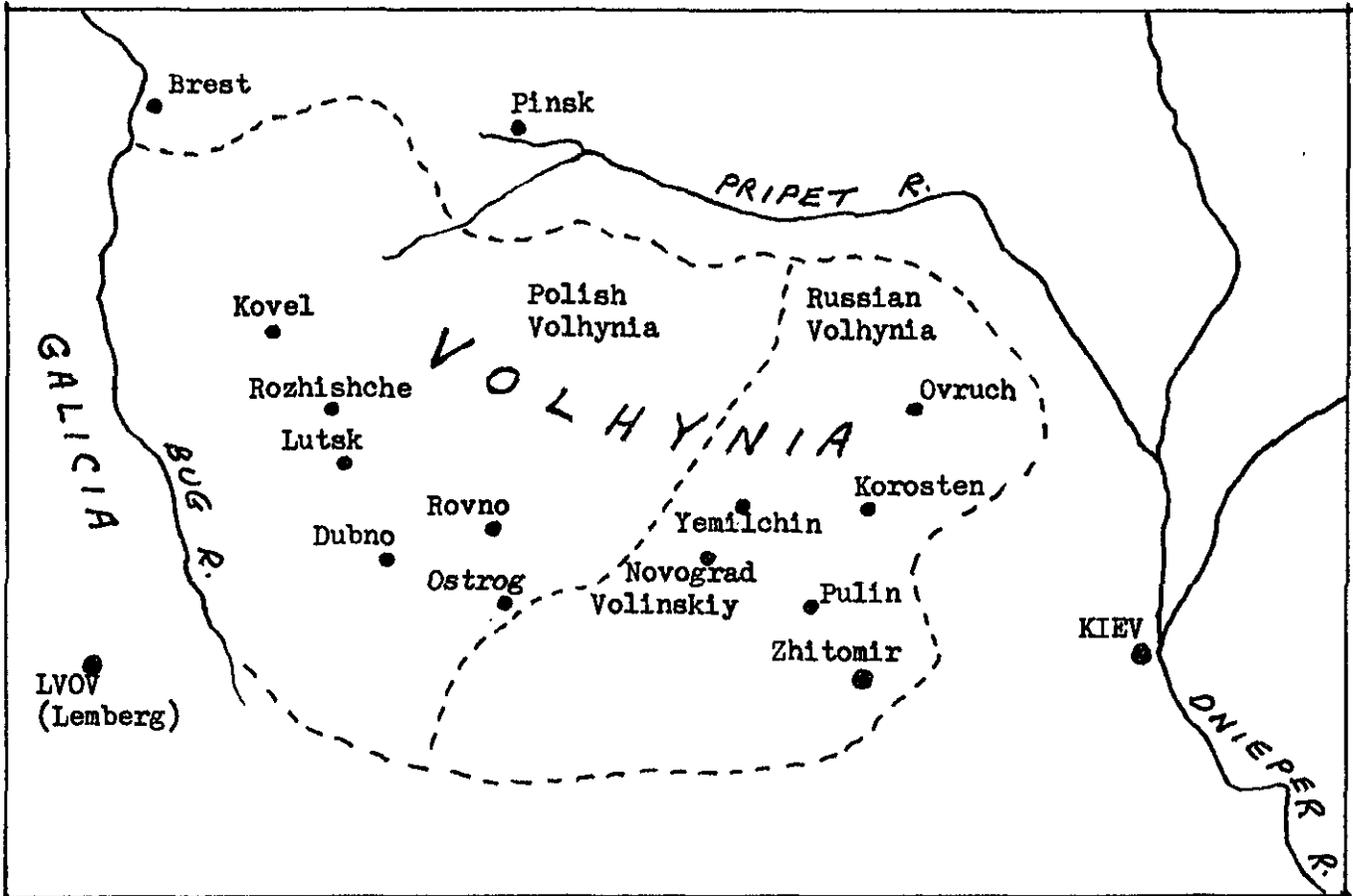
were those who were brought to the Volga and Black Sea regions and into the Ukraine. On route one called them refugees; only rarely were they called what they really were, people deported from their homes, deportees. How could one call them refugees when they had not fled from their homes but had been taken away by force? They did not always receive understanding from the peoples among whom they now had to live, especially when the fact was discovered that they were not refugees from the war zone but had been deported. Even the German colonists among whom some of them found refuge believed that they were deported because they had committed some kind of political offence.

In their new and strange environment they had to do many varieties of work to maintain themselves. Most of them fared badly. Those who found work managed to eke out a living, but work was not always available. Acquisition of property here was impossible, as they had received no compensation for what they had left behind in **Volhynia**.

In the meantime what was happening in Volhynia? At the end of the year 1915 the last German families previously allowed to remain were finally deported. Only south and west Volhynia became an actual war zone. Hard battles were fought in the **Volhynian** fortress-triangle **Dubno-Lutsck-Rovno**. The most severe fighting took place near Lutsck on the **Stochod** and **Styr** rivers, where the army of Archduke Ferdinand suffered a destructive defeat by the Russians. In the war zone the deserted German colonies went up in smoke- But even where there was no direct war action, the German farms suffered greatly. The buildings were destroyed and the wood used for firewood by the natives. Only those farmyards which had been taken over by refugee **Ruthenians** from **Galicia** or by Volhynian natives were at least partially preserved. The **landholdings** of the deported Germans were rarely cultivated and the fertile fields deteriorated so as to be no longer recognizable.



Volhynian German Deportation Routes 1915



When, in March 1917, the Tsarist throne collapsed and new rulers and a new order were established, the deported Volhynians hoped that their hour of deliverance had come. But the new statesmen, as is well known, resolved to carry on the war and, as long as that was the case, the deportees were not permitted to return home. In the fall of 1917 came the Bolshevik revolution and the war was to be ended. But when the negotiations between Russia and Germany collapsed because of the treacherous behavior of the Bolsheviks, the German army marched into Volhynia and into the Ukraine. Then the Russian civil war began.

There was now no longer an authority that concerned itself with the fate of the Volhynian deportees and these could think of returning home. Because they lacked all means, they often raised the money for the journey by selling their last meager belongings, even pieces of clothing. Many had to travel by a very roundabout way to get home, others lost their lives still far from home. Only very few succeeded in reaching Volhynia quickly. On the return journey, which often lasted months, the death rate was again high. Some could not find the means to travel home and had to stay in Russia, where they experienced the great famine of 1921-22.

The few fortunate ones, who managed to get back to Volhynia early in 1918, fared the best. To the extent to which their farmsteads still existed, they were able, with the help of the German military authorities, to take possession of them again and begin a new struggle for existence. Many, however, found nothing at their old homesteads except a choked-up well-hole or a pile of rubbish. These lost courage and preferred to emigrate to Germany.

Only about one-half of the deported Volhynians returned home; the others perished among foreign peoples or found it impossible to return home. In 1920 war activities again disturbed Volhynian territory;

battles between the newly resurrected Poland and Soviet Russia gave the Volhynian Germans another taste of war. In 1921 the peace of Riga divided Volhynia between Russia and Poland. The smaller part remained Russian; the larger part, with about 48,000 Germans, became Polish. Since then there has been a fragment of Germandom in Polish Volhynia and another in Soviet Volhynia; once these had formed an indivisible whole. The fate of each of these fragments is now unfolding independently.

THE HOMELESS: THE TRAGEDY OF VOLGA GERMAN FARMERS

A Report from *Deutsch Amerika*, January 11, 1930, Vol. XVII, No. 2 NYC. Pp. 10-11, 23.

Translated by Roger Welsch

Introduction and Notes by Adam Giesinger

The Germans in Russia were traditionally a devoutly religious people and individualistic in their economic views. They therefore found it difficult to adjust to a regime that was avowedly atheistic and was also determined to collectivize/arming. As soon as it became obvious that the new regime was firmly established, many German colonists looked for a way out. In the van were Mennonites of the Black Sea region, of whom more than 20,000 emigrated to Canada in the years 1923-1928, but Lutherans, Catholics, and Baptists from all parts of the Soviet Union also left in considerable numbers in those years. In 1929 all further emigration was suddenly prohibited. At the same time Stalin initiated a campaign of terror to enforce collectivization of agriculture and to liquidate the kulaks ("rich" peasants) and the clergy of all religious faiths. These moves caused consternation among Germans in all parts of Russia and greatly increased their desire to emigrate. In the fall of 1929 thousands of them left their homes and converged upon Moscow to demand exit visas. The plight of these homeless and desperate people, encamped in the suburb of the capital, attracted the attention of the German embassy and of the representatives of the world press. This forced the regime to concede some exit visas, eventually permitting some 5,000 of the refugees to emigrate. Other thousands, however, who had come to Moscow, were shipped back to their homes or to remote parts of the country. The 5000 permitted to leave were received in Germany and most of them later settled overseas. The report translated by Professor Welsch describes the arrival of the first 400 of these refugees in Germany.

Many thousands of German farmers want to migrate from Russia. There are German colonies in Galicia and in the Ukraine, and the German farmers in the Volga Valley are very much of the same stock and history. From afar one is impressed by their friendly villages, which show a relatively high degree of development, a love for trees and flowers. These German farmers who have kept their native language and customs for many generations in this foreign land have been viewed by their neighbors with mixed emotions. Their economic success has aroused contempt and envy; their ways have encountered a certain antipathy. This has resulted at least in part because their evangelistic beliefs conflicted with the Slavic religiosity, in part from their frugality, so alien to the Russian temperament. But the government has always had to respect these German farmers as model citizens and stewards of the land. Even during the war they were loyal. But from the very beginning an enmity has existed between the Soviet government and these German colonists. The farmers managed to tolerate the new situation only when the Soviet state under Lenin moderated the severity of its policies of Communism in regard to agriculture in order to raise farm production. But during the past few years a new policy toward farming has developed in Russia: the kulak, the large-scale farmer, is to be done away with and anyone who can be defined as a kulak is to be destroyed with unbearable taxation; this includes anyone who has a hired hand or a dairy herd with several cows.

The Swedish farmers were the first to flee the regime and their homeland made it possible for them to return and be resettled.¹ Then the Mennonites found that Canada was prepared to receive German migrants from Russia.² The farmers surrendered their possessions with a minimum of compensation and were assembled in internment camps near Moscow. But when the arrangements with Canada for admittance were stalled, the Russian government first threatened to transport the German farmers to Siberia and then demanded from them a reversal of the personal³ property sales and a "voluntary" return to the abandoned villages. Meanwhile the German government had accepted these farmers.³

A description of a column of these Volga Germans arriving at the German-Russian border is very moving; the German border town of Eydtkuhnen lies dark in the early December evening; the once beautiful, lively town with active businesses and commerce is today a dying city because there is no longer the support of the vast Russian countryside for it. The night is cold. For hours a thin, misty rain has been falling, veiling everything in a gray, unfriendly shroud. A city of barracks has been carved out on the broad fields near the main buildings. Lines for power and water have been laid, army trucks with mess kitchens have been lined up to one side, and disinfectant devices stand ready to take up the battle against vermin.

Everywhere there is feverish activity. Figures dash from place to place. Sanitation staff and Red Cross workers from Konigsberg, Schlochau, Kotbus, Mannheim, and Westphalia, scurry by on their way to assist with the preparations. Doctors and members of volunteer corps are dressed in blue linen hospital uniforms, some with white smocks. Necks, wrists, and ankles are wound with disinfectant-soaked bandages—lice will

not brave a drop of disinfectant. Nurses wear close-fitting rubber caps, the men hoods. Everyone wears rubber gloves.

Manifold preparations are being made to treat **hygienically** these unfortunate people who are coming from distant Russia, from all parts of that country: Siberia, the **Urals**, the **Caucasus**, the Volga Valley. Every effort must be made to eliminate the danger of disease or vermin. During the week- and month-long internment in the camps for emigrants outside Moscow, where the living conditions were absolutely intolerable, epidemics and pestilences frequently broke out among the 16,000 German farmers there. It is therefore crucial to institute stringent health controls for the protection of the German public.

At midnight the first transport arrives with 400 of the German Russians. In the next few days and weeks there will follow nearly 4,000 more emigrants of this first wave that has been granted exit. High wire fences and the guard positions of the police and militia have cordoned off the area. Only with great effort can even a reporter approach the site, and even he must have a white uniform, a pass that can stand the test.

Then they come. Dark figures move across the open area. A long snake. With bundles, bedding, a couple of baskets loaded with household goods, the last transportable possessions that they **rescued-so** they pass through the line. At first glance the men look typically Russian. Most have full, shaggy beards; the grotesque felt or fur caps or the familiar, high astrakhan hats on their heads and the long dark coats give them an eastern, a military look.

The women are typically peasant in appearance, children on their arms and all around their **pleated** skirts. Serious, occasionally handsome faces, some marred by **pockmarks**. The recent suffering has left deep scars in these faces. But in their eyes is a light of **joy-the** joy of standing on German soil, of being able to unburden their hearts **with** other Germans. They have survived the terror; they have been rescued.

Then they pile up their packages and boxes, exhausted by the strenuous demands of the daylong trip. They wait until the family has re-assembled so that they can pass through the gate to the camp together, the gate which **for** them is the gate to hope.

An image of terrible tragedy but not, on the other hand, an image of suffering. Although these farmers have lost everything—the last bits of cash and the few items of jewelry had been taken from them at the Russian **border-their** spirits have not been broken, nor their strength to recover. They still know that no German farmer need **starve-at** any rate under normal conditions except in the Inferno of Communist Russia.

In spite of their long absence from Germany, they are still Germans. They speak the pure German of their ancestors without any accent. And they are proud to be German. Neither the stern, fanatical efforts of the **czarist** regimes to **russianize** everything nor the blind hate of the native, savage peoples of this Soviet period have caused them to forget their fundamental **Germanness**.

It has not been easy for them to leave this old home, the soil that had been worked in some cases for two hundred years by the colonists. "But we couldn't endure it any longer. If we had stayed there any longer we would have had to give up our faith. We couldn't do that," said a tall haggard farmer whose gray eyes blazed almost fanatically.

Others in the group agreed with this.

"Our children were no longer getting any religious instruction. No religion is being taught in the Soviet schools, only anti-religion," added another. "I couldn't sleep for nights before I decided to take my family out, but the pressure had become unbearable. We couldn't stand it any more. It was beyond our power."

"They sucked us dry," said a farm wife. "The grain tax was much higher than our whole harvest. We had to buy grain to give it up for taxes. Nothing was left for us to live on. Because we were hard working we were hated and envied by the Russian peasants. They harassed us German farmers even though we had never paid any attention to politics. We just wanted to mind our own business. The Commissars made a hell out of our lives." So the words came from every side.

They obviously have a strong sense of community. Each helps the other, supports him, comforts him, and shares. "Don't worry too much about us," says one mother when someone tries to give her food and a warm blanket. "Those who are still coming are in much worse condition." They are filled with concern for those who have been left behind. How will things go for them? Will they be permitted to leave? Will they be sent back? Will they suffer a disastrous fate?

Families had been torn apart. Repeatedly they had been arrested, and those who were arrested disappeared without a trace. Nobody knew where they had gone. More "blessings" of Soviet domination!

After a brief stop at the East Prussian border the farmers were transported to **Hammerstein** or **Prenzlau** or eventually to **Nordholz** near **Liibeck**⁴ in order to lay over in camps there until the decision came from across the sea.

This moment's rest in Germany is only another chapter in their story-but of course an unforgettable chapter, a gate of hope, a twist of fate. Only a few of them will find new homes on German soil, here at **Liibeck**; the others will be scattered to the winds.

There they will walk behind the plow as they once did in Russia, bringing new crops in from the soil, for themselves and for you. Their true home is too poor to welcome them, and this they can easily see for themselves with the acute understanding that farmers have for such matters, and they make it clear that they do understand.

A touching and unique tragedy of a modern migration.

NOTES

1. The forefathers of the Swedish farmers mentioned here had founded a village northeast of **Berislav** on the Dnieper river in 1782. Nearly all the people of this village left Russia in 1929 to go back to their ancestral homeland.
2. This is a reference to the 20,000 **Memnonites** who migrated to Canada in the years 1923-1928.
3. It is obvious that the writer was not too well informed about the sequence of events described in the Introduction.
4. Being encamped near **Liibeck** was a real home-coming for the Volga Germans, for this was the seaport from which most of their forefathers had left for Russia in the 1760's.

MEINE HEIMAT

Dort, wo an eb'nem Uferrande
Des Schwarzen Meeres Woge schlaegt,
Wo iiber Schwell' und gelbem Sande
Der Dnjepr seine Wasser traegt,
Wo durch der Steppe grueme Auen
Die breiten Taeler suedwaerts ziehn,
Wo unter'm Himmel tiefen, blauen,
Die gold'nen Sonnenrosen bluehn,
Dort, wo, gesenkt in schwarze Erde,
Der Weizen seine Aehren traegt,
Auf weiter Flur die stoize Herde
Des Hirten Treue sorgsam hegt,
Wo, wild umtobt von fremdem Voike,
Der deutsche Landmann friedlich wohnt,
Und auch in dunkler Wetterwoike
Die guet'ge Himmelsliebe thront,
Dort ist das Land, wo sel'ges Hoffen
Mich einst im Mutterarm gewiegt,
Wo, von dem Schicksal schwergetroffen,
Das Vaterherz begraben liegt,
Dort ist das Land, an das gebunden
Mich hat des Lebens heilig Band,
Weil einst die Ahnen es gefunden -
Dort ist mem liebes Heimatland.

MY HOMELAND

There, where waves of the Black Sea
beat on smooth shores,
Where the Dnieper carries its waters
over surf and yellow sand,
Where green meadows and broad valleys
move southwards through the steppe,
Where golden sunflowers blossom
under deep blue sky,
There, where—sunk into the black earth-wheat
raises its heads,
On broad meadows the herdsman loyally
tends the proud flock,
Where, wildly surrounded by strange people,
the German countryman lives peacefully,
And even in the dark storm clouds
kind, heavenly love reigns,
There is the land, where once blessed hope
rocked me in my mother's arms,
Where lies buried the heart of my father,
struck hard by fate,
There is the land to which the
sacred band of life has bound me,
Because once our forefathers found it-
There is my dear homeland.

Editor's Note: "Meine Heimat" is taken from *Klange der Seele*, a collection of poetry by Professor George Roth, published in 1960. The translation is by JoAnn Kuhr.

METAL GRAVE MARKERS IN GERMAN-RUSSIAN CEMETERIES OF EMMONS COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA

Lewis R. Marquardt

Many were the talents of the frugal Germans from Russia who at the turn of the century **homesteaded** in parts of southern North Dakota, but perhaps none of these talents were so articulately demonstrated as through the fabrication of the **handwrought** metal grave markers of **Emmons** County. Using but the hand manipulated tools of an ordinary blacksmith shop on the prairies, these early pioneers fashioned their grave markers into bold works of art: into four-foot to six-foot high handwrought, iron crosses.¹ Forging raw wrought iron, cutting and forming galvanized metals, fastening or welding bare metal to bare metal without the use of present-day **oxyacetylene** or electric welding techniques,² and adapting machined nuts and bolts onto these crosses as decorative devices, these pioneers and blacksmiths produced early works of a naive folk art on the North Dakota prairies which are slowly succumbing to rust and decay.

Like other homesteaders on the plains, the German-Russian pioneers used wood, stone, or iron as the basic structural material out of which they **crafted** their grave markers. They produced home-made wooden markers as in figure one, and stone or concrete markers too; but the former have mostly weathered away, while the latter, judging from the number remaining, were not aesthetically pleasing, or were too heavy or difficult to move after being cast.³ Nevertheless, several of these minor types of grave markers still stand as do a fairly large number of other examples of individuality in remembrance of departed loved ones.⁴ It is the imaginative metal markers however, those crosses crafted with skill and precision, and worked in endless diversity, which offer the greatest possibility for study and enjoyment.



Figure one: A wooden grave cross with metal repoussé heart and **C-scrolls** used as supports.

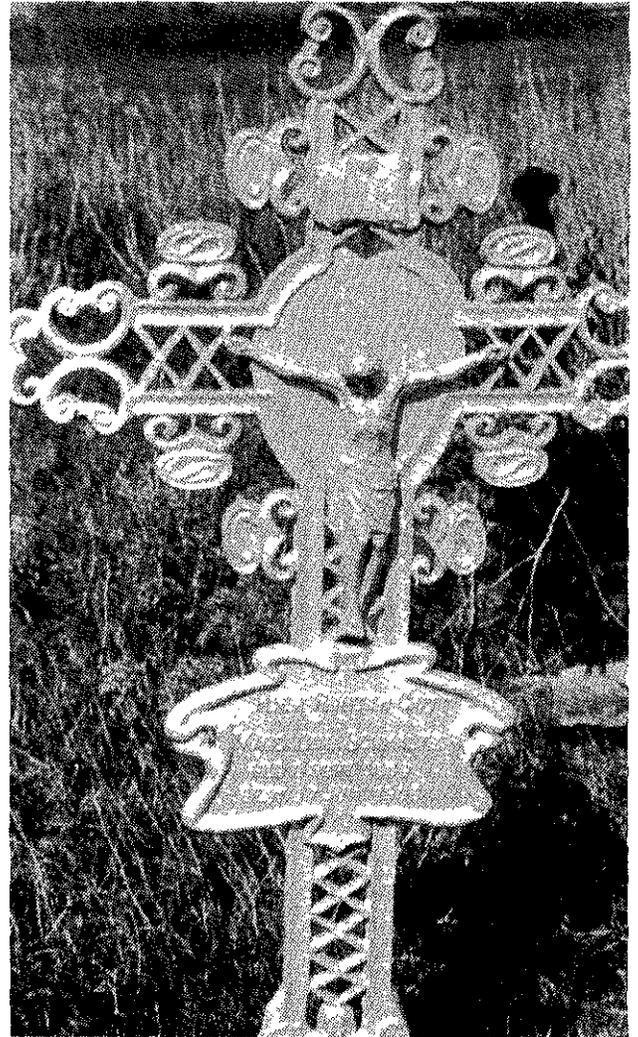


Figure two: A cast iron grave cross; one popular stylistic variety among many commercially produced. The name plate and the **Cirisfus** figure were individually cast and attached later.

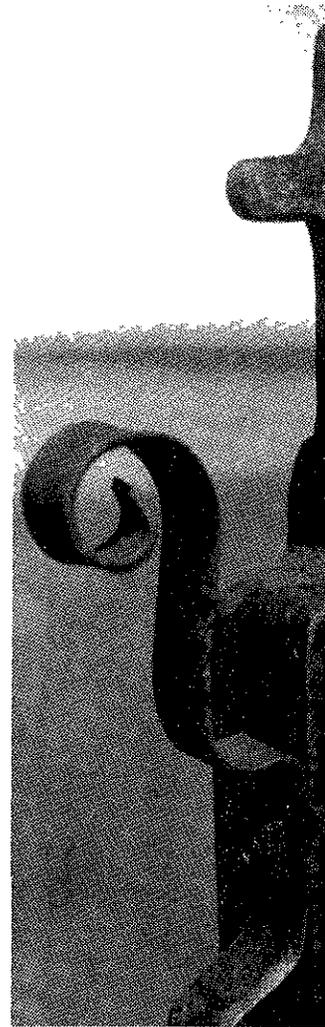
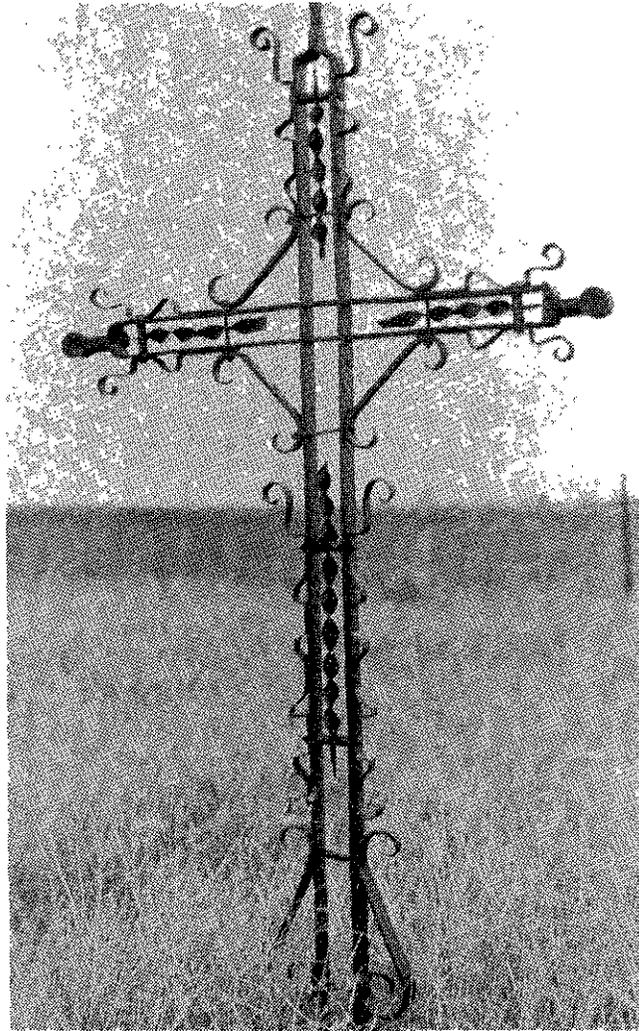
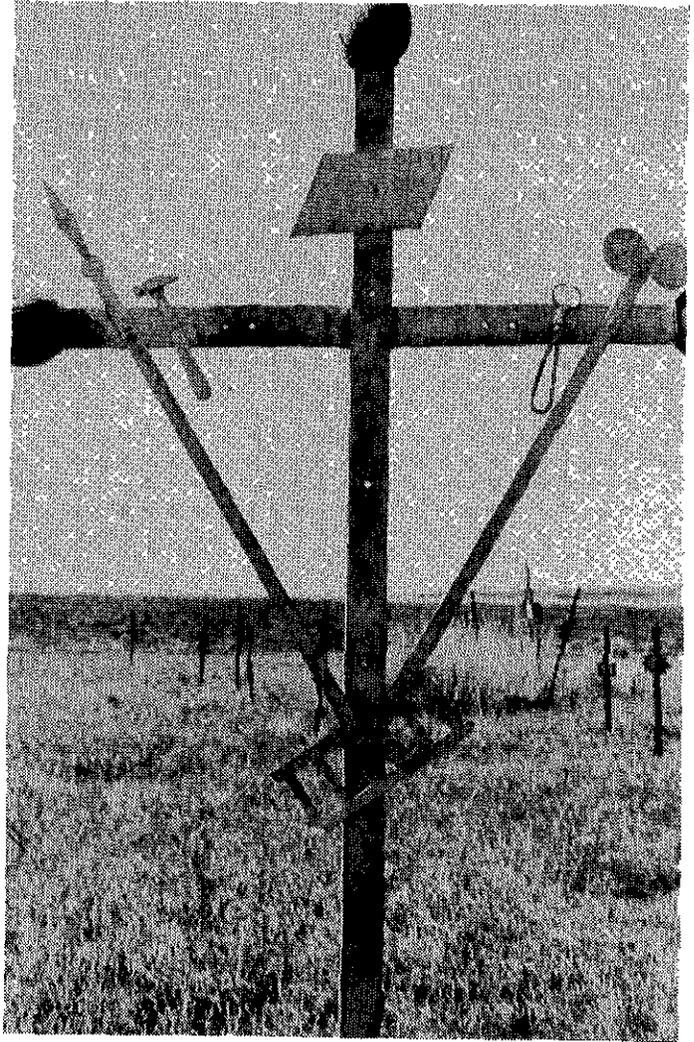


Figure three (A): A hand-wrought fabricated metal grave cross composed of decorative twists and scroll-work; tall, slender, central portion missing. Figure three (B): A detail of the upper welded and forged termination of Figure three (A).

Essentially there were two major types of metal grave markers used by the Catholic German-Russian pioneers of **Emmons** County: the cast iron and the forged or fabricated iron. Cast iron markers, most often in the form of crosses but also in the form of little angels or cherubs, were mass-produced of molten iron poured into sand molds and formed into standard shapes and designs. The product, in contrast to forged iron is quite brittle; figure two is an example of a cast grave marker. Frequently, these cast items were mass-produced by large commercial foundries such as the Bismarck Foundry and Welding Company, since hometown blacksmiths rarely had the requisite equipment for such large-scale operations as the melting and subsequent pouring of molten iron. The second type of grave marker, the forged or fabricated markers were those metal crosses created or fastened together by various devices such as clamps, collars, rivets, welds, or nuts and bolts, and which demonstrate the widest diversity and originality of shape and design, color and texture. To be sure, fabricated markers were also mass-produced by large commercial companies, but it is the locally produced, hand-wrought variety which manifests the highest degree of creativity and aesthetic interest today. The **wrought-iron** markers were most often produced by local blacksmiths upon individual order, and whether because of the difficulty of producing two works of wrought iron exactly alike, rarely does one find two hand-wrought metal crosses precisely identical. And rarely is either type located in any but the Catholic cemeteries of German-Russian origin! Figure three is an example of a hand-wrought, fabricated grave cross.

Invariably, crosses display a respect for those who are dead and stand as universal symbols for Christ and/or Christianity. Since the cross served as the chief instrument of the death and passion of Christ,⁵ the cross became a sign of the sacrifice through which mankind won redemption and salvation. For the Christian

Figure four: The central "entry" cross to old St. Mary's Cemetery of Hague. On the cross-arm, from left, wooden termination, lance, hammer, pincers, sponge; below, ladder. Central Christus figure missing; lance and sponge used as structural members.



then, the cross represents the promise of life after death. The cross also represents the spiritual realm through the **verticality** of its upright member, as well as the worldly or temporal realm, through the **horizontalty** of its crossing beam. Crosses, then, are simple structures composed of an upright beam and a transverse beam fastened together; they serve as complex symbols referring to another world and another time to a heavenly reunion with one's loved ones, to a happier existence. For the German-Russians of **Emmons** County, crosses also seem to testify most expressively to the creative vigor of their artisan-blacksmiths Using the standard forms of old, these artists formed and embellished the basic shape of the cross into delicate imaginative designs, into symbols of uplifting import, into works worthy of the genius of folk-artists.

There are five more-or-less distinct categories or classes into which these fabricated metal grave crosses may be divided, although in Christian art or church decoration there are some fifty forms of the cross which exist in many shapes and varieties.⁶ Of these many forms in art perhaps the most frequently used of all the crosses is the Roman or Latin cross, the tall slender cross with arms and head approximately equal in length, but with its body or total dimensions formed more-or-less in the idea) ratio of two to three. Next in frequency might occur the Greek equal-armed cross, next the Russian seven-pointed cross then the **Tau** cross, and finally several other well-defined forms or shapes. All of these forms have occurred throughout history and their familiarity to the pioneer blacksmith as well as the art historian is quite unmistakable.

The first of the five categories of fabricated metal crosses is the **single-bar** cross, a simple cross, most frequently in the form of a Roman cross and composed of but two intersecting beams or bars of metal A horizontal member is placed at right angles across a vertical member and the two are fastened together The entire single-bar cross may also be cut from a singular piece of metal stock, as with the smallest of crosses; but for the larger crosses, almost never has this been done. After the attachment of the cross-member has been made, the arms, head and body of the cross may be elaborated with sets of ribbon-iron coils or curls extending from the center outward. As shown in figure five, an example of a single-bar

cross, the ends of the arms are terminated in a pleasing manner. The artist may either extend the coils in an open or closed fashion, or he may attach an ornamental finial to the ends. Repeatedly, centered inside open C-shaped scrolls are sharp spear-like points or additional scrolls or points. Most all of the single-bar variety crosses stand in the classic ratio of two to three; those that do not usually are of the Greek equal-arm design.



Figure five (A): A single-bar metal grave cross with heavy spear-pointed ends. Notice closely the two bars of iron fastened together and used as the single structural metal. The bars are twisted and hammered together toward their terminations; scroll-work decorates the beams.

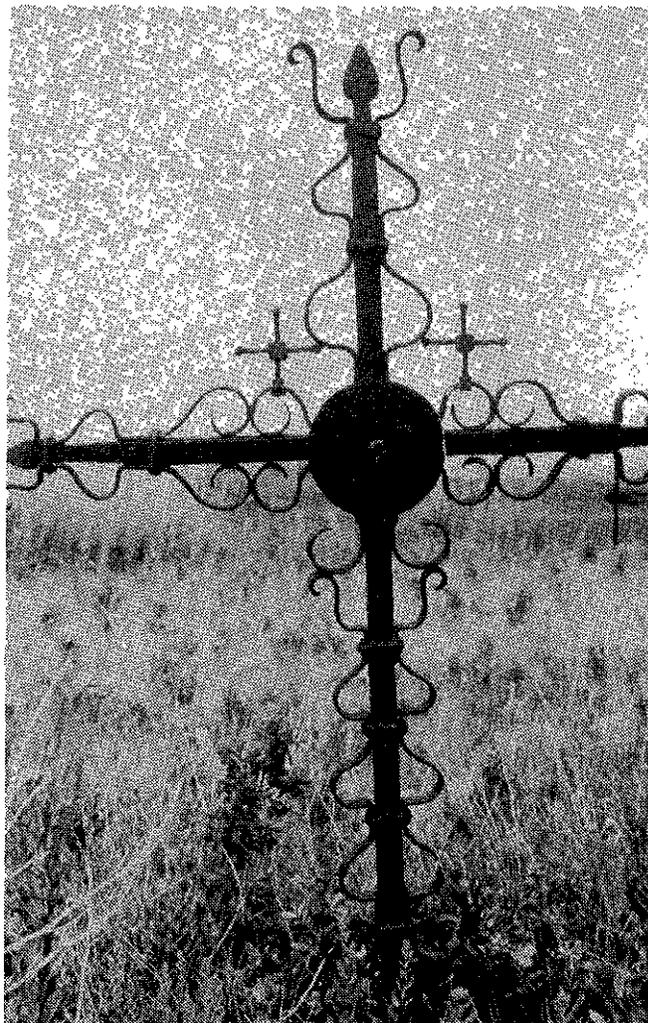


Figure five (B): A second example of a single-bar cross. Again the ends are terminated in heavy spear-points; two secondary crosses are placed atop the innermost scroll of the crossing member.

The second category is the double-bar cross, shown in figure six. Still exhibiting the predominant characteristics of single-bar crosses, the double-bar cross allows for greater design potential. By outlining the form of a single-bar cross with double or parallel bars, the artist creates both a positive and a negative image and prepares for his imagination the choice of additional areas for decoration. Spaces or bars may be embellished, but usually where the bars of the single-bar cross received the elaboration previously, here it is the space within the two bars which becomes most ornamented. The artists seemed to prefer a more nearly equal-armed cross, the Greek cross, for their double-bar cross designs. Often these double-bar crosses were simple affairs but even then they were constructed to express what the bereaved must have felt for those who had left them forever. The humblest cross was to stand as full of meaning as the most towering cruciform shape among them all.

The third category of fabricated crosses can be described as a diamond cross. These crosses may contain the basic form of either a single-bar cross or a double-bar cross, but the predominant feature will be

the diamond shape interconnecting the arms and enclosing the crossing. This particular category offers some of the greatest variety for the artist, for not only does he have the basic form of the cross with which to work, but there is also available to pique his imagination additional design opportunities in the extra "lines" and angles so provided. As figure seven demonstrates, diamond crosses are quite complex affairs and must have taken the artists several days and considerable mental effort to complete.

Figure six: A lovely double-bar grave cross tilting slightly in the ruins of time, one of the outstanding examples of the Hague artist's work. Notice the uneven twists of the ribbon iron between the two parallel structural bars, the five-pointed spears in the intersecting angles, the decorative elongated scrolls.

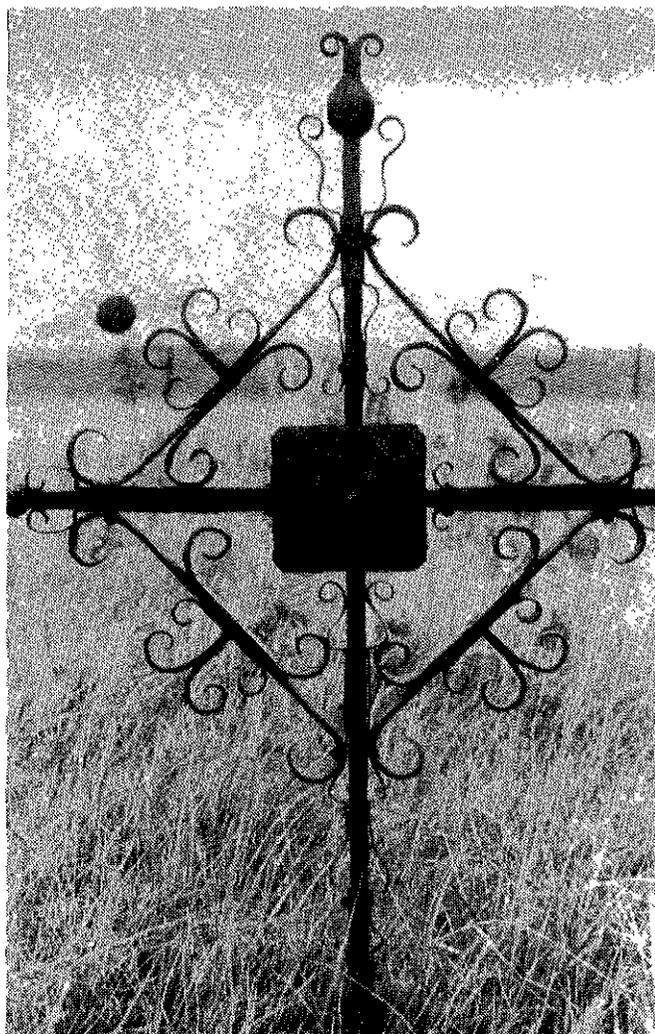
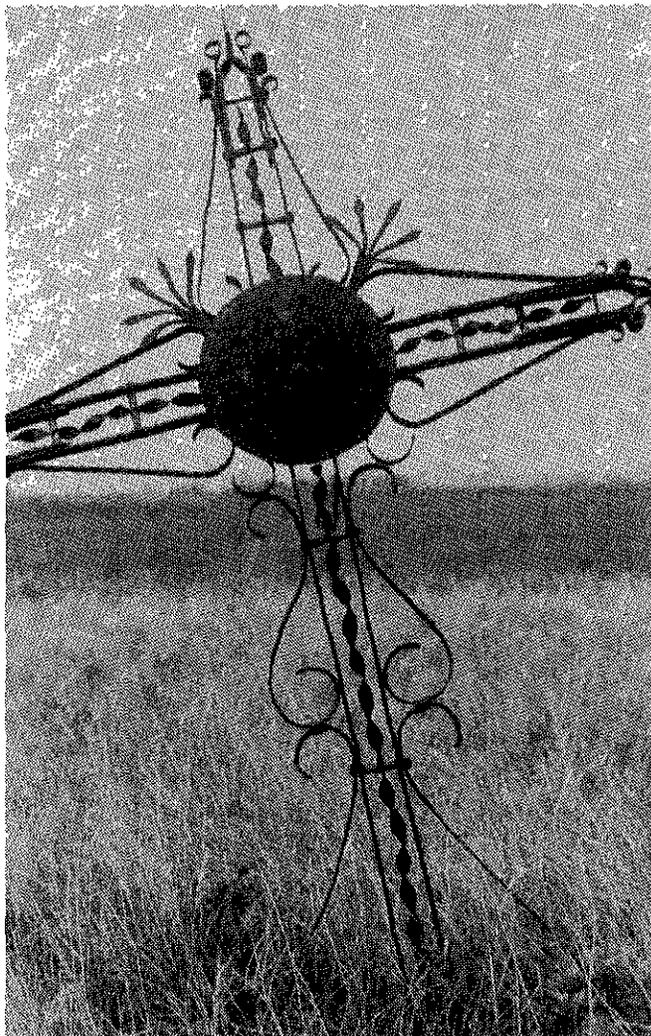


Figure seven: An example of a diamond grave cross. Though constructed of a single vertical and another horizontal member, the diamond shape predominates. Two differing sizes of C-scrolls are fastened back-to-back upon the four sides of the diamond, a split and coiled metal bar protrudes from the smaller, echoing the curves yet a third time.

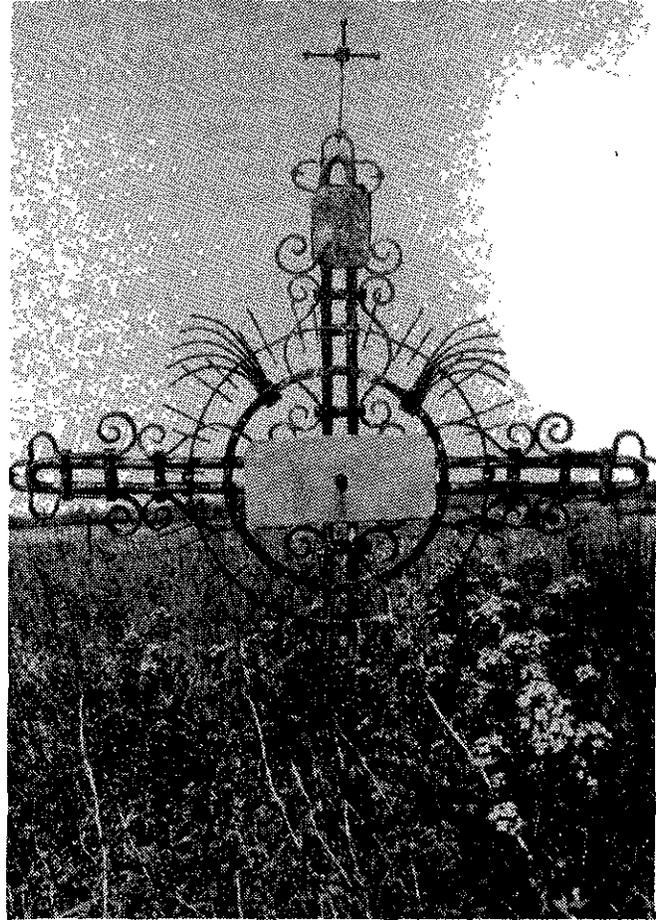
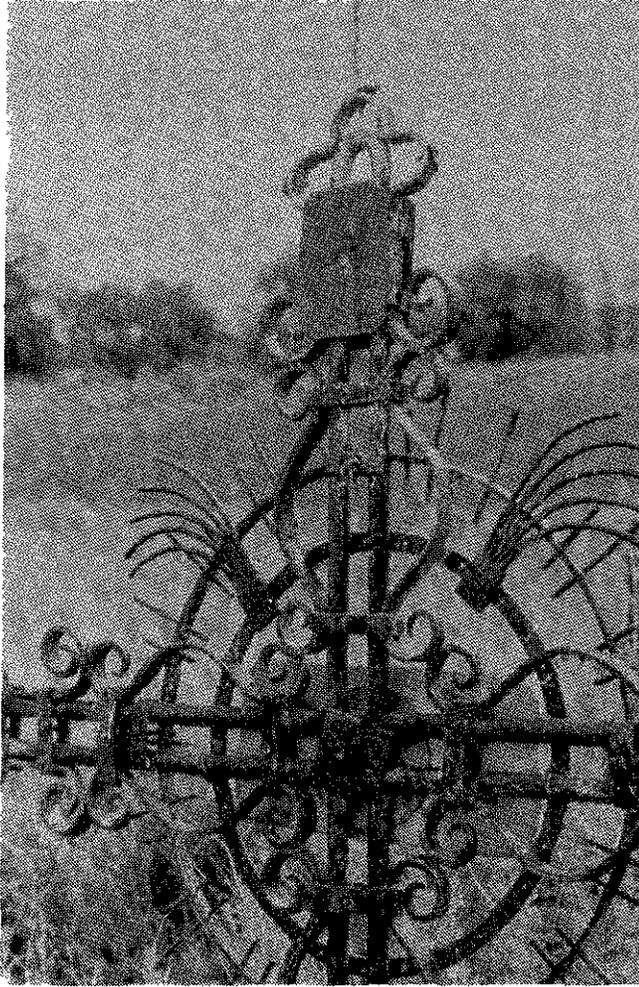
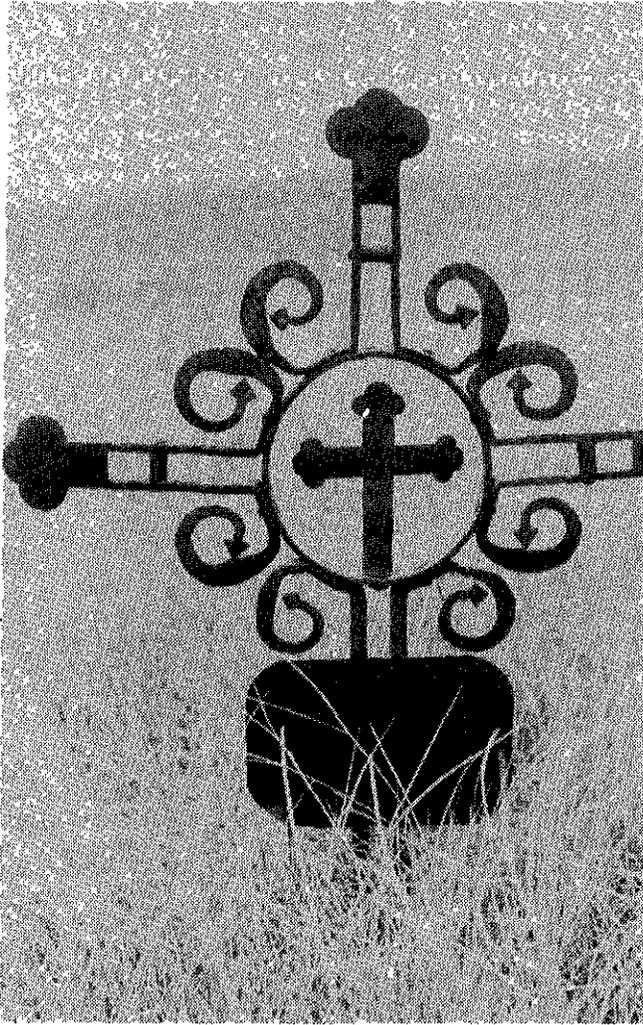


Figure eight (B): Frontal view of cross shown in Figure eight (A).

Figure eight (A): A rear view of a grave cross with circle "attached." While the basic structure is of a double-bar cross, it is the circle (or double circle) which predominates in this design. Notice the various lengths of the single spikes spaced around the outside circle, the bunches attached to the inner. The spikes are made of machined bolt stock.

The fourth category, the most complex, and the category in which the old cemetery of St. Mary's of Hague excels, is the cross with circle. Where the diamond cross "connected" the arms of the cross, here in the circle variety, the circle appears more-or-less as an *addition to* the basic shape or form of the cross, as in figure eight. The cross with circle is more difficult for the artist to construct and thus many, though certainly by no means all of the circles, have been cut out of galvanized metal and attached onto the cross form, instead of having been forged out of wrought iron. There is, perhaps, a sub-category of crosses in which the artist constructs a circle in the *center* of the crossbeams as the major design element, and attaches the arms of the cross onto this centralized circle as in figure nine. There are many delightful examples of both varieties but the "attached" circle variety best depicts the symbol of the noonday sun. Frequently this variety of cross is embellished with spoke-like rays fashioned out of machined bolts which form the rim of the circle. Appearing singly at various heights or in curved bunches the rods representing sun's rays or sheaves of grain add visual excitement as well as symbolic energy. A second cross with circle will have a similar design depicted out of cut galvanized stock in which the rays are diamond shapes emanating from the central circle or disc.⁷ Finally, attached to the entire construction will be symbolic candle-holders, metal flowers either cut from galvanized metal or hammered from iron, secondary crosses, or one of my favorites, a simple door-knob.

Finally, the fifth "catch-all" category of grave crosses includes all other styles which cannot be categorized above, including "paddle crosses" as shown in figure ten, multiple-bar crosses, and others.



*Figure nine: A grave cross with circle, center. This design is of a circle onto which the arms are attached, not *thereverse*. Notice the forged and curled heavy spear-points. The terminations design of the major cross is mirrored in the shape of the interior cross.*

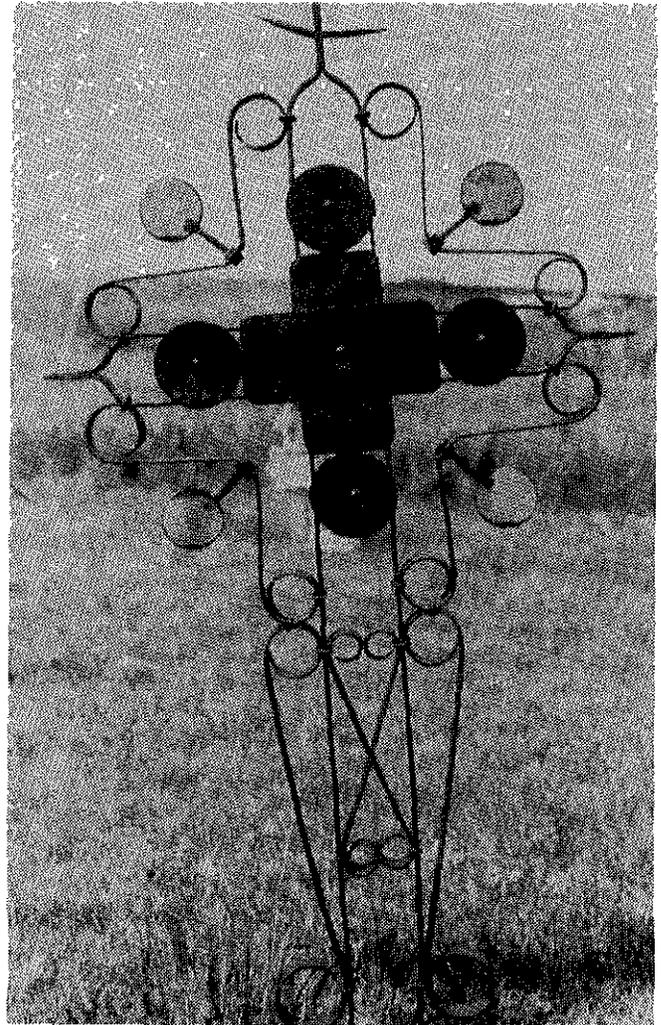


Figure ten: An example found within the fifth category, a metal grave cross of parallel bars with lollipop-like circles of metal attached to the angles formed by the intersection of the cross-members. A central cross somewhat repetitive of the design motif of the larger cross is centrally attached.

The German-Russian Catholic cemeteries of **Emmons** County are simple, natural places, architecturally and economically sparse. Each cemetery seems to have its own character, its own individuality; some are expansive, quiet and peaceful; others are crowded and "busy," yet somehow serene; still others somber and tranquil. As with the North Dakota prairies, few trees or bushes grow within. Only recently, because of the sameness of commercial grave markers, have the cemeteries taken on a uniformity that contrasts with the old variety. As yet one finds no large mausoleums here, no **Grafted**, bronzed doors, no ornate marble columns — only simple markers of a common, frugal people.

The placement of the cemeteries in relation to their position from the church varies considerably, as do the burial positions of the deceased. The old Hague cemetery, for example, was located on flat ground, just north of the first church. There the deceased appear to be placed with their feet facing east, toward the rising sun or the holy city of Jerusalem. The ground is on a somewhat lower level than the surrounding hills. On the other hand, at the new Hague cemetery the first burials were positioned to face eastward;

later burials were positioned to face north, toward the new church. The cemetery, therefore, lies south of the church, resting on a slightly higher, gently rising hillside. Other Catholic German-Russian cemeteries in the county facing east are St. **Aloysius's** Cemetery lying south of the church; Saints Peter and Paul's Cemetery of **Strasburg** lying northwest of the church; **Krassna's** Holy Trinity Cemetery lying west of the church; St. Michael's Cemetery lying northwest of the church on a gently rising hill; and St. Bernard's

Cemetery, situated east of the original church, atop of sloping hill some distance away. Finally, in contrast, **Rosenthal's** Sacred Heart Cemetery lies east of the church; there the deceased face west.

The apportionment of the land allotted to the cemeteries varies too. Mostly one finds rectangular shapes, or less commonly, square plots; none were ever randomly shaped. Furthermore, each has a special area set aside for the burial of children, those little ones who had died and who had not yet attained the age of reason and who thus were held in special regard by the church. Their markers, often of cast iron, were smaller, as might be appropriate for little children or "little angels."

Within **Emmons** County almost all of the old cemeteries are well cared for, -whether or not the church to which they belong still stands, and in spite of the difficulty of working around the sharp metal of the crosses. Grass is usually freshly mowed, weeds are pulled and markers are tidied-up. Often the remaining metal crosses are freshly painted; most common is a silvery aluminum color, white, or more rarely, black. No other color has been observed. Previously flowers of many colors and varieties had been planted and decorations of all types were fashionable. Today, however, cemeteries are exhibiting more and more of the plastic, non-decaying flower. Their inclusion in a cemetery established as early as 1885 appears somewhat incongruous.

Few records exist for the earliest deaths in Emmons County. Since the immigrants were for the most part young, strong, and hardy, deaths were not so common as if the populace were comprised of a more normal distribution of ages. To be sure, deaths occurred, but apparently few records, other than private notations were kept for posterity. One can imagine little need for record-keeping; just a note in the family Bible was sufficient. Yet pioneer life was hard and when death arrived, due either to accident or illness, funerals were conducted quickly and the process of living altered but slightly.

There were at least 300 such funerals conducted at the old Saints Peter and Paul's Cemetery of Tiraspol, located just north of present-day **Strasburg**. Following the parish's relocation to the new village of **Strasburg** after 1907, arrangements were made to transfer some of the deceased to the new cemetery too.⁸ This was not the case however when St. Mary's of **Elzas** moved from west of town into what is now Hague proper; there, the old cemetery was used for a number of years until the parish, began a new burial center south of the new church grounds. Today, in contrast to many other cemeteries, the old cemetery stands ravished by time, rather derelict in appearance; yet amidst a jumble of weeds and thistle, broken markers and weathered iron, and resting peacefully inside a rusting woven wire fence, stands one of the greatest collections of fabricated metal grave crosses in all of North Dakota.

This old pioneer cemetery, with almost no record remaining of the deceased buried within, contains grave markers of several types: cast iron crosses, cast concrete markers, wooden crosses, fabricated metal crosses, an enclosed burial plot. Unlike the newer cemeteries, old St. Mary's is composed almost exclusively of fabricated, and though much fewer in number, of cast iron crosses. There are but two, possibly three, marble monuments among them. The great majority of this cemetery's metal grave crosses were probably Grafted by a single blacksmith assisted by his wife, who is said to have "come over with the trade of crosses," — a certain **Defort Schneider** of Hague.⁹

The fabricator of the metal crosses of the old Hague cemetery was probably not a learned artist; though from all appearances he was a most excellent blacksmith and proved to be a very great artist indeed. Using mainly the cruciform shape of the Roman cross, he constructed designs of beautifully intricate and delicately executed metal work. None of his work is what one might call sophisticated, yet every possible element of design or character of ornamentation is dared. Utilizing to the fullest the inherent properties of his material in the best tradition of the old-world craftsmen, this artist **crafted** the circle, the diamond, spear-points, tendrils and coiled scrolls, double-bar and single-bar crosses; he twisted ribbon-iron, bar metal, and square rods; he fashioned spikes, and perhaps a favorite, single stems of metal rods to simulate the wind-blown grain or the rays of the noontday sun. He used many symbols, most often the heart but also the circle and the square; he placed metal flowers such as roses, tulips, or lilies upon his crosses thus adding texture and color; he placed a cross upon a cross; he added stars. Some of his grave crosses are tall and slender, others low and square. As a further elaboration, a few crosses are parental in design, with miniature crosses used repetitively on each extremity; others are much more simple.

The colors available to this pioneer artist were natural colors, mostly tones matching the earth into which the crosses were anchored. There was the patina of the dark iron, now a rich brown sienna, the silvery white flake of the galvanized metal, the whites, blues, and grays of the ever-changing Dakota sky, the yellows and greens of the prairie. The artist used both positive and negative space artistically. It was the negative space which admitted the colors, the area within the parallel bars which became a major unifying device for the grave crosses and the colorful Dakota sky and prairie. And though many of the crosses

have been painted and repainted many times, it still remains the sky and prairie which contrasts and blends, the true palette of the artist of these grave crosses.

The iron the artist used was malleable and repairable; it was the fashionable material of his time period and was, in fact, the major commodity of his trade. It was plastic enough for rendering the shape of a little, gentle daisy, yet strong enough to withstand the Dakota elements of wind, rain, snow, and time. And stand the crosses do; though some have fallen and others are bent, all were created from iron and galvanized metal, all are works of gentle beauty; lovely, elegant, slender, precise. That they remain standing is testimony to a heritage all of us may preserve and study today!

NOTES

1. For an interesting discussion of iron crosses constructed by Germans from Russia in Kansas wherein the author defends his use of the term "steel crosses," see Samuel J. Sackett, "Steel Crosses in Volga German Catholic Cemeteries in Ellis, Rush, and Russell Counties, Kansas," *Work Paper*, No. 21 (Fall, 1976), 20-24.
2. Wrought iron is welded through the process of heating the pieces to a white heat and then hammering them on an anvil. Many details such as cleanliness of metal, proper heat, and correct joint preparation must be adhered to closely. Good wrought-iron welding techniques are difficult to attain. See, among others, Thomas F. Googerty, *Hand Forging: And Wrought-Iron Ornamental Work*, (Chicago: Popular Mechanics Company, Publishers, 1911).
3. Other pioneers also made makeshift grave markers; however most contemporaneous cemeteries, today, contain conventional marble monuments, or, more rarely, monuments of cast metal plates so shaped as to resemble marble monuments.
4. Among these are found the small commercial markers used by the funeral parlors, plastic flowers and wreaths of all description, as well as one example of a decorated cross made by the intertwining of plastic six-pack beverage holders.
5. Other symbols or devices associated with Christ's passion and used throughout the history of Christian art are: a hammer, nails, lance, a sponge, and a ladder with which Christ's body was removed from the cross. Too, these devices have all been used by the German-Russian artist; see figure four for the incorporation of some of these devices on the central cross of St. Mary's old cemetery of Hague, North Dakota.
6. See any thorough art history text such as, Horst de la Croix and Richard Tansey, *Gardner's Art Through the Ages*, 6th ed. (New York; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1975); or H. W. Janson, *History of Art*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969).
7. There is the suggestion that this circle design may also symbolize Christ's crown of thorns, or even his halo, but considering the regular grouping of the metal rods secured in bunches as in other designs, the possibility is remote.
8. Many of the more than 300 members remain buried at Tirsbol, as the place is called today; but most of the grave markers have been moved into the new cemetery. A small plaque at Tirsbol dates the cemetery from 1889 to 1912. However, if one is to accept a 1939 W.P.A. field report stating that a "Mr. Sebastian Bauman was the first person buried in the Saint Peter and Saint Paul Cemetery at Strasburg," and listing his death in November of 1915, one must question either the date of death, the 1912 date stated above, or the possibility of there having been no deaths for a period of three years.
9. Together with the task of identifying the interred, there remains the task of complete verification of this artist's work, for in a newspaper article of 1914, the *Emmons County Record* lists the blacksmiths of Hague as Paul Kelley, Defort Schneider, and Michael Schmidt. A later article lists Schmidt's death in May of 1921 at 46 years of age.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Googerty, Thomas F. *Hand-Forging: And Wrought-iron Ornamental Work*. Chicago: Popular Mechanics Company, Publishers, 1911.
- Kezys, Algimantas, editor. *A Lithuanian Cemetery*. Chicago: Lithuanian Photo Library and Loyola University Press, 1976.
- Kuhn, Fritz. *Decorative Work in Wrought Iron and Other Metals*, Trans. by Gillian Brett. London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1967.
- Mercer, Henry C. *The Bible in Iron: Pictured Stoves and Stove Plates of the Pennsylvania Germans*, 3rd. ed, Doylestown, Pa.: The Bucks County Historical Society, 1961.
- Sackett, Samuel J. "Steel Crosses in Volga German Catholic Cemeteries in Ellis, Rush, and Russell Counties, Kansas." *Work Paper*, 21 (Fall, 1976), 20-24.
- Thomas, Richard. *Metalsmithing for the Artist-Craftsman*. Philadelphia: Chilton Company Publishers, 1960.
- University of St. Thomas Art Department. *Made of Iron*. Houston: University of St. Thomas Art Department, 1966.

EARLY CHRONICLERS AMONG THE VOLGA GERMANS

Translated by Adam Giesinger

With this issue of the Journal, Professor Giesinger continues his translations of memoirs of Volga settlers who took part in the great emigration from Germany 1764-1767. The recollections were compiled in the 1820's and were published a century later in the Volga German periodical Friedensbote.

V. The Reminiscences of Philipp Wilhelm Assmus.¹

A proclamation was publicized in various parts of Germany announcing that all who wished to emigrate to Russia could report to certain places. Of the places mentioned, one was known to me, Sauerlach in the Isenburg region, where we were accepted and immediately began to receive the support allowance. After we had been there for a few days, until the transport had reached its capacity, wagon drivers were hired and we were taken through various regions to Lubeck, where the assembly point was. In the next six weeks all who were poor and naked were clothed, we were divided up among appointed leaders, and by means of small boats were taken out to large ships on the Baltic Sea. After nine days we disembarked at Kronstadt, where we had to camp out in the open for two days and two nights. Then there came bearded Russians with their Russian wagons, loaded us up and drove us to Oranienbaum, There we had to stay for six weeks, each of us being instructed to build himself a hut, for which we were given lumber and twigs. We were then put on ships and taken up the Neva river to the lake at Schlüsselburg, and then again on the Neva.² When ice formed on the river we left the ships and were taken to neighboring villages. As all waters were now frozen and there was much snow, we were taken in sleighs to Belo-Osero, where we remained for three weeks. Then we were brought to winter quarters at the Kirilowa monastery on the White Sea, where we were housed till spring. Here school was conducted for the children and a house was set aside for religious services, where a pastor preached each Sunday and confirmed children at Easter. But the best news of all was that strict orders had been given to the local Russians not to raise the price of provisions. So we spent the winter in the greatest contentment and quietly used up our support allowance, which provided for us very adequately.

When spring came and the ice melted, we were taken by wagon to a river which flows into the Volga and were carried on flat barges down the Volga to Katharinenstadt, where we found a bare uncultivated steppe without houses- Here our allowance was reduced to one-half and in its place we were given flour, which was to last us until the first harvest, when our provisioning would be discontinued completely. We arrived on 3 October and were taken to a steppe where there were neither houses nor lumber. People were given horses and cattle but had neither hay nor straw. They had to dig themselves caves in the earth at the Kalmuck Hill on the Little Karaman. They were shown hay in the crown meadows near the colony Fischer, and had to get their hay from there and also their wood. They were given a money advance of forty-five rubles.

I myself remained in Katharinenstadt. It was quite a life there! One man was a tailor, another a wig-maker, and so on, none of whom had ever handled a horse and even less a plow or a wagon. Given an old Kalmuck horse by the crown and materials to build a wagon and plow, most of them had not the slightest idea what to do with them. As there was no lumber, nor house nor stable on the village sites, the colonists had to get lumber from Katharinenstadt to build their houses. Since this was done with untrained horses, you can imagine what troubles the people had, especially since at the same time they also had to harvest their grain and bring it home.

After some order had been established, there came a very dry year, when all the grain burned up in the fields, so that there was no bread. That was the third year of their farming. At that time the fortifications at Katharinenstadt were being built and people were given flour in payment for their work- But it was too little for their needs and was yellow and of poor quality for eating. Because the conditions were so bad, several Dutch colonists, who still had some means, gathered up their belongings and decided to travel back to Holland. It was Caspar Gartner and a man named Streng, with their wives and children, eighteen persons in all. They traveled over to Beresnik, for they had made a deal with the Beresnik Russians to guide them to the Polish border. The Russians, however, did not do this but took them to an island opposite Beresnik and killed them all. That island is called Murder Island to this day. Towards spring a few Germans went over there to get fence posts, when four men came from Beresnik with horses and made a prisoner of old man Sander and Andreas Fischer. I was there too, but they let me drive home with the horses and sleigh. I went immediately to the Russian major, who had police powers, and reported to him what had happened.

He sent some of his men over there and our people were immediately allowed to come home. Thereafter the Russians no longer came to the island.

In the following years the Kirghiz came and attacked the colonies, took many people prisoner in the **Karaman** district and sold them into slavery in Persia. They even took Father **Johannes**³ right out of his church, but he was redeemed after three years. I had the opportunity to speak to him after his return from captivity. Later the Kirghiz came a second time and again took many captives; the exact number I can not remember, but I know that it was more than a hundred. All the Germans now fled from their villages and brought their livestock and everything that they could carry with them to **Katharinenstadt**. All field work remained at a standstill. If my memory serves me right, the people stayed here for three or four weeks. At such times they always came to Katharinenstadt as a refuge. The Kirghiz came a third time and took everything they could lay hands on. According to my count, they took away about 150 persons this time.

Pastor **Wernborner**⁴ gathered volunteers from among the colonists to pursue the Kirghiz and free their captives. Forty-six men assembled, ready for battle, among them a man named Erfurt from **Orlowskoi**, who became a co-leader with the pastor. When the group got under way, the weather became misty and a light rain began. Some of them had not properly protected their ammunition and so their powder got wet and their guns would not go off. They also had very little knowledge about the handling of guns. They came upon the Kirghiz much sooner than they had expected. As soon as they reached the top of Kalmuck Hill they were surrounded by the Kirghiz and all were taken prisoner. Pastor Wernborner had his tongue cut out and then he was killed, and Erfurt was stabbed with pikes until he was dead. The others were tied up and taken to the Mohammedan camp.

Thereupon Major Gogol with twenty police hussars from **Tsaritsin** and 500 Russians on horses, and a cannon, pursued the Kirghiz. When they reached Kalmuck Hill, not far from the Little Karaman, where the barbarians were encamped, Major Gogol expected resistance. He directed a cannon shot toward them, which caused them to take off on their horses so quickly that only three of them were taken prisoner. One of these was burned at the stake, the other two were taken to Orenburg as hostages. Our people, lying bound on the ground, were now freed.

After these events **Pugachev** came from **Jaik** in the **Urals** and attacked Orenburg, where he was not successful. Then he went to Kazan and down the other side of the Volga as far as Tsaritsin. He had gathered up a rabble of 1500 followers, among whom were also a few of the bad elements of our Germans. But General **Michelson** defeated him at Tsaritsin and the Germans were returned to their colonies and suitably punished. Pugachev himself was captured at Kazan, was brought to Moscow in an iron cage and there drawn and quartered.

The German colonists have now increased in numbers and become good farmers. This is all that I can say about the immigration of Germans to Russia and their situation in the early days. I have told this story for their descendants so that they will not forget where they came from and how their forefathers fared in the old days, in their effort to provide a better life for their children. This should be a spur to the present generation to show more honor and gratitude to their elders, to whom they owe thanks to this day for providing them with bread. A great many of them would have perished in want and misery if they had remained in Germany! I hope I have provided some pleasure to the present generation by going to the trouble of writing this account for them. I am myself one of the immigrants, having made the journey from Germany in person, and now as a man of seventy-four have given a truthful account of those events.⁵

Written in the year 1829 on 30 April.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

1. Published by Pastor Johannes **Kufeld** in *Friedensbote*, Vol. XVI (1900), No. 12, pp. 742-746. For earlier chronicles of this series, see *Work Paper* No. 25, pp. 10-12, and *Journal*, Vol. I, No. 1, pp. 25-30.
2. The lake reached at **Schlusselfurg** is Lake Ladoga. The continuation of the Neva river that he mentions is the Ladoga Canal, followed by the Volkhov river. See the *map in Journal*, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 28.
3. Father Johannes **de Ducia** was parish priest at **Mariental** on the Karaman when the Kirghiz came. After his return from captivity, he served at **Kamenka** on the *Berg&eute*.
4. Pastor **Ludwig** Wernborner was the first Lutheran pastor at Katharinenstadt.
5. It should be noted that **Assmus** was only a twelve-year-old boy at the time of the migration from Germany. While his memory of events is clear, he is hazy about the chronological order, particularly with respect to the Kirghiz attacks and the Pugachev uprising.

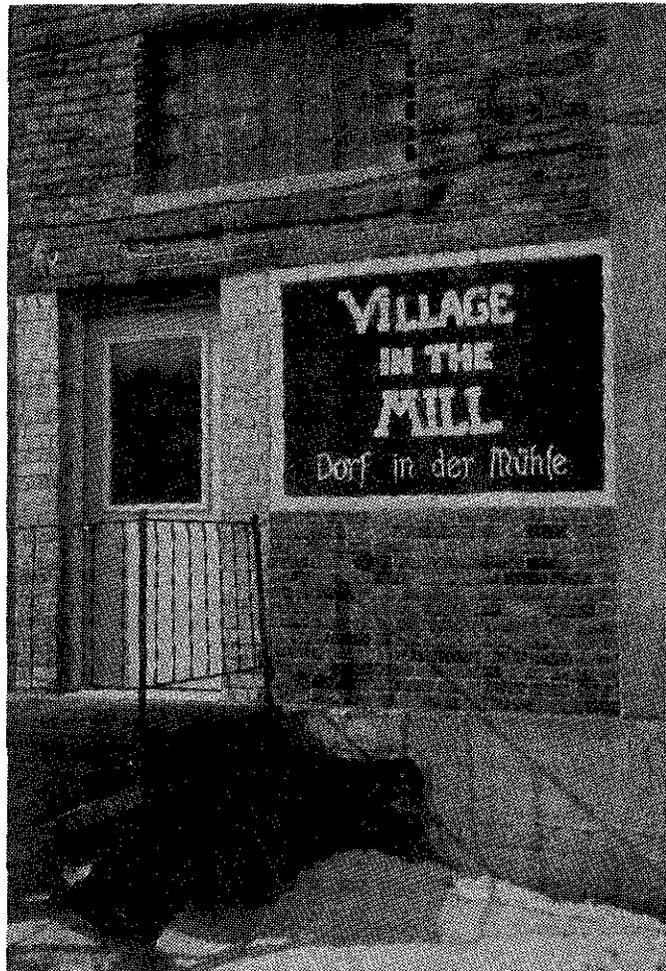
**FOLKLORE FORUM:
PROVERBS AND PROVERBIAL EXPRESSIONS AMONG THE
GERMANS FROM RUSSIA**

Timothy J. Kloberdanz

**The Brotbueichse Cafe in Ashley, North Dakota:
Where Old Country Proverbs Thrive**

South-central North Dakota originally was settled by hundreds of hardy Russian German families who emigrated there from the Black Sea region of Russia in the late nineteenth century. Today, in prairie towns like Ashley, Wishek, Napoleon, Strasburg, Hague, and Kulm, much of the traditional Russian German subculture persists. The crumbling walls of clay brick homes built by early Black Sea German homesteaders are still visible, as well as more contemporary scenes. The sweet-sour aroma of fresh *Dinne Kuchen* and thick rings of smoked sausage greet the visiting shopper who wanders inside the local supermarket. In cafes, clothing stores, gas stations, and taverns, the sound of dialect German still spices the air with a curious flavor all its own. Everywhere there is a haunting presence of the past and yet a healthy enthusiasm for the present. South-central North Dakota (like Ellis County in western Kansas) offers the serious researcher a gold mine of untapped information and ethnic folklore.

East entrance to "Village in the Mill" Ashley, North Dakota.



In Ashley, North Dakota, located 120 miles southeast of Bismarck (the state capital), the local old country subculture is celebrated daily inside a huge brick building called *Dorf in der Muhle* ("Village in the Mill") that stands on main street. Several shops, as well as the main office of the *Ashley Tribune*, are housed in the building. On an upstairs floor, a small restaurant known as the *Brotbuechse* ("Bread Box") beckons tourists as well as local patrons. The cafe is tastefully decorated in rustic fashion, complete with oak tables and chairs, hanging plants, and bearded wheat arrangements. The names of some twenty German villages in South Russia appear on the overhanging support beams and include those of such colonies as

Katharimental, Neudorf, Grossliebental, and Selz. A hand-painted proverb or jingle from the Black Sea region also appears in bright yellow on each of the wooden tables. The proverbs are in dialect German and seldom fail to arouse the curiosity of customers. The sayings range from the well-known proverb *Der Apfel fällt nit weit vum Stamm* ("The apple does not fall far from the tree"), to humorous verses such as the following:

D'Schissle klinge, d'Pfanne krache	The dishes are clinking, the pans are rattling,
Will d'r Harr ka Kiechle backe?	Won't the cook bake any pastries?
Kiechle 'raus, Kiechle 'raus	Bring out the pastries, bring out the pastries,
Oder ich schlag a Loch	Or else I'll knock a hole ins Haus!
in the house!	

Dorf Strasse ("Village Street") in "Dorf in der Mühle" Complex.



"Bread Box" Cafe.

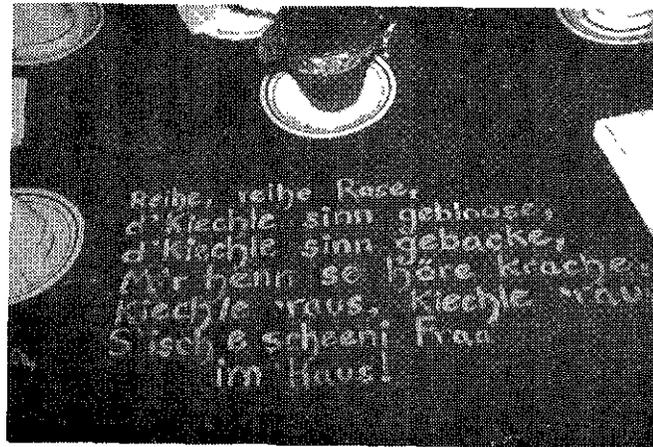
The recently-established Brotbuechse Cafe in Ashley, North Dakota, is the creation of Warren and B. J. (Barbara Joan) Overlie. The husband-wife team manages not only the "Dorf in der Mühle" complex but also the local newspaper and *Prairies Magazine* (a regional quarterly). Although Warren and B. J. are transplanted Norwegian-Americans from Iowa, their interest in local Black Sea German folklore is obvious. Because of their dedicated efforts, old country proverbs and many other facets of the Russian German heritage will continue to thrive and be enjoyed by North Dakotans of all backgrounds.



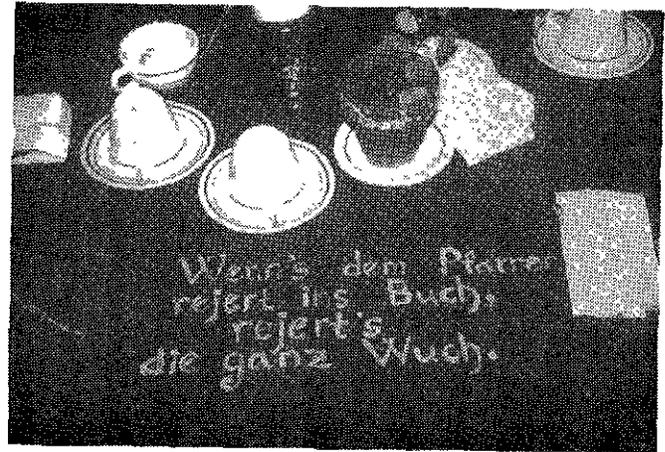
Interior of Cafe *Brotbuchse* showing names of German villages in South Russia.



Each of the wooden tables displays a proverb or /ingle popular in German villages near the *Black Sea*.



"Ring around the rosy; the pastries are cooled; the pastries are baked. We heard them crackle. Pastries out! Pastries out! There's a nice lady in the house."



"If it rains on the minister's book [i.e. on Sunday], It will rain the entire week."

Volga German Proverbs and Proverbial Expressions from the Colony of Dreispitz

Mary Koch

This is the second and final collection of dialect German proverbs collected and translated by Miss Mary Koch of McMinnville, Oregon. The first installment, based on a folklore presentation she gave at the Ninth International Convention, appeared in the Fall 1978 issue of the AHSGR Journal, pp. 28-32. All of the following proverbs and proverbial expressions are from the Protestant Bergseite Volga German colony of Dreispitz (called Werchnaja Dobrinka in Russian) and were obtained by Miss Koch over a twenty year period from her mother.

Readers who wish to submit additional proverbs and proverbial expressions are encouraged to follow Miss Koch's format, in which she gives not only the dialect version of each proverb and an English translation, but also a detailed explanation when the proverb's meaning seems ambiguous.

Proverbs

Wie mer in Wald nei greischt, so kommt's zurik.

As you call into the forest, so the echo conies back.

(Admonishment when children say mean things back and forth to each other.)

Im Dunkle is feder Stump a Wolf.

In the dark every stump is a wolf.

(We are afraid of the unknown and imagine it worse than it is.)

Es ist ka Schand zu falle,
awer leie zu bleibe.

It is no disgrace to fall, but
it is to stay there.

So wie die alte Sunge,
So zwitzern ag die Junge.

As the mature birds sang, so the baby birds chirp.

(Children imitate their parents.)

1st kein Toepchen so schief,
denn es passt ein Deckelchen darauf.

No little saucepan is so crooked but that there is a
lid to fit it.

(When someone with physical or mental problems
marries the same kind.)

Versprechen ehrlich,
Halten schwerlich.

To promise honorably, To keep
with difficulty.

Wann mir so alt wird wie eine Kuh,
lernt man immer noch dazu.

If you get as old as a cow, you still learn more.

(You are never too old to learn.)

Wer im ungemachtem Bette schlaft,
schlaft mit den gestrigen Sorgen.

He who sleeps in an unmade bed, sleeps with
yesterday's sorrow.

Selbst geweben,
Selbst gemacht,
1st die beste Bauertracht.

Woven yourself,
Made by yourself,
Is the best costume for a farmer.

Die Laenge bringt die Last.

Time brings the burden.

(If a thing lasts too long, it becomes a burden.)

Hat ein Ding so lang gewaehrt,
Hat unendlich aufgehoert.

A thing lasted so long,
And at last it ended.

(If you kept trying over and over again and finally
succeeded or finished it, then you said this jingle.)

Was ein Haekchen werden will, kruemmt sich bei zeit.

If it wants, to become a hook, it will have to be
bent in time.

(If a child is to grow up to amount to something,
it has to be corrected early.)

Zu viel verweist den Sack.

Too much tears the sack.

(If you overdo it, there will be evil consequences.)

Mir griecht nix vor nix als me der Tod, und den rnuesse mir mit dem Leve bezahle.

Nothing is free except death, and we have to pay for it with our life.

Die Zeit is net an a Poste gebunne.

Time is not tied to a post.

(Time marches on.)

Nix gewage, nix ge\vonne.

Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

Was a Dernche gewa will, spitzt sich in der Zeit.

If it is going to be a pine tree, it will begin to get a point when it is young.

(In other words, if someone is going to amount to something, he needs to begin to "shape up" when he is young.)

Mir kann die Katz schmeise wie mer will, bleibt sie immer uf der Fies.

No matter how you throw a cat, she lands on her feet.

Ende gut, alles gut.

End good, all good.

(All 's well that ends well.)

Das brate Deil kommt hinne drei.

The heavy end comes last.

(The worst comes afterwards.)

Es schreiet nach der alte Regierung.

It is crying for the old government.

(When the government changed in the colonies in Russia, they were wishing it was like it used to be.)

Eignes Lob stinkt.

Self praise stinks.

Selbst gelobt ist immer recht. If you praise yourself, it is always right.

Wann's Herschebrei regert, hasst du kein Leffet If it is raining millet mush, you don't have a spoon. (You are never prepared.)

Mach dir ka Gedanke iwer ungelegte Eier.

Don't worry about unlaidd eggs.

(Don't worry about things that have not hap-pened—or like saying not to cross the bridge, be fore you come to it.)

Viel Gegrisch und wenig Woll,

A lot of noise and very little wool.

Des is gehopft wie gesprunge.

It's all the same, whether you run or hop.

Proverbial Comparisons

Bild sich mehr ei,

Als dem Noll sei Seiche.

He thinks more of himself than Noll's little pig.

(He was proud of something.)

Die gukt so wann sie die Hexe geritte het.

She looks like she had ridden the witches.

(If your hair was all mussed up.)

Du behandelst's ja so wie die Sau mit dem Bet-telsack.

You handle it like a pig does the beggar's bag.

(If a pig got hold of a beggar's bag, containing the goodies he had begged, it would not be very gentle. It would shake it around hard to get at the con-tents. So if an older child handled a smaller child or a pet rough, this expression was used.)

Basst wie die Faust uf's Ag.

It fits like a fist in the eye.

Des is so gut wie a Brichel uf den Kopp.

It is as good as a stick hit over your head.

(It would not be very good.)

Funkel Nagel neu.

(*Funkein* means to glisten. *Nagel* is a nail. *Neu* is new. Therefore: "Glistening new as a shiny nail.")

Zusammen gehagen wie Kraut und Erbsen.

Thrown together like cabbage and peas.

(You wouldn't put cabbage and peas together—so it would be thrown together carelessly.)

Du gehst von Ort zu Ort wie ein Dorfbesen.

You go from place to place like a village broom.

(The village broom, used to sweep the street, started from one end of the village and was passed from house to house, each one sweeping his street, and then the broom was returned to where it started. Therefore anyone who did a lot of flitting around was called a "Dorfbesen.")

Du machst ein Gesicht, wiesieben Topchen Women.

You make a face like seven pots full of bed bugs.

(Pretty sad face.)

Du schleppst es rum wie die Katz die Junge. You drag it around like a cat her kittens.

Der schloft wie an Russ.

He is sleeping like a Russian.

(The Russians slept soundly.)

Grotte boes.

As angry as a frog.

Du kommst fo wie an Schneider. You are coming like a tailor.

(A tailor worked in his shirt sleeves. If you came without a jacket, you came like a tailor.)

Du verstehst so vieldafo, wie die Kuh von Pfingste.

You understand as much about that as a cow does about the Day of Pentecost.

So dumm wie Sei Bah un Nudel.

As dumb as pig's feet and noodles.

(Pig's feet and noodles would not be cooked together—it would be a way of saying the situation was utterly ridiculous.)

Dem geht's wie dem Vogel im Kornkaste.

He is getting along like a bird in the grain bin. (That would be getting along very well.)

Du sitzt wie ein Bleiklotz.

You sit like a chunk of lead.

(When someone will not move when asked to.)

Du sitzt do wie an Blumestock.

You sit like a flowerpot.

(You are just sitting there like a flower pot—looking pretty but doing nothing.)

Die la ft um die Ervet rom, wie die Katz am hase Brei.

She walks around the work like a cat around hot mush.

Die hat sie so wie der Hen sie am Dor naus getriebe hat.

She has them like the Lord drove them out of the door.

(She has every kind of something-like the Lord has every kind of animal.)

Ich hah mehr zu tue als die Pann vor der Fassnacht.

I have more to do than the frying pan the night before Lent. (They would be making lots of hot cakes.)

Traditional Metaphors and Miscellaneous Expressions

Wie gehts? Wie Bech von der Hose.

How is it going? Like tar from a pair of pants.

(It wouldn't be going very well.)

Wenn die in Brunne hopt, musst du ag nei hoppe.

If she Jumps in the well, do you have to jump in, too?

(Said when someone defends his deed by saying somebody else did it, too— not necessarily because it was right.)

Wann sie der Herr net besser kennt wie ich, is se verlohre.

If the Lord doesn't know her (him) better than I do, she is lost.

(Said of a person who was a complete stranger.)

Schickt mer dich weit,

Lache die Lent.

Schickt mer dich noh,

Bist du grell do.

If one sends you a long way,
People will laugh.

If you are sent near by,

You will return in a hurry.

Bsel, bueck dich.

Donkey, bend.

(Sometimes you have to be willing to stoop, to get something done.)

*Hasst du nicht mem Mann gesehen,
Hast du ihn nicht sehn reiten,
Hat ein blau Kardueschen auf,
Schnuptuch in der Seite.*

Have you seen my husband? Have you seen him riding? He has a little blue hat on, A kerchief on the side of it.

*Ach du Ueber Strohsack, Und
ka Bedduch nei.*

Oh, you dear strawsack,
And no sheet over it.

(A minor calamity. A straw mattress without a sheet over it would be prickly.)

Des is Sindeschuld.

It is the punishment for sin.

(If you did something you should not have, and it turned out wrong, it was punishment for your sins.)

Heit bin mir's Kerch urn Darf gefahre.

Today we rode the church around the village.

(A way of saying we went the long way around-or did it the hard way.)

*Hasst du ausgeschlafen?
Nein, ich hab aufgehert.*

Did you finish sleeping?
No, I quit,

Die kranke frogt mir.

You ask the sick people.

(If you offer food to someone, the reply is that you ask sick people. To the others you simply serve it.)

Mir misse heit uf zwa Backe kaue.

We have to be chewing with two cheeks today.

(We are in a hurry, so we must eat fast.)

*Wie fuhlst du? Wie der Paffam
erste Oster Dag.*

How do you feel? Like the priest on the first day of Easter.

(The Russians celebrated two Easter holidays. On the first Easter Day, the priest gave communion, and he drank a lot of wine. Also, the people brought their "Galitch"—Easter breads—to be blessed and gave some to the priest. So on the first Easter Day he would be feeling pretty great; on the second Easter day, not so good, as he would have a hangover.)

*Wie willst du das Kleid machen?
Strackweg, Hannes bei die Ochse.*

How are you going to make your dress? Straight-John with the oxen.

*Wanngehsf du?
Wann die Sonn vor Tag aufgeht.*

When are you leaving?
When the sun comes up before daylight.

Long nicht gesehen, und doch noch gekennt.

I haven't seen you for such a long time but still know you.

(Said to someone who had made a nuisance of himself and came back soon—like a child would.)

Des ist annerlei.

*Na, das is net annerlei. Wann's annerlei wer, deda mir
am Finster rei gehe. So gehe mir an der Dier nei.*

It's all the same. No, it is not all the same. If it were the same, we would go in the window. As it is, we go in the door.

*Die is so dunn, die kann die Gas zwish der Herner
kuesse.*

She is so thin, she could kiss a goat between the horns.

Do ist Hopp und Maltz verlore.

The hops and malt are lost.

(Things are really tragic—with hops and malt lost, you could not make beer. It was said sort of making fun of somebody who made a big tragedy of nothing.)

Die ist mit dem blohe Ag davo komme.

She got away with a black eye.

(She barely escaped tragedy—just got a black eye.)

New die gebackene Beere un geh ham.

Take your baked berries and go home.

(In other words, go fly a kite. Take your shriveled up berries and go home.)

Schmeckt lieber nog dem Ove als wie nog dem Teig.

It is better that it tastes like the oven than like the dough.

(It is better to overcook or **overbake** it than to have it too raw.)

Dere ihre Zung is net von Lupke.

Her tongue is not made of shoe leather.

(When you removed bark from certain trees, there was a part underneath that could be peeled off. This was used by the Russian peasants to make shoes, as a type of leather. The above expression would be used, if a small child could tell the difference between something that tasted good [like butter] and oil [or an imitation of some sort.] Since the child's tongue was not made of shoe leather, so to speak, it could taste the difference.)

Die Narre sin noch net all dod.

The fools aren't all dead yet.

(It was a **putdown** for a foolish act, your own or someone else's.)

In der Brut verdorve.

It was spoiled in the "brood," or wrong from the inception or its beginning.

Mehr Glueck wie Verstand.

More luck than sense.

(When you didn't really know how but were lucky enough to get it right.)

Die sticke all unner anner Deck.

They are all under one quilt.

(They were all a party to the crime.)

Der hat den Stabbesen griet.

He got the dust broom or the dust pan.

(A way of saying he got fired or demoted.)

Die hat's End verzottelt.

She lost the end of it.

(If you lost the end of the yarn, everything went wrong.)

Kratz's in den Schanstah.

Scratch it in the chimney.

(When someone remembered to do what they ought to [and they usually did not] then you were to scratch it in the chimney-to make a record of it, that once it was done right.)

Mit Speck fangt mer die Meis.

You catch the mice with bacon.

(When you try to win someone with smooth words or favors.)

Mer nwhnt du werst mit der Beizkapp geschosse.

You act like you have been shot with a fur hat.

(That would be pretty silly or crazy.)

Dem Tag die Augen ausbrennen.

To burn the day's eyes out.

(If you stay up very late, you burn out the day's eyes.)

Leib und Seel zusammenehen.

To sew body and soul together.

(If you sew something while you have it on, you sew body and soul together.)

Was is dir iwer den Navel gekrawelt?

What crawled over your navel?

(What got into **you-or** what's eating you?)

Net mehr wert also bei die Dadar verkaufen.

He is not worth or good for anything but to sell to the Tatars.

(Like saying you shoot a lame horse.)

Der hat a Laus im Beltz.

He has a louse in his overcoat.

(He is hiding something unpleasant.)

Du sitzt do und blost Truebsal.

You are sitting there and tooting gloom.

(In other words, you are pouting.)

Do bin ich so sicher, da beist die Maus ka Fade ab.

I am so sure of this, that no mouse will bite off a thread.

(Pretty sure.)

Diesitztwo sieaufihrHochzeitgesess'n hat.

She sits where she sat at her wedding (on her hindy).

Er hat ein Sparren los.

He has a spoke loose.

(Same as having a screw loose.)

Die sugt Brot im Hunde Stall.

She is looking for bread in a dog house.

(Looking in the wrong place—the dogs would have eaten the bread.)

Silber nixsche und a goldiches Wartnocheinweilche.

A silver nothing and a golden "wait a while."

(If we wanted to know what was for dinner, or what was going to happen, and my mother did not want to tell us yet, we got that for an answer.)

Die hat immer das Dode Hem ah.

She always has a death shirt on.

(She always thinks something is tragic or dangerous.)

Der will mit dem Kopp darch die Wand.

He wants to go through the wall with his head.

(A way of saying someone is stubborn, wanting to do the impossible—like going through the wall with his head.)

Der hat immer a Russ im Busa.

He always has a Russian in his bosom.

(He always had some misgiving or grievance hidden underneath.)

Der muss sich die Homer ablaufen.

He has to walk off his horns.

(Said of an overly self-confident person.)

Ich zieg mich net aus, bis ich ins Bett geh.

I won't take my clothes off, until I go to bed.

(I won't give away what I have, until I know I won't need it. If you took your clothes off before going to bed, someone might come.)

Des iss a Dodeblum. Wann 's ans Herz geht, bisst du bis Morge frueh dod.

That is a flower of death. If it goes to your heart, you will be dead by tomorrow morning.

(A way of making fun of a minor injury.)

Wann du in die Wolge gesterzt werst.

If only you had fallen into the Volga.

(If something fell, and you had a hard time getting it, you said you wished it had fallen into the Volga.)

Nemm Wasser ins Maul.

Hold water in your mouth.

(If you couldn't keep *from* talking back in a childish argument, our mother suggested we hold water in our mouth—so we could not talk.)

Do gehe Hunder on Saratov vorbei, und seh des net.

Hundreds will go by the city of Saratov and not see that.

(When you had something minor wrong with an article of clothing, you said this to make light of it.)

Since last spring, hundreds of other proverbs and proverbial expressions have been received and their large number necessitates a separate publication. Thus, a special monograph, devoted solely to the proverbs and proverbial expressions of the Germans from Russia, may be published in the future. Additional contributions can still be sent to the Folklore Forum editor: Timothy J. Kloberdanz, Department of Sociology-Anthropology, North Dakota State University, Fargo, North Dakota 58105. All contributions should be written in dialect German, and an English translation and a short explanation about its meaning also should be provided. Deadline for submission is July 1, 1979.

LIMESTONE LANDMARKS

Anyone traveling through Rush and Ellis counties in Kansas will be struck by the sight of miles and miles of post rock fences, golden sentinels hemming the prairie and often enclosing the weathered stone ruins of impressive houses and imposing barns. Like the magnificent native limestone churches that dominate the villages where Germans from Russia settled more than one hundred years ago, these more humble monuments stand as timeless testaments to the determination and ingenuity of a pioneer people. In *Prairie Monuments*, a photo album of limestone structures in this area, John Mohn gives "simple directions" for building a post rock house (assuming one has already completed the time-consuming and back-breaking task of quarrying the limestone):

"First, find three of the smaller rocks. 8" x 8" x 16" (which will weigh between 50 and 60 pounds) would be fine for a start. Place two of the rocks together to form a straight line.

Second, pick up the third rock, carry it about 10 feet, then place it carefully upon the two rocks, being certain that it rests exactly in between both of them.

Third, pick up the rock, turn it over, and gently replace it to see if it doesn't fit better that way.

Fourth, remove the rock, imagine that you place a trowel full of wet mortar upon your two rocks, then very gently replace the third rock back upon the other two, making certain that it is centered, level and flush with one side.

Fifth, multiply the time that took by the number of rocks you see on a wall of one of these houses, and then remember that you have been "building" from a pile of rocks already cut and stacked beside your wall. Sixth, please do not hold the authors responsible for wrenched backs, smashed fingers or damaged egos. We feel that only an aching back can comprehend the amount of effort that was required of these early homesteaders to build their homes, barns and fences out of rock.

Though they probably learned how to build with the rock by working with skilled masons in community projects (churches, schools, etc.), most likely each homesteader hauled his own rock and built his own home.

Their first structure was usually a dugout or a sod home to provide temporary shelter. A 20' x 30' house with a small second-story bedroom for the children was then constructed out of rough-sledged rock.

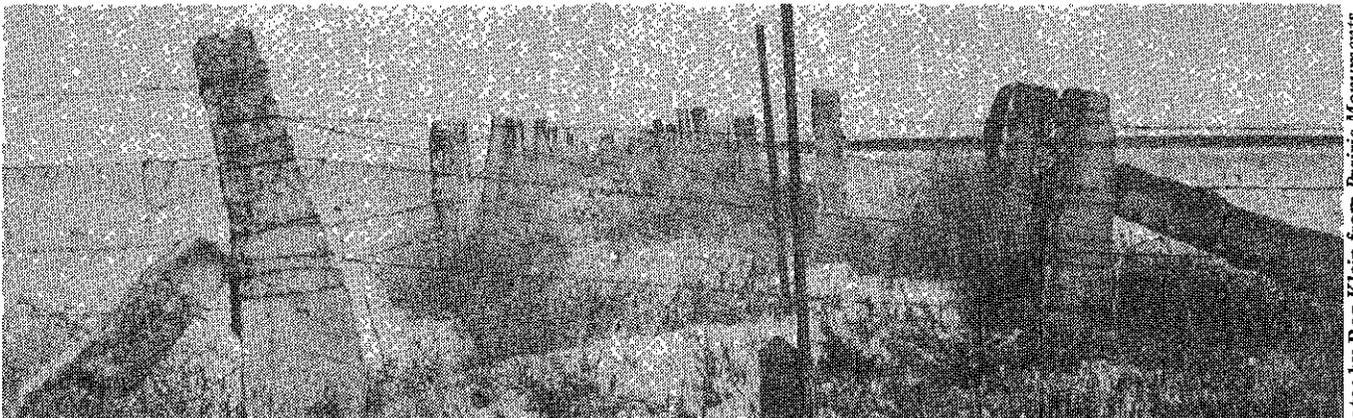
After the community church and school was built, attention was directed towards a barn large enough to store hay and protect the horses.

As the family prospered and the children grew, additional structures were added (a second well, a bunk-house or a smokehouse),

Then came the dream house. An elaborate two-story structure with elegant trim, with a sun porch and two fireplaces and a water-well right inside the kitchen!

Stones were carefully chosen, and each was faced and carefully placed to make the home the envy of all who saw it." (p. 12).

Using skill, labor, and the materials at hand, these enterprising immigrants fashioned buildings and walls, bridges and silos, fence posts and telephone poles, stock tanks, well covers, and gravestones—memorials to the pioneer values of economy, endurance, and beauty. As John Mohn puts it, "These people believed in creating a better world for their children and for their children's children. Something built from post rock was something that was going to last" (p. 30).



Photos by Ron Klein from *Prairie Monuments*.

THE IMMIGRANTS

I observe the urban face of man — then ask,
“What trace of our ancestral race is left?”

Reflect, sons of today!
Especially youth that's prone to play!
Consider the nature of a host
Of long dead men, women and children
Who came to wrest life from the soil
With only work, sweat, tears, and God,
While bending to the daily toil
They wrenched forcibly from the stubborn soil
The native stone, the ochre rock,
Blest the bitter plains, bred blizzard muck
The able, tough, relentless streak
Engrained in men who are not weak.

Who among you living after them can also
act with fortitude? Throughout the ages
What they built of native stone will stand
Inspiring onward guardians of the land.

I see a few of you have tugged away
hoping another day will be less difficult.
You claim your daily work a grind, but
I submit that we would find
if you were born in time and place
as pioneers instead of those who lived
before you, no masterwork would send
A vital link to help us mend
The fissures, and with strength renew
The slumps, guarded by the few.

What evidence you ask? What tasks were
never shunned? Oh, come! You do not
realize what they have done?
A hundred years or more have run their course!
You cannot feel the determining force?
No pampered ingrates wrote the immigrant's creed!
Take heart and follow them — we have great need!

Come, people of today!
Take your place and point the way
For generations yet to come
In this great promised land.
If you will ask, He'll lend a hand!

Joan McAfee

VILLAGES IN WHICH OUR FOREFATHERS LIVED

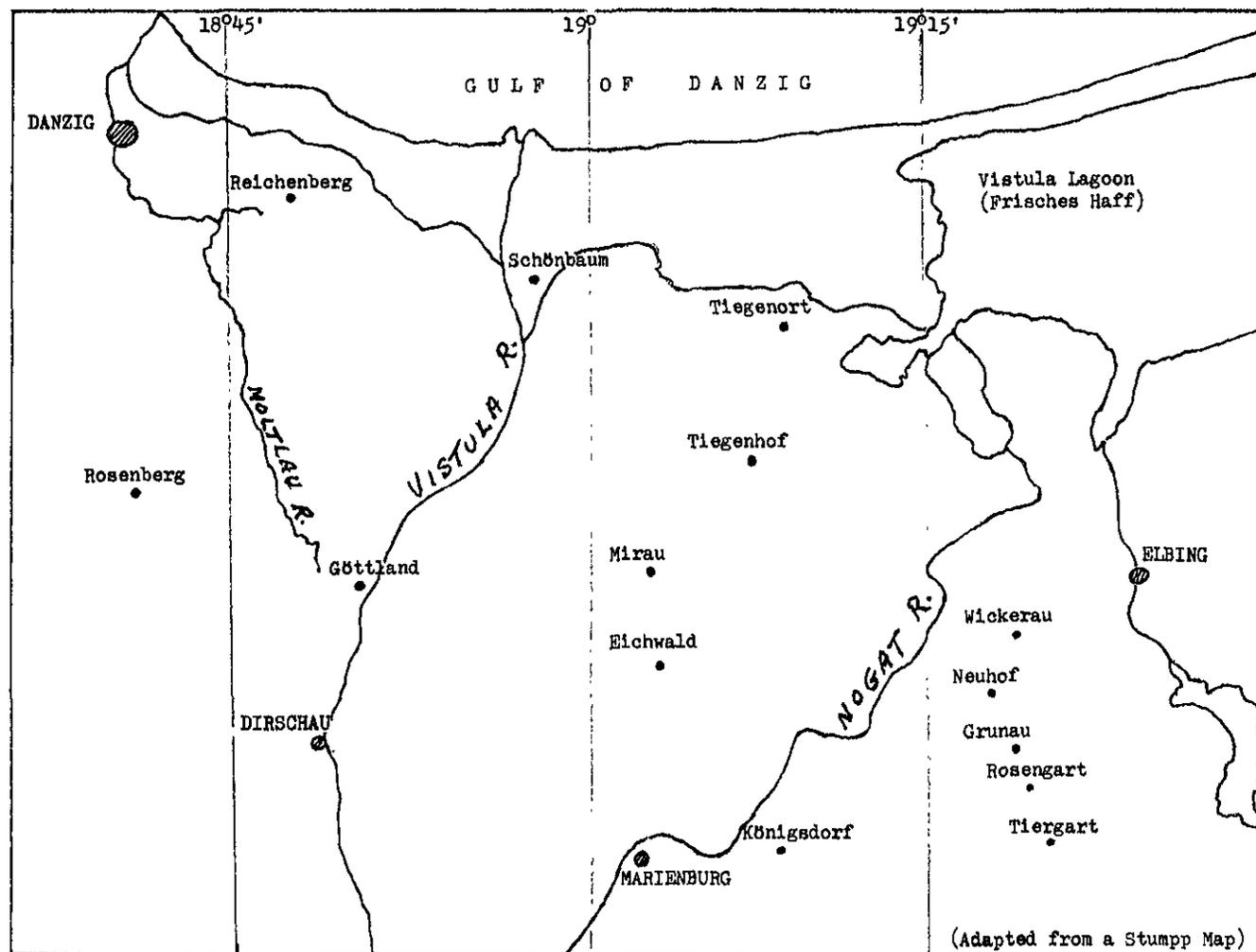
Adam Giesinger

During the years 1818-1821 about 900 families from the Danzig region in West Prussia migrated to southern Russia. Of these, 400 families were Mennonites, who added twenty new villages in the Molotschna settlement. The other 500 families, who spoke the same Low German dialect as the Mennonites, were Lutherans and Catholics. These arrived in Russia in small groups in the years 1818 and 1819 and lived and worked among their countrymen in the Molotschna region until land was found for them. In the fall of 1822 they were given a tract of land forty to eighty versts northwest of Marmopol, a seaport on the Sea of Azov. The following summer they founded seventeen villages in this region;

- | | | |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Kirschwald | 7. Rosenberg | 12. Kaiserdorf |
| 2. Tiegenhof | 8. Wickerau | 13. Gottland |
| 3. Rosengart | 9. Reichenberg | 14. Neuhof |
| 4. Schonbaum | 10. Kampenau | 15. Eichwald |
| 5. Kronsdorf | 11. Mirau | 16. Tiegenort |
| 6. Grunau | | 17. Tiergart |

The first eleven of these were Lutheran, with Grunau as the parish center; the last six were Catholic, with Eichwald as parish center. Grunau became the local government center.

Chronicles written in 1848¹ are available for these villages, except for Neuhof. Those for the Lutheran villages in Woltner, *Gemeindeberichte der Schwarzmeerdeutschen 1848*; those for the Catholic villages in Malinowsky, *Die deutschen katholischen Kolonien am Schwarzen Meere*. Copies of both books are in the Society Archives. Translations of four of these chronicles appear below.



THE DANZIG REGION IN WEST PRUSSIA, showing some of the villages from which the Mariupol colonists migrated. The Chortitza and Molotschna Mennonites also migrated to Russia from this region.

GRUNAU²

The colony **Grunau** was founded in 1823 in the valley of the **Karatish**. It is 150 **versts** from the district capital **Alexandrovsk**, 234 **versts** from the provincial capital **Ekaterinoslav** and forty **versts** from the Sea of Azov and the seaport **Mariupol**. The land assigned to the colony, which has a light, black dusty soil suitable for summer grains and the growth of grass, was formerly occupied by Greeks. Originally twenty-nine families settled here, twenty-seven becoming landholders and two others, consisting of old people with no one fit for work, receiving only village lots. They all came from the **Elbing** district of the Danzig region in West Prussia and had emigrated as a result of a proclamation, which appeared in official papers in 1819, inviting settlers to go to Russia. Especially attractive to them was the promised support money to be provided by the Russian government for settlement purposes. The emigrants assembled in groups in the kingdom of Prussia and travelled to their new home on routes planned for them by friends already living in Russia. In the same year, 1819, they arrived in the **Chortitza** and **Molotschna** colonies³ and after giving up their passports and receiving the consent of the local government authorities they rented living quarters from older colonists.

In March 1820 the Supervisory Office for Foreign Settlers issued an order that the Prussian immigrants choose from among their number delegates to devote their time to settlement matters. The later Grunau colonist Christian **Claasen** and the later **Eichwald** colonist **Johann Majewsky** were chosen and their appointment was confirmed by the Office. Their efforts did not prove fruitless.⁴ In the fall of 1822 the tract of land for the settlement was assigned and its outer boundaries marked by a furrow plowed by Greeks and Russians in the presence of the Governor and the Junior Member of the Supervisory Office, **Babiewsky**. The steppe which was thus assigned to the immigrants three years after their arrival in Russia had lain largely unused up to that time. The Greeks who lived nearby, whose **landholdings** had not then been properly surveyed, had cultivated some parts of it and used other parts for pasture.

The immigrants did not find houses nor shelter of any kind on their land. Each had to build himself a hut with lumber or clay as best he could. Altogether the settlers in this village received from the crown 9875 rubles, 84 kopecks, as support money to get themselves established. This money was distributed among the individual families more or less according to their needs. Two families, who had adequate funds of their own, received no support. The means possessed by the rest were so small that some had not enough to cover the travel costs from Prussia to Russia and had to borrow money from their travelling companions.

As several villages in the old homeland of the colonists had had the name Grunau, this name was chosen for the new village and was confirmed by the authorities.

In the early years of the settlement grain prices were so low that people had hardly any income. Wheat had to be sold for four to five rubles a *chetverf*⁵ and oats for twenty kopecks a *chetvert*. On top of that there came "the many natural disasters, such as locusts, livestock epidemics, crop failures, and so on. Livestock epidemics occurred three times in Grunau and each time some farmers lost every animal. In the famine year 1833, many horses, cattle, and sheep had to be sold at sacrifice prices because of the shortage of feed, and of those that were kept many died. There have also been six fires since the village was founded. The first and best source of income in the early years was wool. Unfortunately people still had very few sheep.

Thanks to the wise ordinances and arrangements made by the authorities, farming has developed significantly and better yields are obtained than formerly. In the early years His Excellency **von Kontenius**⁶ took a special interest in promoting sheep-raising and the planting of trees in the gardens, and in the last years Actual State Councillor **von Hahn**⁷ promoted gardening and the starting of tree plantations.

Signed by: Mayor **Koschke**, Councillors Koch and **Stach**, teacher **Reinhold Ohm**.

TIEGENHOF

Tiegenhof was founded in 1824 by the building of houses on the right side of the river **Kermentshik**, after another site in a distant valley on the colony land, on which earthen huts had been built in 1823, was abandoned because of a shortage and the poor quality of the water. The colony is 250 **versts** from Ekaterinoslav, 180 **versts** from Alexandrovsk and 60 **versts** from Mariupol. The black soil, mixed with sand and some stones, is of uneven quality. It is too light for winter grains and of medium fertility for summer grains in places sheltered from the wind. The village has within the boundaries of its **landholding** a good sand quarry, a lime quarry, which provides material for whitewashing walls, and a source of a yellow clay, which turns red when heated, useful for painting trees and wooden utensils.

Tiegart «
 »Tiegenori Elohwald »
 Kronsdorf Tiegenghof GoUland
 Neuhof * \lOrschwald
 »Mirau **Grunau**
 • » Rosengart » Reichenberg »
 Sch»nbaum
 Kampenau • Rosenberg • Wickerau
 Kaiserdorf •

MARIUPOL (ZHDANOV)

THE MARIUPOL COLONIES

SEA of AZOV

founded 1823

The colony received its name from the fact that most of the settlers came from the market town of **Tiegenghof** in the Danzig region. Originally twenty-seven farmsteads were established here by immigrants who arrived in the **Chortitza** and **Molotschna** settlements in 1819. Three additional farmsteads were established later by young colonists.

As this steppe had previously been used as grazing land by Greeks living nearby, the settlers found no houses here and had to begin by building themselves earthen huts. For the acquisition of livestock, seed grain, and building materials the colonists received a loan of 10,800 rubles from His Majesty Tsar Alexander **Pavlovich**. The first grain crop in 1824, when it stood at its best, was severely damaged by locusts. An even greater disaster came early in the year 1825 with a terrible snow storm, during which part of the livestock died because of inadequate food and water and the people suffered greatly through the bitter cold. In the year 1827 the settlers were impoverished again by the loss of nine-tenths of their livestock through an epidemic. After they had recovered somewhat in the years 1828 to 1832, there came the total crop failure in 1833. This brought famine conditions which killed most of the livestock, the people being saved from death only through timely support from the government. At this time the moral tone of the colony was raised through Pastor **Holtfreter's** introduction, in addition to Sunday services, of church services on two weekdays, called penance and prayer days.⁹ On 11 January 1838 at eight o'clock in the evening, on a quiet and very cold day, there was a strong earthquake with underground rumbling. Stoves, tables, chairs, and cradles began to rock and created great fear, but the danger passed without disastrous consequences. The year 1838 was noteworthy also for an exceptionally good crop through which the prosperity of the colony was much enhanced.

As the colonists in later years developed a strong inclination to move their village to their original settlement site, which was more central in their **landholding**, they neglected the tree plantation which the authorities had ordered them to establish in 1844. In the year 1846, however, State Councillor **von Hahn** looked at the site and ordered the colonists to stay where they were, whereupon they developed their plantation more carefully and industriously.

Through the establishment of the tree plantations and the fencing in of the farmyards the colony has significantly improved its appearance. The good crops of recent years, the purposeful ordinances of the Supervisory Committee, and not least the moral code worked out by the Inspector of this colonial district in collaboration with Pastor **Holtfreter**, which is read out at the beginning of every month to assembled villages at the Mayor's office, have brought this colony to its present prosperous condition.

Signed by: Mayor **Klein**, Councillors **Wittowsky** and **Brodd**.

KAISERDORF¹⁰

When future generations of this colony, for whom the following reminiscences of their forefathers and their experiences were written, learn about these matters and realize how their home here came into being, and when they become convinced through their own experiences what lively zeal, along with work and sacrifice, have animated the authorities to provide as happy a lot as possible for their subjects, then they like their forefathers will praise our mighty ruler and his government with grateful hearts, because they are inhabitants of a country in which provision for the welfare of every rank is the government's chief concern.

The founding of the colony Kaiserdorf began in the year 1823. It lies on the Great **Kabilna** river, 130 **versts** from the district capital **Alexandrovsk**, 210 **versts** from the provincial capital **Ekaterinoslav** and 70 **versts** from the seaport **Mariupol**.

The soil, consisting of black earth, varies in its fertility. With industrious and purposeful cultivation, however, it is becoming ever more productive, providing good grain crops and garden produce when the weather is favorable- For some years now wheat has been the most lucrative article of trade.

The reason for the name of the village is as follows. Some of the settlers wanted to call the village **Koenigsdorf** (King's village), because there was a village of that name in their homeland. **But** the authorities called it Kaiserdorf (Emperor's village), because in Russia the ruler is not a king but an emperor,

The number of families settled here originally was twenty-six and the number is still the same. All the settlers came from the Danzig region in West Prussia. All left their fatherland on their own, without leaders, with the hope of finding in Russia what Prussia, because of overpopulation, could no longer give them:

land and homesteads of their own. Where one now sees rich flourishing villages with beautiful and pleasant gardens and tree plantations, there were at the time of settlement only barren wilds and grazing lands, on which Tartars, Greeks, and other nomads grazed their flocks. These left to the colonists their miserable huts, in which they had to live until they could build new houses of their own.

A hard struggle now began for our settlers. Not only was the material for the building of houses lacking, and the equipment for fanning, but even the needed food could not be provided in time because of the long distance it had to be brought. In addition there was the problem that the small amount of money most of the immigrants had brought with them had long since been used up. All of the newcomers were poor people, whose whole property consisted of two horses, a wagon, the necessary kitchen utensils and a small amount of money. It would never have been possible for these poor people to reach the goal of their wishes and they would have had to give up their settlement project, had not our benevolent and gracious emperor given each family a loan of 450 rubles. Then, as busy hands occupied themselves with house-building and cultivation of the land, a long-cherished hope became a reality. The thought of finding recompense in these for the sufferings endured gave them courage, strength, and endurance. But the following year, 1824, did not provide for them according to their justified expectations, for enormous swarms of locusts descended on the flourishing fields and meadows and destroyed everything. An almost similar fate was suffered by the crops in 1825 and 1826. Only a firm faith in God's Providence could preserve the hope of these afflicted people for a better future. Soon there came another terrible blow from the hand of God. In the year 1828 the crops stood splendidly in the fields but an unusual hailstorm came and destroyed everything in an hour. In the same year there came an animal disease which killed nearly all the livestock. The wound which this year had inflicted had scarcely healed when the year 1833 came, with its terrible drought, which converted all fields and gardens to a barren desert. But the high point of the powers of destruction had not yet been reached. Again a ruinous epidemic took away what was left of the cattle. No matter what words one uses to describe the want and misery, they give only a weak picture of the actual suffering endured by these sorely tried people. But help from government authorities and their trust in God kept their hope alive and gave them new courage to get back to work again. There now followed a few prosperous years which made up for the years of suffering but did not wipe out the memory of them.

Other occurrences were: In the winter of 1825 it stormed so violently for eight weeks that it appeared that all life would perish. In the year 1847 from 26 December to 15 January 1848 there was again a violent storm during which neither churches nor schools could be opened. In the year 1838 at eight o'clock one evening there was a strong minute-long **earthquake**. In 1843 steppe mice did much damage to the crops. There were fires in 1832 and 1834. The year 1833 has become proverbial as the bad year and the winter of 1825 as the stormy winter. These were the events of a depressing kind, but we should note also the good effects they had on us.

The farmer, always engrossed in his occupation with its many cares, is understandably not in a position

to search out and make use of new discoveries that promote his welfare, however close to him they may lie. But the government authorities are able to do this and to promote in a fatherly way the advancement of their subjects. It is to them mainly that we owe the improvements in the cultivation of fields and gardens, Moral education too is based on laws and ordinances received from them. Churches and schools were built at their suggestion. The community granary was built in 1846, forests and roads in 1848. Improved horse breeding was introduced. People's welfare was fostered. May the younger generation continue to enjoy this favor; through strict moral behavior, genuine patriotism, and faithful obedience to prescribed laws, may it earn its continuance.

Signed by: author, teacher **Stein**, and by Mayor **Kunkel**.

EICHWALD¹¹

The colony **Eichwald** was founded in 1823, the houses being built in 1824. The village lies on a level steppe near the dry valley which forms the boundary between the Eichwald land and that of the Greek village **Novo-Kremantshuk**. It is 85 **versts** from the district capital **Alexandrovsk**, 230 **versts** from the provincial capital **Ekaterinoslav** and 80 **versts** from **Mariupol**.

The soil is black earth, which is productive when the weather is favorable, especially for summer grains, less for winter rye. On the hills there is white and red gravel.

The name Eichwald was given to the village by Michael **Raschinsky**, who came from **Eichwald** in West Prussia. Originally twenty-eight families settled here, all of whom came from the **Marienburg** district in West Prussia, except three families who came from Bohemia. The colonists had no leaders on their journey to Russia. A circular had been issued by the king permitting emigration to Russia. The steppe on which the village was founded was assigned to the colonists by the Supervisory Office in Ekaterinoslav. The area was then uninhabited and there were no houses, nor even huts on the land. Four of the families had 500 rubles each but the other twenty-four needed loans from the crown.

In the year 1824 a cloudburst caused a great flood which washed away all the haystacks. On the 15 July of the same year the fields were ravaged by locusts. As the locusts stayed here to lay their eggs, there were more of them the next year and they did tremendous damage. They appeared again in 1826 but in smaller numbers. The year 1833 was a complete crop failure and people and livestock suffered great want. But our gracious government helped again, supplying grain for bread and seed for the coming year. In the same year; there was a destructive fire in which the school building was destroyed. In the year 1838 a terrible livestock epidemic raged in the village, leaving animals alive in very few farmyards. On 8 August 1842 there was a great flood which floated away much hay and grain from the threshing areas. In the year 1843 field mice did much damage. The authorities ordered that the field mice be destroyed, every family being required to catch eighty every month by pouring water into their holes. In the year 1847 there was another livestock epidemic, which left only one-third of the cattle alive. The same year there was another flood which damaged grain and hay. On 9 February 1848 a house burned down.

Signed by: the author, teacher **Sukkowsky**, Mayor **Gunter**, Councillors **Komrowsky** and **Majewsky**.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

1. These chronicles were written in response to a questionnaire sent to the villages by State Councillor **von Hahn**, then the head of the Supervisory Committee for Foreign Settlers.
2. **M. Woltner**, *Gemeindeberichte der Schwarzmeerdeutschen 1848*, pp. 174-176.
3. The **Chortitz** and **Molotschna Mennonites** had been their neighbors in West Prussia.
4. The first land offer to them was an area of 24,000 **dessiatines** south of the Molotschna Mennonites, but they rejected it because it suffered from water shortage. A suitable area was not found till the fall of 1822.
5. One **chetvert** = 360 pounds = six bushels (in the case of wheat).
6. Till about 1830 **Kontenius** was the chief assistant to the head of the Supervisory Committee that governed the foreign colonies.
7. Von Hahn was acting head and then head of the Supervisory Committee 1841-1848.
8. Woltner, pp. 168-169.
9. Pastor **Holtfreter** was Lutheran pastor at **Grunau** from 1831 to 1872. All the West Prussian Lutheran colonies of this area belonged to his parish.
10. **Josef A. Malinowsky**, *Die deutschen katholischen Kohmenam Schwarzen Meere*, pp. 8-10.
11. **Malinowsky**, pp. 12-13.

AMBASSADOR DUBS SLAIN IN SHOOTOUT

On February 14, 1979, the news was flashed to all world capitals that Adolph Dubs, 58, American ambassador to Kabul, Afghanistan, had been kidnapped by Afghan terrorists while he was riding to work. He was then taken to a hotel room in Kabul and shot that noon in a crossfire between the terrorists and the Afghan police.



It may come as a surprise to most members of AHSGR that Adolph Dubs was the son of Volga German parents. Mr. Alexander Dubs Sr., the father of Adolph, was born 1893 in the German colony of **Rosenheim** which lay northeast of Saratov on the east or *Wiesenseite* of the Volga. He was left an orphan at an early age, and after a brief trip to Siberia, decided to emigrate to Chicago, Illinois, in 1913. In the following year he was married to **Regina** Simon, who had been born in **Enders**, which lay quite close to **Rosenheim**. She had preceded Alexander by one year to Chicago. The young couple lived in the Jefferson Park area and attended the Eden Evangelical Lutheran Church whose members, even today, consist almost entirely of Volga Germans. The father raised himself to a position of importance in the Illinois Tool Works, but today he and his wife live in a retirement home in Arlington Heights, near Chicago.*

Alexander and Regina Dubs had three children. Adolph was born in 1920 and was baptized and confirmed in the Eden Church. He received a **B.A.** degree from **Beloit** College in Wisconsin in 1942, and later studied at George Washington University, the National War College, and Harvard University. He served as a lieutenant in the navy during World War II, acting as chaplain on his ship.

In 1950 he joined the State Department as a specialist in Soviet affairs. Before going to Afghanistan, Dubs held several influential State Department positions. In 1974 he was named Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs. Before that he had been Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, and for a time was Acting Ambassador. His State Department duties also took him to West Germany, Liberia, Canada, and Yugoslavia.

While he was being held prisoner in the hotel room, American authorities made pleas for restraint to officials of the Afghan government. At one point an American political officer, **Bruce Flatin**, Adolph "Spike" Dubs called to Dubs through the closed door to ask in German what type of weapons his kidnapers had. Dubs answered "revolvers" but was then silenced by his captors. The resulting crossfire which took **Dubs's** life, occurred at 12:50. When the horrified Americans entered the room, they found Dubs, plus four of the terrorists, dying of bullet wounds.

Dubs's second wife, the former Mary Ann Parsons, an editor of the *Congressional Record*, along with his daughter **Lindsay**, his brother Alexander, and other relatives, especially from Chicago, flew to Kabul to escort the body home. The flag-draped coffin was met by President Carter, members of the diplomatic corps, and a military honor guard. Carter said that "We're here to pay tribute to a good man, a courageous man. We express our outrage at the senseless terrorism of those who pay inadequate value to human life."

Memorial services were held at Arlington Cemetery on Tuesday, February 20. Secretary of State **Vance** presented The Secretary's Award posthumously to Dubs. It is the highest **honor** granted by the Department of State. The inscription read, "For inspiring leadership, outstanding courage and devotion to duty, for which he gave his life, Kabul, February 14, 1979."

Emma **Schwabenland Haynes**

*The information in this paragraph came from Mr. and Mrs. Robert Smith of Chicago, Illinois, members of AHSGR.

PASSAGE TO RUSSIA: WHO WERE THE EMIGRANTS?

Lew Malinowski

Translated by Douglas Austin

With this issue the Journal continues the series of articles on the German colonization of Russia which originally appeared between 14 September and 19 October 1976 in Neues Leben, the weekly newspaper for Germans in the Soviet Union, published by the Moscow offices of Pravda. The author is a Soviet historian whose specialty is the history of the Soviet Germans before 1917. Part III is translated from the 5 October 1976 issue of Neues Leben, pp. 6-7. For previous translating in the series, see AHSGR Workpaper ./Vo. 25 (Winter, 1977), pp. 1-3 and AHSGR Journal, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring, 1978), pp. 4-5.

Part III The Unequal Settlers

There is no doubt that a rapid development of the class structure of the German communities of Southern Russia occurred during the nineteenth Century. On one side arose millionaires and wealthy property owners such as the Kornies or Faizfeins, and on the other side was the mass of poor, that is, the peasants. These poor residents, most of whom came from the same Mennonite families, comprised sixty to seventy percent of the total German population.

What were the circumstances, at the beginning of this development of a class structure? In regard to the immigrants from the Grand Duchy of Warsaw and Wuertemberg there was barely enough wealth among them to subsist on to reach the Russian border. About the Mennonites, however, there exists information which suggests the opposite condition. The noted researcher, S. Bondar, writes that the Chortitza Mennonites generally belonged to the poorer classes, but the Molotschna Mennonites were all wealthy people and brought a great number of horses, cattle, farm implements, and cash with them to Russia. He observes, however, that the latter group consisted primarily of entire villages which had emigrated to Russia en masse. Therefore, the class structure was a replica of the condition existing in West Prussia prior to the emigration.

Another author, Pastor J. Stach, also makes certain assertions about the wealth of the emigrating Mennonites. About the Molotschna Mennonites he writes:

Their backers were wealthy men, many of whom had substantial estates which they sold for 30,000 to 40,000 Prussian guilders . . . Among 322 families, there were 63 which received no advance of any kind from the Russian State and 89 brought with them between 10,000 and 12,000 guilders.

According to these quotes 27.7 percent of the Mennonites in the second wave from Prussia to Molotschna could be considered rich. Among those were several (19.5 percent) who could forgo any advance and still have sufficient means to build and farm their new communities.

The Soviet researcher, A. I. Klibanow concurs that the Molotschna Mennonites were richer but thinks that the class differentiation did not arise until some decades after the arrival in Molotschna ". . . when the classes began to develop." This seems to indicate that originally the emigrants were a homogeneous group of farmers who did not exhibit any class structure. Other authors point out that inasmuch as the Mennonites in Prussia worked their farms in a capitalistic manner, hired laborers and landed capitalists must have existed already. For example, W. F. Krestjaninow writes about the exploitation of the laborer in Prussia and about the accumulation of capital among the Mennonites prior to the emigration.

Our research in the State Archives of Leningrad (ZGIAL) permit us to bring some clarity to this matter. We succeeded in finding several materials there from the pertinent time period which shed light on the wealth of the Mennonite emigrants.

These materials are not without contradictions regarding the opinions and attitudes expressed by other authors of that time. So, for example, the Russian Consul Trefurt writes from Danzig on 13/25 June 1804 (the difference in dates stems from the use of different calendars in Russia and Prussia) that measures were taken to detain the Mennonites because now mostly the rich who possessed 5,000-6,000 or more guilders were departing. Three weeks later the same official wrote about the Mennonites who did not even have the necessary 300 guilders but were to be allowed to accompany "the rich as their workers and under their sponsorship,"

Thus it is clear that part of the Mennonites emigrated under the "patronage" of the rich. Inasmuch as the minimum legally prescribed amount was 300 guilders one can assume that some of the poor people borrowed the money from the rich thereby enabling the rich to conceal a part of their wealth from the Prussian tax officials. The other, greater part, of the wealth of the rich was kept concealed because the wealthy emigrants agreed among themselves to declare only a third to a half of their wealth prior to their

departure.

Unfortunately, because of both of these actions, the actual circumstances were obscured. We must assume that the class differences were far greater than they appear in the official immigration records. So, with this in mind, we wish to analyze the records available in the archives regarding the wealth of the immigrants.

We have access to records regarding 178 families totaling 810 persons. The combined wealth of these families amounted to 205,286 guilders, approximately 1,117 guilders per family as an average which was almost four times the legally required minimum. That led the authors mentioned above to the assumption that the immigrants were principally affluent people.

However, among these were such families as the Elder [Johannes Warkentin](#) who reported his wealth at 2,730 guilders as well as the family of [Isaak Loewen](#) whose estate amounted to 200 guilders. Of course, 200 guilders did not even approach the required minimum. A special case was [Jakob Penner](#), who with a reported estate of 10,000 guilders sponsored fourteen of his own family members as well as two servants:

[Bernhard](#) and Peter [Rempel](#) who possessed only 150 guilders among the six members of their two families. Thus, every member of the Penner family declared 700 guilders as his own; however. In the servants' families the sum was only 25 guilders per member, in other words 1/28th as much as the Penner figure.

Many declared only 200 guilders and took the risk of not being permitted to cross the border. Even those who declared 300 guilders perhaps did not have it (or as observed above were declaring borrowed money). Therefore, we consider those with 300 guilders or less as poor; those with 1,000 guilders as rich, and those in between as the middle class.

According to the above figures the 87 poor families comprised 49 percent of the total in comparison to 34.6 percent for the 63 families of wealth. The beginning of a class structure is very apparent here. The middle class, which was supposedly the major group before the development of the two dominant classes amounted to only 16.4 percent and for practical reasons is of no significance. The wealthy, which comprised one-third of the immigrants, owned 88.8 percent of the declared wealth; however, their actual share was, as previously stated, larger. The poor claimed only 6.1 percent of the declared wealth. Naturally, most of the servants traveled with the rich, a contingent of sixty-six men comprising seventy-three percent of the work force. This only emphasized the power of the rich in the [Mennonite](#) community of that period. What is more, the Russian officials had procured other farm labor to work in the Mennonite colonies but these [people] were settled outside of the Mennonite communities themselves.

One can see from the above illustrations that capitalistic development in the Mennonite community and the division between the exploiters and the exploited did not originate in Russia, but, on the contrary, already existed in Prussia. The average rich man who brought 640 guilders with him for each member of his family was far ahead of his less wealthy contemporary who brought only a miserable 40 guilders and practically speaking possessed only his ability to work. The availability of capital and cheap labor also explains how millionaires developed in the Mennonite villages of Southern Russia as early as the 1820's;

otherwise we would be at a loss to explain such things as the relationship between Johannes [Kornies](#) and the expensive gifts from the Czars to him. There had always been a wealthy Mennonite nobility.

More recent research in the [DDR](#) [German Democratic Republic] emphasizes the capitalist traits of the early Dutch [Mennonites](#) who also immigrated to the German territorial states. The well known DDR researcher, [G. Schilfert](#), writes that the immigrating Dutch Mennonites and [Calvinists](#) brought with them new business and farming techniques which stimulated the accumulation of wealth. Of course, what was right in the seventeenth century was certainly fair in the 1800's.

It is possible that the cash advance paid by the Russian Government as well as the access to free land somewhat moderated the flagrant differences between classes and aided a part of the poor to reach the ranks of the middle class farmers. But because by the middle of the 19th Century the middle class Mennonite farmer did not play a significant role, we must assume that this moderation was only a [temporary](#) episode. The capitalistic division of classes, once begun could not be stopped. This is proven by events occurring later in connection with the [Stolypin](#) reforms and the movement from the South to Siberia. Capitalistic conditions also ruled in Siberia in spite of cheap land and government allocation of land and money to the poor.

Therein exists, in our opinion, the basic difference in the class structure of the Mennonite community versus other German communities in Russia. On the Volga, for example, it was a matter of developing a capitalistic agrarian society from scratch rather than the restoration of a previous system in a new geographic location, as with the Mennonites. On the Volga capitalism developed for the first time in the second half of the nineteenth century and thus influenced the subsequent history of those communities.

THE WANDERERS: WHAT IS FICTION? - WHAT IS FACT?

Ingrid Rimland

Like all novices who "want to write a book," I started writing *The Wanderers* as an autobiographical account in the beginning, patterning it loosely after my own immediate family, for I needed a concrete structure on which to hang my tale. It was natural that "Katya," my Mennonite grandmother, should have a prominent place on my stage, for that was her undisputed place among us, I know of no woman with more inner strength, although she was simple of mind, uneducated, credulous, not given to deep inner searching. But under my pen, she soon took on a life of her own. In Newton, and later in Fresno, as I read through the many old newspaper accounts, the often inarticulate, poorly formulated letters, the awkward turns of speech stored in the Mennonite archives, I realized that that was *my* grandmother speaking. In many different ways, through many different voices, by means of many different lives who had left their traces for me to piece together in some way, my *Oma* spoke to me. This was how she had lived. Those were her feelings. This was her language. Here was her struggle, her victory, her glory, her defeat. I felt I had my hands at the very pulse of her stubborn Mennonite righteousness, at the very current other awesome Mennonite strength. She died in 1970, the year I seriously started my research, and to me, now she became more real, more true to her own inner self, more "Katya" than she had ever been in life. I realized then that I had never known her at all — for I was too young, too impatient, too ignorant of her essence, too deeply engrossed in my own narrow world. Now she was gone, and it was up to me to pay her some kind of a tribute.

And my mother? Of course she was "Sara" — and yet, in life, she was never as flippant, as frivolous, as shallow as Sara at all. But yet she was her counterpart in that she managed to snatch herself a ray of sunshine from the darkest of all clouds. She never married "Ohm Jasch" — that part is clearly fiction. Hers was a generation without men. She was a beautiful thing, widowed by the evil hand of Stalin at the age of twenty-eight, sentenced to wither before she could ever be young, left with two *children* in a world ripped apart by ferocious political evil — a slim, pretty, sharply intelligent woman who should have been sheltered and pampered. What must she have felt? No one will ever know. All she had left was a smiling bravado.

"Ohm Jasch," too, is a composite. I knew men with characteristics such as he depicts in my story, but not all of my teachers were as destructive of a questioning mind. There was one, in particular, whom I loved dearly, and to whom I owe a spiritual and intellectual debt I can never repay. But it is bitter fact, and needs to be said, that there were also others. I have encountered Ohm Jasch's intolerance, his superstition, his self-serving, sanctimonious traits in many an adult throughout my young, impressionable years. As a result, it is a fact that I did not emerge unscarred. A man like Ohm Jasch once stood in my way when I could have been sent to a school and been salvaged. But I was only a girl, and headstrong at that, and impatient with pious pretensions.

"Kari-Heinz" is a fusion of two German soldiers — one who came to rescue us in Russia in 1941, who filled our house with his youth and his laughter, and who was sent to die at Stalingrad. The second one was just a boy — barely seventeen, it seemed, who bled his life into the dirt of an abandoned farm shack the very night of Adolf Hitler's birthday in the spring of 1945. It took him all night, with my grandmother sitting by quietly. She never knew his name. She was forced to leave his body in the wake of the horror that came with the Russian onslaught, and only much later, now and then, would she remember this boy with a wordless, simple sorrow. "His mother's still waiting," she might say. It is a fact that his death was a betrayal of such preposterousness that even now this knowledge makes my heart contract in torn, helpless rage. I would not call that feeling fiction, although I wrote this scene with nothing but my *Oma's* sparse tale as support,

What else is true, what fiction? All of the events of the trek are true — the lice, the cold, the hunger, the shelling, the fire, the end. I know it is true, for I was there, a child barely nine, driven through Armageddon with a terror so vast it made me lose speech for a week, as my mother would later remember. All of the heat, and the sweat, and the dirt, and the ants and mosquitoes, and the hard, backbreaking slavery of the jungle are true, for I was there, too, although not in the Chaco. I lived in eastern Paraguay where the air was more humid and the insects more fierce, but where we did not have sandstorms or locusts.

I made up "Carlitos" for the sake of my storyline, and I even knew a handsome young man by that name. But in real life I certainly knew better than to fall in love with a Paraguayan native — why, my good, sweet, even-natured, German-bred *Oma* would have skinned me alive, as they say! And on my wedding day I did not run away into the sunset — I married demurely. When "Karin" says, at the end of *The Wanderers*,

"... a birthright has been sold for a mess of pottage. I want it back, for it is mine. . ." that is not Karin speaking. It is, in a deeply personal way, a summary statement of my very own life. The "Karin" in my story is what I would have liked to have been — had I had more courage, had I seen more options, had there been teachers, had there been books. The real young "me" was shy, quiet, subdued — a discomfort to myself and to those around me, "... a foreign object in a body of folkish cohesion . . ." as my dear friend and mentor. Dr. Quiring, former editor of *Der Bote*, once perceptively remarked in a letter. No, I was never Karin; in my story, she is more daring, more beautiful, much stronger, much more vivacious and courageous than I have ever been.

Emotions arc, almost by definition, subjective. Yet emotions do not grow in barren soil. There have been stark preceding incidents on which emotions are anchored. So why even try to sort out fiction from fact? *The Wanderers* was meant to be a strong, poignant novel in which I attempted to capture the vastness of the German-Russian epic,

Editor's Note: A full review of Ms. Rimland's award-winning and much-acclaimed book appears in the Fall 1978 issue of the *Journal* (Vol. I, No. 2), pp. 61-3. *The Wanderers* is available for purchase by members of the Society at \$8.95 per copy (plus \$1.00 for postage and handling) from AHSGR, 631 D Street, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68502.

ADDENDUM

Professor Adam Giesinger's implacable instincts for research have turned up additional information about the Kehrer family described in the spring 1978 issue of the *Journal* (Andrew Kehrer, "A Voice from the Past: Remembering Eighty Years," AHSGR *Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 60-66). Giesinger notes that Herbert Weiss in his *Geschichte der Kolonie Teplitz* which was published in Tarutino, Bessarabia in 1931 lists three Kehrers among the original settlers in Teplitz;

(1) Family No. 9: Johann Georg Kehrer from Lemflingen/Tubingen, Wuerttemberg, twenty-one years old in 1817. He died in 1854 at Teplitz. His first wife, Elisabeth, was sixteen years old in 1817. She died at Teplitz in 1823. Johann Georg remarried in 1824.

This is, I believe, the ancestor Georg Kehrer mentioned in the article.

(2) Family No. 37: Michael Kehrer from Niedrich/Urach, Wuerttemberg, thirty-one years old in 1817. He died at Teplitz in 1853. His wife, Anna Maria nee Wetzel from Rubgarten/Tub-ingen, Wuerttemberg, was eighteen years old in 1817. She died at Teplitz in 1883.

(3) Family No. 103: John Martin Kehrer, age not given, place of origin not given. His wife Margarethe, thirty-one years old in 1817. This couple died at Teplitz in the first year of settlement. Other Kehrers of interest, all born in Teplitz:

(1) Jakob Georg Kehrer, born 1848; wife Euphrosine, born 1854. Moved to Benkendorf (year not given).

(2) Johannes Kehrer, born 1834; wife Maria, born 1838. Moved to Posttal in 1863.

(3) Mathias Kehrer, born 1860; wife, Magdalena, born 1862. Came to the U.S.A. in 1902.

ADDITIONS TO THE LOAN COLLECTION

The Punished Peoples: The Deportation and Fate of Soviet Minorities at the End of the Second World War, by Aleksandr M. Nekrich. Translated from the Russian by George Saunders. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1978. 238 pp.

Reviewed by Emma Schwabenland Haynes.

Although this book does not describe the Soviet Germans in any appreciable way — they were deported in 1941, not at the end of World War II - it does throw light on the inhuman mentality of the Soviet regime. Aleksandr Nekrich, who left the Soviet Union in 1976 and is currently a research fellow at the Russian Research Center of Harvard University, was twenty-four years old in May 1944 and was serving with Russian troops who were liberating the Crimea. As a result, he witnessed episodes in the deportation of the entire Tatar population of the Crimea to Central Asia and Siberia. Similar deportations of Chechens, Ingush, Balkars, Karachai, and Kalmyks took place in the northern Caucasus. All of these unfortunate minority groups were accused of collaborating with the Nazis. In all, about one million inhabitants (not counting the Soviet Germans) were deported. Although several thousand of these people did collaborate with the Germans, the big majority were opposed to the Nazis because of the brutal practices of the Third Reich in the occupied areas.

In the case of the Chechen-Ingush, Soviet trucks were rolled into the center of their villages on February 23, 1944. Soldiers held the citizens at gunpoint while the decree of the Supreme Soviet was read. Families were allowed to take twenty kilograms of baggage with them. Nekrich tells that one man with his daughter-in-law and small child remained behind. Then addressing a Georgian officer he said in his broken Russian, "Me born here; me here die. Me no go anywhere." The officer gave an order to a Russian soldier, "Shoot! All three." The soldier answered, "The man I will shoot but not the woman and child." Before he had even finished his last word, a pistol flashed in the officer's hand, and the Russian soldier along with the three Chechen lay dead. People were then taken to train stations where they embarked for the long journey to Central Asia and, less frequently, to Siberia or the Urals.

As was true of the Soviet Germans, the mass uprooting were shrouded in silence. Not a single word concerning the fate of the deported people appeared in the central or local press. After arriving at their destinations, they were put into "special settlements" directly under the supervision of the MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs). They were usually treated with hostility by the local population and had to live in underground shelters and mud huts with several families sharing a single room. Tens of thousands died of starvation or disease.

Finally, in February 1956 (three years after Stalin's death) at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party in Moscow, Nikita Khrushchev confessed that the deportations were arbitrary acts connected with Stalin's "Cult of Personality." He mentioned particularly the injustice that had been done to the Karachai, Balkars, and Kalmyks. Then on January 9, 1957, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet issued four decrees which allowed these three groups, plus the Chechen-Ingush to return to their former homes.

The Volga Germans were rehabilitated in 1964 and the Crimean Tatars in 1967, but in neither case were they allowed to return to the Crimea or the Volga. One might well ask why this distinction was made. In the case of the Volga Germans they were needed in the virgin lands of Siberia and Central Asia, and were probably still under suspicion as being pro-German. The Crimean Tatars, on the other hand, had long been suspected of being pawns of Turkey. As early as 1854-55, at the end of the Crimean War, tsarist officials brought wholesale charges against them for allegedly having helped Turkey, and deported 100,000 Crimean citizens. Thus there arose the stereotype of the Crimean Tatar as an enemy of Russia and an agent of Turkey.

The Soviet government has persistently used similar charges against the Crimean Tatars and has even resorted to falsifying history. Mr. Nekrich gives numerous examples of documents published in 1973 in which key sentences testifying to the loyalty of the Crimean people and the aid which they gave to the partisans are omitted without the use of ellipses. In the same way, the names of Crimean Tatar activists in the partisan movement are either not mentioned or are russified. For example, Seidali Kurtoseyitov, a Crimean partisan diversionist, who was killed by the Germans in early 1944 is written S. Kursakov so that readers will assume he is a Russian.

The Crimean Tatars have waged an unceasing battle to go back to their native homes. As early as 1957 many of them returned to the Crimea without permission, but they were always deported a second time to Asia. After 1964 they maintained a permanent lobby in Moscow, and in 1966 practically the entire

adult population of 120,000 signed petitions and sent seven volumes of data. The historian, Professor Refik I. Muzafarov has collected an enormous amount of material testifying to the loyalty of the Crimean Tatars in the Second World War. He sent this material to the Central Committee of the Communist party with the hope that it would ameliorate the treatment of the Crimean Tatars, but outside of minor changes in removing obvious slanders from the record, it has had no effect at all. Leaders of the Crimean Tatars are always in danger of being deprived of employment or of being sentenced to prison terms on charges of anti-Soviet propaganda, if they support the desires of their people.

Mr. Nekrich ends his book by sharply criticizing the secrecy with which archival material is kept in the Soviet Union. Even Russian students have difficulty in obtaining access to this material. In addition, he says that in thirty years at the Institute of History and then at the Institute of General History of the USSR Academy of Sciences, he was never once allowed to take a trip to work in foreign archives or to participate in international conferences or symposiums. Thus falsehoods such as those against the Soviet Germans and the Crimean Tatars are allowed to continue.

Note: Copies may be purchased from W.W. Norton & Co., 500 5th Ave. N.Y., N.Y. 10036 for \$10.95 postpaid.

Lasst Sie Selber Sprechen ("Let Them Speak for Themselves"): Berichte russlanddeutscher Aussiedler, by Katharina Drotleff, editor. Hannover: Lutherhaus Verlag, 1978. 122 pp.

Reviewed by Emma Schwabenland Haynes.

I have often been asked since returning to the United States if anyone in Germany is putting on tape the stories of the *Heimkehrer* ("returnees") when they arrive from the Soviet Union. My answer had always been that I knew of no agency which has been systematically recording the history of these people. For that reason it was a pleasure to hear of Katharina Drotleff's book which is based upon tape recordings. The only changes Frau Drotleff has made is to put difficult dialect terms into a more understandable German. Otherwise, she really does let these Soviet Germans "speak for themselves."

The first two reports are by women. Frau A. B. was born in 1916 in a rural village near Odessa. During the famine of 1921-1922 her family moved to the Caucasus where A.B. grew up and was married. Then came the invasion of the Soviet Union by the Nazis and the resulting deportation of the Soviet Germans. They were kept on boats in the Caspian Sea for two months until trains could be found for them. Frau A.B. had three children at the time. Her four-year-old son soon starved to death and was thrown overboard into the water. Her seven-year-old son, who was nothing but skin and bones, wept incessantly from hunger. Finally, the mother, who was still nursing a baby, took the little boy in her arms, and covering him up let him drink from her breast. But all was in vain. He also died and was thrown into the water.

By the time the group reached Siberia, they were so covered with lice that they were not allowed into a Russian village, but instead had to live in underground shelters outside of town. Frau A.B.'s husband was taken into the *Trudarmia* ("labor force") and she eventually heard that he had starved to death. Around 1970, her remaining daughter married a man whose father had managed to get to Germany. He sent a *vysov* for all three and thus they were able to come west. She asked that her name not be mentioned because her German neighbors did not believe the stories of starvation, cruelty, and abuse to which she had been subjected.

The other woman, Frau G.L. was born in 1915 south of Moscow. After the famine of 1932-1933 when so many millions of people died, her family was asked to join a collective farm in a Russian village in the Ukraine. She married a German in 1936 and gave birth to a baby girl a few years later. When the news came that her family was to be deported, she was so upset that Russian neighbors had to pack her clothing and put provisions of food together. Her husband was placed under arrest and taken away separately, but she joined other Black Sea Germans who were sent to *Kustennai* in Kazakhstan. After first working in the fields, she was made a cowherd and was warned that she was responsible for the animals. One day a pack of wolves came and attacked the young heifers. She fought them off, using her coat as a shield and screamed for help. Finally a wagon with *some* men drove up, but she was so afraid of being punished that she could only weep hysterically.

After the war was over, she was reunited with her husband who was still being held in a prison camp. Her daughter got married to a man who had relatives in Germany. He managed to get a *vysov* for his wife and himself, and after arriving in Germany, sent a second *vysov* for his mother-in-law and father-in-law.

Of the three stories that are told, the most heart-breaking is that of Herr W.G., who was born 1923 in Neu Freudenthal in the Ukraine. He was five months old when his mother died. One of his aunts took care of him until his father married again. Then came the period of "dekulakization." W.G. tells that his grand-

father and father lived together on a beautiful estate, but in 1928 or 1929 the Bolsheviks came and took everything away: their house, the stables, the animals, and the storehouses full of grain. W.G. continues:

I still remember how they led my grandparents out of the house. I saw all of this with my own eyes and remember it very well. Grandfather said to me, "Child, we will never see each other again." And so it actually was.

They brought our grandparents to Archangel and were driving over the ice. But the ice broke and all were destroyed. Grandfather and Grandmother with their horse and wagon. Later we heard that they with many other people from our villages disappeared under the ice. All of them drowned. The whole transport. Meanwhile they chased my father, my stepmother, and me out of our house.

The family then went to *Hoffnungstal* where the father was eventually able to build a second house, but this was also taken away by the Bolsheviks. They then moved back to *Neu Freudenthal* where the stepmother ran away with another man. The father was arrested and the little boy had to go out begging for food. But this was in the midst of the famine years 1932-33. In some houses which he entered, dead bodies had been left lying on the ground. It also happened that when a person died of hunger, people would cut up the body and eat it. W.G. saw this with his own eyes and from then on had a horror of being murdered and eaten. His father now joined him again and eventually they found work on a collective farm, but the father became ill and died two weeks later.

The ten-year-old orphan continued to work as a swineherd on the farm. He could find no place to sleep except in the horses' manger. One evening after coming home from work, he had just crawled into the hay when he felt something tearing at his shirt and then running over his face. Rats were nibbling at him. He screamed for help but nobody except the horses could hear. He then went to the highest part of the crib and began to speak;

"What do you want from me?" I said. "I myself have nothing. Only this piece of bread is in my pocket; that is for breakfast. But I will gladly share it with you." In this way I spoke to the rats. I got out the bread, crumbled it up, and threw it to them. Now they came swarming from all sides and pounced upon the crumbs. I then said, "Go now in God's name and don't come again. Leave me in peace, because I myself am as hungry as you."

Nobody wants to believe this, but from that time on, they never crawled over me again . . . But I continued to share with them any food that I had.

During the following years, W.G. continued to work at various jobs and managed to get three years of schooling on the side. In 1941, the same year that the German army entered his village, he married a German girl. However, the Germans began retreating at the end of 1943 and W.G. with his wife joined the thousands of refugees who were resettled in Poland. Here W.G. worked in a cheese factory and his daughter Elvira was born. Then he was drafted into the *Waffen SS* but saw little fighting. His company surrendered to the American army in Austria and was happy to be held prisoner by them.

However, in the spring of 1945, W.G. and his comrades were suddenly brought to *Linz*, Austria, and turned over to the Russians as part of that shameful deal by which the United States and Great Britain allowed two million helpless Russian soldiers and civilians to be repatriated to the Soviet Union against their will. Many of these prisoners were shot as soon as the train crossed the border. W.G., on the other hand, was given a prison sentence of twenty-five years at hard labor.

In all of these years, the nicest thing that ever happened to him was the day in 1969 when he discovered through a cousin that his wife was still alive and had gone to Estonia to visit their daughter who was married and had just given birth to a child. He was finally released on June 11, 1970, and left at once for Estonia, although he still had to report to the police twice a month for the next five years.

In 1976 he managed to come to Germany with his wife, daughter, and son-in-law. A cousin of his had sent the *vysov*. It was here in Germany that he went to church for the first time. He felt very shy in doing this and thought to himself, "I don't even know how to pray." But this was not exactly true, because many times in the past he had found himself whispering in Russian *Hospodi Pomilui* ("Lord have mercy upon us"). And he had often witnessed that when a person seemed most completely down and out, the repeating of these words could give him new strength. And so, W.G. ends his report by testifying to his belief in the unfailing compassion of God.

Note: This book may be borrowed though inter-library loan from our Archives in *Greeley*. I would strongly recommend that anyone who is able to read German should request it. Or, for those who may want to purchase the book, it may be ordered from the *Lutherhaus Verlag* in Hannover, West Germany, for \$4.00.

East Prussians from Russia, by Michael J. Anuta. Menominee, Michigan, 1979. 212 pp., German supplement 32 pp. Maps, documents, illustrations.

Reviewed by Adam Giesinger.

This book is the story of a group of East Prussian families who emigrated to the Russian province of Volhynia in the 1860's, lived and prospered there for a generation, then found the growing anti-German sentiment uncongenial and undertook a new migration, this time to the United States, where they settled in the 1890's in Marinette and Oconto counties in northeastern Wisconsin.

In East Prussia most of these families had lived in the village of Rummy in the jurisdiction of Mensguth in Kreis Ortelsburg. Some of them had received land grants there as early as the sixteenth century, others not till the eighteenth century under Frederick William I and Frederick the Great. There were among them descendants of French Huguenot families who had found refuge in Prussia from religious persecution in France. The author illustrates his book with copies of documents showing land grants by Frederick the Great to his forefathers Michael Hannuta and Jacob Labusch. In the course of time, through subdivision of the land as the population grew, the individual landholdings became too small for many, putting them into a receptive mood for invitations to migrate to areas which had vacant lands.

In the early 1860's Polish landowners in the Russian province of Volhynia, having just lost their serfs through the emancipation edict of Tsar Alexander II in 1861, issued invitations, offering very favorable terms, to farmers in northeastern Germany to come to Volhynia to settle on lands not then under cultivation. Such an invitation reached the people of Rummy in East Prussia and found wide acceptance among them. In the fall of 1865, after harvest, the difficult trek across country to Volhynia was accomplished. The migrants settled in the fertile region north of the city of Zhitomir, where they remained for the next quarter century. The book has an interesting description of their way of life in that region.

The political climate in Russia began to change in the 1880's, becoming hostile to Germans. There was discrimination against them in both economic and cultural matters. Although this was happening in all parts of Russia, it was most pronounced in Volhynia, because this was a western border province and because many of the Germans here had not yet become Russian citizens. The author provides documentary evidence that his own grandfather, who emigrated to America in 1890, remained a German citizen throughout his twenty-five year sojourn in Russia. The same was probably true of the other East Prussians and of many other Germans who had come to Volhynia in the 1860's. This was one of the factors which made them suspect in Russian official eyes.

The less friendly atmosphere caused most of the East Prussians in Volhynia to undertake a new migration, this time to the United States. The first ones arrived in 1887 and the majority were here by 1893; a few stragglers came later. The author provides an informative list of 254 immigrant families belonging to the East Prussian group, who settled in Marinette and Oconto counties in Wisconsin. Descendants of the families whose names appear on this list should find this book intensely interesting.

The last three chapters deal with the life of these immigrants, and their American neighbors, in their new home in Wisconsin. The East Prussians have been a progressive element in the economic life of their area. Deeply religious, they carried their Baptist faith from East Prussia to Volhynia and from there to Wisconsin, and there developed a very active religious life over the years.

Appended to the book is a supplement in the German language which indicates that the Baptist faith was still fervently alive among their kin in East Prussia as late as 1937.

Michael Anuta has rendered a noteworthy service to his own people and to all Germans from Volhynia by researching, writing and publishing this book.

Note: A copy has been presented to our Archives at Greeley by the author. The book is available for purchase from AHSGR, 631 D Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68502 at \$14.00 per copy for Society members (\$15.00 for non-members) plus \$1.00 for postage and handling.

Germans from Russia in Colorado, edited by Sidney Heitman. University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1978. 188 pp.

Reviewed by Adam Giesinger.

This is a collection of ten papers by American scholars on the history of Germans from Russia, with an introduction by Sidney Heitman, head of the Germans from Russia in Colorado Study Project at Colorado State University. Although the title is somewhat of a misnomer, since only three of the papers deal specifically with Germans from Russia in Colorado, all the papers are worthwhile contributions to the historical

literature on our people and will be read with interest by members of this Society.

In a concise but informative introduction, Dr. Heitman explains the ethnic background of the people dealt with in these papers, introduces the scholars who contributed to the book, and describes briefly the contents of the papers themselves.

Since each paper is an independent work, the order in which they are read, or reviewed, is not important. I have chosen, in this review, to start in Colorado and work my way outward, which is not the order in which the papers appear in the book.

As was mentioned above, there are three papers that deal with Germans from Russia in Colorado. Dr. Kenneth Rock's paper, "Colorado's Germans from Russia," gives an excellent brief account of the history of Germans from Russia in the state, from their earliest arrival to the present day, so far as research to date has given us information. The two other papers deal with sugar beet farming in the state, as it was in an earlier era, when newly-arrived Germans from Russia provided much of the stoop labor for this industry and were often exploited by their employers. The papers by Dena Markoff, "Beet Hand Laborers of Sugar City, Colorado, 1900-1920," and Georgiena A. Cook, "Fact and Fiction: German Russian Sugar Beet Farmers in Colorado," throw new light on this familiar topic. These two essays will revive memories of their youth in many of the older members of this Society.

What made them come to America? A paper by Dr. Norman Saul of the University of Kansas, "The Arrival of Germans from Russia; a Centennial Perspective," gives interesting new insights into the conditions in Russia which motivated the earliest German emigrants to leave. It also describes American attitudes towards the newcomers in the early years and recounts their relatively rapid adjustment to life in this new world. This paper will look familiar to many of our readers, because it was first presented at the AHSGR convention at Denver in June 1976 and was published in our *Work Paper* No. 21, Fall 1976.

There are two papers dealing with the folkways of Germans from Russia. The author of one of these is a well known member of AHSGR, our outstanding researcher on the folklore of Germans from Russia, Timothy Kloberdanz. The title of his paper is, "We Sing our History: Oral Tradition and the Germans from Russia." It describes in his usual lively style how our people have passed on their history and traditions through their songs. A paper by Dr. Klaus Hoffmann of Colorado State University, with the somewhat whimsical title, "Sewing is for Women; Horses are for Men," a quotation from Mela Lindsay's *The White Lamb*, gives an informative description of the traditional role of women in the life of our forefathers, based mainly on information from *The White Lamb* and from Timothy Kloberdanz's Colorado State University master's thesis.

All the Germans who emigrated from Russia did not come to the United States and Canada; substantial numbers went to Brazil and Argentina. We get a good insight into their way of life from the paper entitled, "Cultural Changes among Germans from Russia in Argentina 1967-1977," by Iris Barbara Graefe, an Austrian scholar who has lived among these people and is a recognized authority on them. Many members of AHSGR will remember Dr. Graefe, who has spoken at two of our conventions.

Now back to Russia. There is an interesting paper by Aleksander Mrdjenovic, a Ph.D. student at the University of Kansas, whose master's thesis was reviewed in *this Journal* (Vol 1, No. 1). He has done extensive research in both German and Russian language sources on the history of the Volga Germans between the wars. The title of his contribution to this book is "The Genesis of Volga German Political Autonomy, 1917-1918." It throws new light on the events of the revolutionary period which led to the formation of the "Autonomous" Labor Commune of the Volga Germans in 1918.

Finally, we go back in time to the manifestoes of Catherine II and Alexander I. Dr. James Long's article on the manifestoes includes the first complete translation of these historic documents from Russian into English, a useful contribution to our historical literature. Although sections of these documents have been misinterpreted by some, their content has been accurately known for many years from existing German translations. Catherine's government, perhaps the empress herself, produced an authoritative German version, along with the Russian version. This was reprinted most recently in the June 1962 issue of *Volk auf dem Weg*, from a copy in the *Stadtarchiv Ulm*. A German translation of the 1804 "manifesto" appears in Malinowsky, *Die Planerkolonien am Asowschen Meere*, pp. 80-84. A comparison of these German versions with Dr. Long's translation from the Russian shows them in a favorable light. Personally, I would have preferred that Dr. Long had given us a translation of something from the Russian literature that is less well known to us.

The book ends with a bibliography of the Germans from Russia Collection at Colorado State University, prepared by John Newman.

This is an interesting set of essays, which I recommend to our readers. I can assure the scholars involved that their research efforts on the history of our people are much appreciated by the members of [AHSGR](#).

Note: A copy of the book has been donated to our Archives by the publishers. The book is obtainable from University Microfilms International, Monographs Order Entry, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48106, at \$14.25, plus \$1.00 for postage and handling.

The German-Russians: A Bibliography of Russian Materials with Introductory Essay, Annotations, and Locations of Materials in Major American and Soviet Libraries, by James Long. Santa Barbara, California, [Clio Press](#), 1978. 136 pp. Subject Index. Author Index.

Reviewed by Adam [Giesinger](#).

By providing us with this bibliography Professor Long has rendered a service that will be much appreciated by American scholars doing research on the history of Germans in Russia. He investigated the resources of seven American libraries and the Lenin Library in Moscow for Russian-language materials on this history. In this work he lists and annotates the books, pamphlets, and articles that he found, indicating in each case, except for the newspapers, the libraries in which the items are available. It is interesting to note that nearly half of the items listed can be found in American libraries, mainly the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library, and the Hoover Library at Stanford University. American scholars could be making more use of this material and hopefully this book will inspire them to do so.

In his introductory essay Dr. Long gives a brief summary of the history of Germans in Russia and discusses Russian primary sources on this history and the research that has been done on this material by Russian and Soviet scholars.

The most useful primary sources are official publications of the central government and later, after 1860, when local administrative units (*zemstvos*) were set up, the publications of these local government bodies. Some of these publications are available to us in American libraries and, although Dr. Long does not mention this, in German libraries, at Helsinki in Finland, and probably elsewhere outside of Russia. For many, however, one must go to Russia itself. Some of the resources of certain Soviet libraries are now open to foreign scholars, but much of the material that we would wish to see is still not accessible. Dr. Long, who spent six months in Russia in 1976, had some success in locating materials in the Lenin Library. He established the existence there of more than 200 items of interest to us, which are not available in American libraries. These are listed in this bibliography.

In his discussion of research carried out by Russian scholars under the old regime, he singles out for special comment the historians [Skalkovskii, Klaus](#), and [Pisarevskii](#), who used archival sources to produce major works on the Germans in Russia. While the names Klaus and Pisarevskii are well known to American scholars in this field (although many details of their works are not), Skalkovskii is not so familiar. Articles giving information from his writings, by American scholars proficient in the Russian language, would be a desirable addition to the English-language literature.

No significant research in this field has been done in Russia during the Communist era. Since the war especially, it has been a sensitive area in which work by Soviet scholars has not been encouraged. Some Soviet-era writings are mentioned.

The bibliography lists 438 items: numbers 1-13 are bibliographies; numbers 14-173 are books and official publications; numbers 174-395 are articles and statutes; and numbers 396-438 are Russian newspapers. The books and articles listed range from reputable scholarly works down to anti-German tracts of no scholarly value. Dr. Long's annotations are a valuable guide to the researcher regarding the nature of the contents of each item. A helpful subject index and author index follow the bibliographical list.

The preface of the book makes one claim that is somewhat inaccurate. This is the statement (p. x) that "few scholars have endeavored to use Russian materials," in which there is an implication that these materials are unexplored territory. Dr. Long must surely be referring only to American scholars writing in English. The major German-language writers, whether they wrote in Russia or in Germany, did use Russian-language sources extensively. A study of the German literature establishes that beyond any doubt. It is true, of course, that much remains to be done and that little use has been made of the Russian literature here in America.

Dr. Long's bibliographical list has several examples of a phenomenon that will be of interest to our readers, the changes in spelling that German names undergo as a result of transliteration from German to Russian and then from Russian to English. Two well known names will serve as illustrations: la. [Shtakh](#)

(No. 158) is [Jakob Stach](#), the well known author of German-language books on the Germans in Russia, who also wrote a book in Russian, listed here; and [Iakov Tim. Ditts \(Nos. 182-186\)](#) is [Jakob Dietz](#), a Volga German member of the First Imperial Duma in 1905, who wrote many articles for a Russian newspaper in Saratov.

This book will prove useful to all researchers on the history of the Germans in Russia and should be on the shelves of all libraries collecting materials in this field.

Note: A copy of *The German-Russians: A Bibliography* was presented to [AHSGR](#) by the publishers and is now in our Archives at [Greeley](#). The book is available for purchase at \$16.95 from [Clio Press](#), Riviera Campus, 2040 A.P.S., Box 4397, Santa Barbara, CA 93103.

"A Survey of English Loanword Usage in the Spoken German Language of German-Russians in North Dakota," by [Alien L. Spiker](#). Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of North Dakota (Grand Forks), 1978.91pp.

Reviewed by [Timothy J. Kloberdanz](#).

Of all the cultural aspects relating to the heritage of Germans from Russia, perhaps the most neglected is that of linguistics. This is a regrettable oversight, when one considers the crucial role of the spoken German language in Russian German oral history, folklore, religion, and ethnic identity. Various dialects of the Russian Germans were carried to the New World and formed an important part of the "cultural baggage" of the early emigrants. Though intangible, the dialects proved far more durable than the embroidered [headshaws](#) and felt boots worn by the emigrants. Today, in numerous Russian German communities stretching from the frozen prairies of central Saskatchewan to the humid pampas of [Argentina](#), Russian German dialects persist. However, none of the dialects remain totally unchanged. The Queen's English has colored the German dialects of Russian Germans in western Canada, just as Spanish and Portuguese have influenced the Old World vocabularies of dialect German speakers in South America. This will come as a surprise only to the strict grammarian or purist who actually believes in "fossil languages." Linguists recognize that all living languages — like all living cultures — respond to their environments and thus change (to at least some degree) to maintain vitality. This has been the case for the many German dialects spoken by Russian Germans around the world. The fact that present day Russian German dialects incorporate a growing number of Russian, English, Spanish, or Portuguese words does not mean that they are inadequate but rather that they respond to new conditions and new settings in ways that all healthy languages do.

[Alien L. Spiker's](#) recent master's thesis on English loanword usage among Germans from Russia and their descendants in present day North Dakota deserves to be read and studied by those contemplating similar linguistic research. It also should be read by anyone interested in the linguistic heritage of Germans from Russia, and particularly by those individuals who think that Russian German dialects are merely aberrant forms of proper [Hochdeutsch](#).

The Spiker thesis is well written and is a solid contribution to a hitherto little-explored field of research. The study consists of nine concise chapters, numerous tables, and an appendix section that includes North Dakota dialect German texts in phonetic transcription. The thesis is largely devoted to an analysis of linguistic borrowing among Russian Germans in south-central North Dakota and is based on 184 minutes of recorded conversations in dialect German with 15 Russian German informants (10 in [Lehr](#), North Dakota;

5 in [Strasburg](#), North Dakota), All of the informants traced their ancestry to German colonies in the Black Sea region of South Russia.

After analyzing the 184 minutes of recorded conversation, Spiker found that 350 different English loanwords were used by his informants while conversing in German. Seventy-four percent of these loan words were nouns, seventeen percent were verbs, and the remainder were adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and so on. Many of the direct English loanwords included such terms as *dollar*, *farm*, *store*, *pickup*, *granddaughter*, and *claim* (homestead). In many cases, English verbs were partially altered to conform to German ones, such as *spenden*, *getransferred*, *farmen*, *moven*, and *usen*. Other loanwords that occurred quite often included *east*, *anyway*, *inside*, *outside*, and *easy*.

While conducting and analyzing his interviews, Spiker noted that English loanwords were less common when the informant related a story about life in Old Russia or things intimately familiar to him. However, when the subject shifted to "a trip west" or the description of an unfamiliar activity, English loanwords

were far more frequent.

Spiker admits that his thesis is only a survey and thus "the motivation for the adoption of loanwords is difficult to determine" (p. 82). However, the reasons (psychological, cultural, or otherwise) behind such loanword usage are extremely important and it is unfortunate that Spiker did not include at least some of his own speculative observations as to why informants preferred to use terms such as "easy" or "inside" rather than their German counterparts. While it may not be difficult to understand why Russian Germans rapidly incorporated such loanwords as "pickup" and "fridge" in their German vocabulary, it is clearly another matter altogether when the issue becomes one of linguistic preferences, rather than mandatory substitution.

It is also unfortunate that Spiker was not able to utilize any of the fine archives of Russian German source materials now available in the western United States. The AHSGR international archives in Greeley, Colorado, for example, would have been especially beneficial for additional background study and comparative analysis. In the introductory portion of his thesis, Spiker writes, "Since the language [of the Germans from Russia] has been long neglected by linguists, reference material concerning the spoken German of this ethnic group was not available" (p. 2). While it is true that the Russian German dialects have been "long neglected," a few articles and studies do exist, including early works published in Russia by Soviet linguists Georg Dinges and V. M. Zhinnunskii, as well as more recent dialectal German compilations by Leo Marx and V. Poljanski. In present-day Germany, linguistic studies by scholars of the Low German dialect used by Russian German Mennonites deserve recognition, as do the highly professional folkloristic works of Johannes Kuenzig, Waltraut Wemer, and Alfred Cammann. In the United States, relatively little has been done in regard to Russian German dialectal research, but Joseph S. Height's *Die Muddersproch der Kutschurganer, Beresaner und Liebentaler* (1975) and Aina Sirks's masters thesis "A Study of a Nebraska German Dialect" (University of Nebraska, 1956) are worthy of mention. The Height booklet would have been of value because of Mr. Spiker's numerous contacts with Black Sea German informants. The Sirks thesis, although it deals with a specific Volga German dialect still spoken in eastern Nebraska, would have been worth citing for comparative purposes. In her synchronic study of twenty-two years ago, Sirks noted the existence of Russian loanwords among Volga Germans as well as more prevalent English loanwords such as "floor, measles, pin, buggy, and county."

In mentioning the above works, I do not mean to fault Mr. Spiker for not including them in the bibliography of his excellent thesis. The fault lies elsewhere. What is needed — now more than ever — is greater cooperation, dialogue, and exchange among scholars and students doing Russian German research in all areas of the country. (International organizations like AHSGR can and do provide invaluable service in helping scholars become familiar with past as well as ongoing research endeavors.) To fully understand the Russian German experience and place it in proper perspective, we must familiarize ourselves with that experience in all its diverse forms, whether it be of Black Sea Germans in North Dakota, Volhynian Germans in Michigan, Mennonites in Kansas, Hutterites in South Dakota, Moravian Brethren in Canada, South Caucasus Germans in California, or Volga Germans in central Argentina. We must know what research has been done, what is presently being accomplished, and most importantly, what remains to be studied. Otherwise, both the field of scholarship and the world-wide community of Germans from Russia will suffer.

Along the Trails of Yesterday: A Story of McIntosh County by Nina Parley Wishek. Originally published by *The Ashley Tribune*, Ashley, North Dakota, 1941. Reprinted 1978. 437 pages.

Reviewed by Timothy J. Kloberdanz.

County histories are relatively commonplace but their individual worth as *reliable* scholarly sources is often questionable. Some are insightful, well-integrated accounts while others are merely compilations of hurriedly written family sketches that mean little to those outside the actual boundary lines of the county described. Perhaps the next best thing to seeing a good county history in print is seeing an old but valuable one back in circulation. Of all the county histories that deal with Germans from Russia, Nina Parley Wishek's volume, *Along the Trails of Yesterday*, is certainly one of the better known. Until last year, it was also one of the hardest to obtain. Now, thirty-seven years later, readers again can enjoy this absorbing account of a county in south central North Dakota that has one of the highest percentages of Russian German-Americans in the entire United States.

One simply would not expect to find so much interesting and original material in a volume that begins with the opening phrase "once upon a time, long long ago" but the book has a peculiar charm all its own.

The writer first came to McIntosh County in 1887 when (in her own words) "there was . . . nothing but the waving grass and a vast unbroken silence." Decades later, as an elderly woman who had watched the North Dakota prairie slowly bloom with sun-gilded farmsteads and towns all around her, she wrote the history of her locale so that others might obtain "a picture of those [pioneer] times and to render tribute to the valiant souls who blazed the trail for the youth of today."

Nina Parley Wishek was an Anglo-American who looked upon the Black Sea German homesteaders of the northern plains as a decidedly curious lot. Although she endured the same hardships of pioneer life on the Dakota prairie that many other Russian German neighbors did, she maintained a keen awareness of her own social background and resulting status. One of the chapters in her book, entitled "German Maids Whom I Have Known," relates her experiences with young women fresh from the Black Sea region who were employed in her home. To her surprise, Nina Parley Wishek discovered that her Russian German maids did not possess the inferiority complex she had previously imagined. In fact, the author noted "... I soon learned that in spite of our feeling of racial superiority, we were ridiculed and looked down upon by them" (p.252).

In the fifteen chapters of *Along the Trails of Yesterday*, the author recounts the history of the county via personal recollections, anecdotes, family biographies, newspaper accounts, and official government records. References to the role played by Germans from Russia in the development of McIntosh County are numerous. One of the more tragic incidents from pioneering days described by the author was a prairie fire in 1898 that involved a heroic Russian German mother. The woman, Wilhemina Geiszler, was severely burned when she tried to save the life of her small daughter whose clothing caught fire as flames raced across the prairie near their homestead. Both mother and daughter later died from the painful injuries they received.

Chapter Ten of *Along the Trails of Yesterday* is devoted entirely to the "Manners and Customs" of the early Russian German settlers. Nina Parley Wishek meticulously described their traditional clothing, footwear, "sodhouse" architecture, work habits, foodways, family organization, match-making rituals, and elaborate wedding celebrations. Even a few paragraphs describing the preparation of "Russian lignite" (manure fuel) are included.

Perhaps the highest and most unforgettable compliment Nina Parley Wishek paid the early Russian German pioneers of McIntosh County, North Dakota, appears in her chapter "And They Came Unto A Far Country" in which she wrote (p. 229), "We American pioneers thought we sacrificed, lived cheaply, and enjoyed no luxuries, but I doubt if we could or would have lived the simple frugal life that was theirs."

Note: A complimentary copy of the new edition of *Along the Trails of Yesterday* was donated to the AHSGR Archives by Max A. Wishek, a son of the late author. Readers can purchase second edition hard-bound copies of their own by sending \$8.95 (postpaid) to: Max A. Wishek, Ashley, North Dakota 58413.

The AHSGR Archives and Historical Library housed in the Greeley (Colorado) Public Library contains in addition to maps, manuscripts, and documents, several hundred books which may be checked out to members of the Society through Interlibrary Loan. Members of the Society may request any volume in the AHSGR collection from their own local libraries which will then order the books from the Greeley Library and check them out to the member requesting them. No more than three items will be loaned at one time. Materials may be checked out for a period of one month. Members will be required to show a current AHSGR membership card when requesting items and will be charged for return postage at the library rate. A fifty page *Bibliography of the AHSGR Archives and Historical Library* provides a short description of each item in the AHSGR collection. Copies of the bibliography are available at two dollars each (plus fifty cents for postage and handling) from AHSGR, 631 D Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68502.

WE SING OUR HISTORY

Lawrence A. Weigel

Because love is one of God's greatest gifts to mankind, we can assume that among the first songs any ethnic group ever sang were songs of love. During the late 1880's German settlers from Russia came by the thousands to settle the prairies of the Dakotas, Nebraska, and Kansas, bringing with them hundreds of love songs and romantic ballads sung by their forefathers. By way of oral tradition these rugged immigrants preserved their tender songs of love, many of which are still being sung today. One of the most beloved is entitled "Herz mein Herz." This song, no doubt also popular in Russia, was brought to the plains of Kansas by my forefathers in 1876. Several years ago I recorded the song on tape and sent it to the [Volksliedarchiv](#) in Freiburg, Germany where they transcribed the notes for me. I translated the words into English and featured the song in my column "Volga German Traditions" in the [Ellis County Star](#). I hope [AHSGR](#) members will enjoy it.

Herz mein Herz

1. Herz mein Herz war-um denn du so trau-rig und ich bin al-le Freu-den
voll Ei das macht weilst du mir hast be-foh-len, dass
ich kein and-res lie-ben soll

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Herz mein Herz warum den du so traurig,
Und ich bin alle Freuden voll;
Ei das macht weilst du mir hast befolen,
Das ich kein andres lieben soll.</p> <p>2. Du liebst ja alle Tag ein andren,
Und ich soll lieben dich allein;
Dass kann ja nicht immer so bleiben,
Es muss einmal geschieden sein.</p> <p>3. Herz mein Herz schwimmt alle Tag im Wasser,
Herz mein Herz schwimmt alle Tag im Blut;
Ei du brings! mich um mein Jung frisch Leben,
Du bringst mich urn mein jung frisch Blut.</p> <p>4. Da kommt ein Vogel angefliegen,
Und setzt sich nieder auf meine Schoss;
Einen Zettel druch er in seinen Schnabel,
Von mein feinsliebchen einen Gruss.</p> <p>5. Ach Vogel, flieg nur wieder weiter,
Und nimm den Gruss und auch den Kuss,
Denn ich kann dich heute nicht begleiden,
Weil ich dahir verbleiben muss.</p> <p>6. Seht ihr nicht die viele schoene Haeuser,
Und auch die schone Thuren dran;
So begriss mir alle meine Nochbars Leute,
Die bei der Arbeit lustig sein.</p> <p>7. Wenn ich mir vieles Gelt gespart,
Dann bau ich mir ein neues Haus,
Mit sieben hundret sieben und siebzig Fenstern.
Zum obersten schau ich heraus.</p> | <p>1. My dear Sweetheart, why are you sad,
When I am happy and gay;
It is because you have forbidden me
To love any other girl today.</p> <p>2. Yet every day you love another,
And I should love only you;
Don't expect this to remain that way,
Because to me you are not true.</p> <p>3. My heart swims in water every day,
My heart swims in blood too;
You are robbing me of my young life,
My blood I give to you.</p> <p>4. From afar a bird comes flying
And gently sits down upon my lap;
In his bill he carries a greeting,
With his wings he starts to flap.</p> <p>5. Dear bird fly back to my sweetheart,
And return her greeting and her kiss;
I will not be able to accompany you,
Here, I will remain and live in bliss.</p> <p>6. Don't you see those beautiful houses,
With the best doors in the land;
I send greetings to all my neighbors,
When they work, they're happy, how grand.</p> <p>7. When I have saved enough money, I
will build a house where I can roam;
With seven hundred seventy-seven windows,
I will look out the highest in my home.</p> |
|---|--|

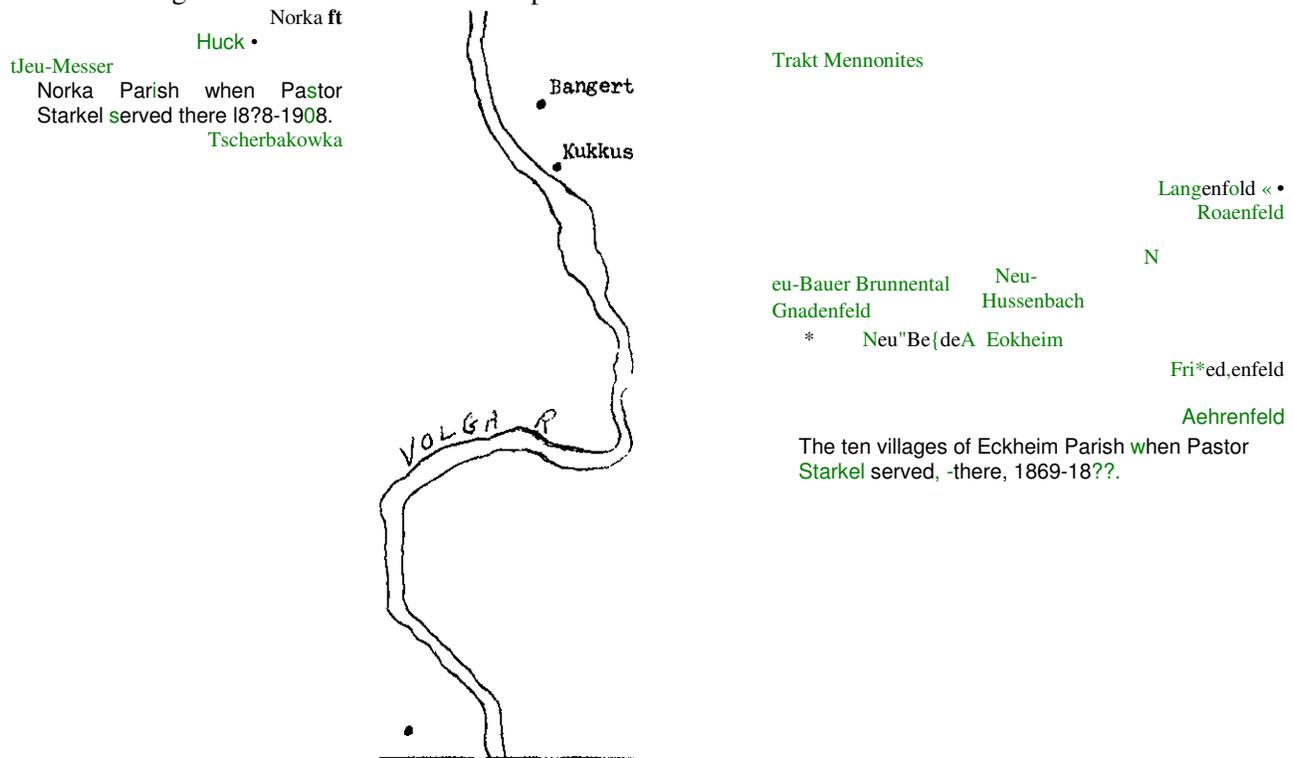
A VOICE FROM THE OLD COUNTRY: THE STARKEL LETTERS

Letters by and about Pastor **Wilhelm** Starkel, longtime pastor at Norka on the Volga *Bergseite*
Translated by Paul **G. Reitzer**

Introduction and Notes by Adam **Giesinger**

The Staerkel family, who came to the Volga region in the 1760's from Boenstadt, **Oberhessen**, Germany, were among the founders of Norka. The immigrant **Staerkels** were Daniel and his son Wilhelm. The first of the line born in the Volga region was **Christoph**, son of Wilhelm, Pastor Staerkel's grandfather. The pastor's father was **Johannes Hehmch** Staerkel, born at Norka in 1805.¹ He appears to have been a teacher-sexton (*Kuster*), who gave his family a piously religious upbringing. He taught for many years at Bangert in the parish of **Kukkus** on the *Wiesenseite*. Two of his sons have left a recorded history of interest to us. One was Pastor Wilhelm Staerkel, born at Norka in 1839; the other was **Heinrich** Jacob Staerkel (commonly called simply Jacob), born at Bangert in 1846.

The elder son, Wilhelm,² born December 13, 1839, was sent to the Basel Mission House in Switzerland in 1859 to receive theological training to prepare him for the ministry. He was ordained in **Ravensburg, Wuerttemberg**, in July 1864 and in October of that year sailed for America, where he served as pastor at **Kenosha** and Burlington, Wisconsin. In April 1868 he left America to return to his old home in Russia. Shortly after his arrival in Norka, on July 4, 1868, he married **Beate Bonwetsch**, daughter of Christoph Heinrich Bonwetsch, then pastor at Norka. A year later he accepted a call to the parish of Eckheim, which comprised ten relatively new villages far out on the steppes east of the Volga, where he served till 1877. In 1876 his father-in-law, Pastor Bonwetsch of Norka, died of a stroke while visiting Germany. For a brief period the parish was served by a son, Pastor Nathaniel **Gottlieb** Bonwetsch, but in 1878 Pastor Wilhelm Staerkel was called from **Eckheim** and served in Norka until 1908. Many of his parishioners came to America during this period. It is probable that there are still a few **old-timers** among us who can tell us a great deal about this esteemed pastor. We would welcome such reminiscences.



Since Professor Giesinger submitted his introduction to the Staerkel letters a number of such recollections of this pastor "whose name echoed the length and breadth of the Volga region and is still remembered today wherever German-Russians are found"* have come to the Editor's attention. Anecdotes illustrating Pastor **Staerkel's** exemplary piety, erudition, and benevolence border on the legendary.

In his fascinating volume *One of Many*, Reuben A. Bauer elaborates on the career of Pastor Staerkel. An anecdote on pages 36-7 describes the Pastor's ordination. Each of the newly-ordained pastors was required to preach from an assigned text before the seminary professors and a board of examiners. When Pastor Staerkel took his turn at the pulpit, he found no assigned Biblical text—only a blank piece of paper. After thoughtfully turning the blank page from side to side, the young minister began, "Hier ist nichts und da ist nichts; von nichts hat Gott die Welt erschaffen," (i.e., "Here is nothing; there is nothing. From nothing God created the universe.") He continued with a sermon that caused his superiors to "sit up and take notice." Impressed with his response to this situation, and with his total performance as a seminarian, the professors assured Pastor Staerkel that "The Holy Spirit is surely with you," and appealed to the church elders in Norka, "Bitte, schickt uns mehr von diese Staerkel," (i.e., "Please, send us more of these Staerkels!").

J. Preisendorf of Fort Morgan, Colorado recalls a dream of Pastor Staerkel's recorded in the "Chronik der Kolonie Norka." In the Pastor's words, "I lay on my bed trying to imagine to what sort of work I would be called, and so fell asleep. Two women appeared to me; one a young woman I did not know the other an, old woman with whom I had been acquainted in Norka. Each of them proffered me a piece of buttered bread, first the young woman, then the elderly one. Then I woke up. This was prophetic of my two parishes: first, the small, unfamiliar parish [Eckheim], then the familiar Norka congregation which I had hoped to serve."

George Sauer, Sr., who served as the Pastor's coachman for three years in Norka recalls an event from the harvest season of 1906 when Pastor Staerkel received word that there was an uncontrollable fire raging in the threshing field. "When they arrived at the scene, the fire was well underway and fanned by high winds. The amazing fact of the matter was that Rev. Staerkel stopped the fire from spreading to the nearby fields and granaries loaded with grain by orally reciting a prayer as they circled hurriedly around the fire. The fire did not continue to burn beyond the tracks left by the carriage wheels, but instead burned itself out."***



Wilhelm Starkel (1839-1915), much-revered Reformed pastor of the Volga Wiesenseite parish of Eckheim and of the Bergseite parish of Norka. (Photo courtesy of Reuben A. Bauer).



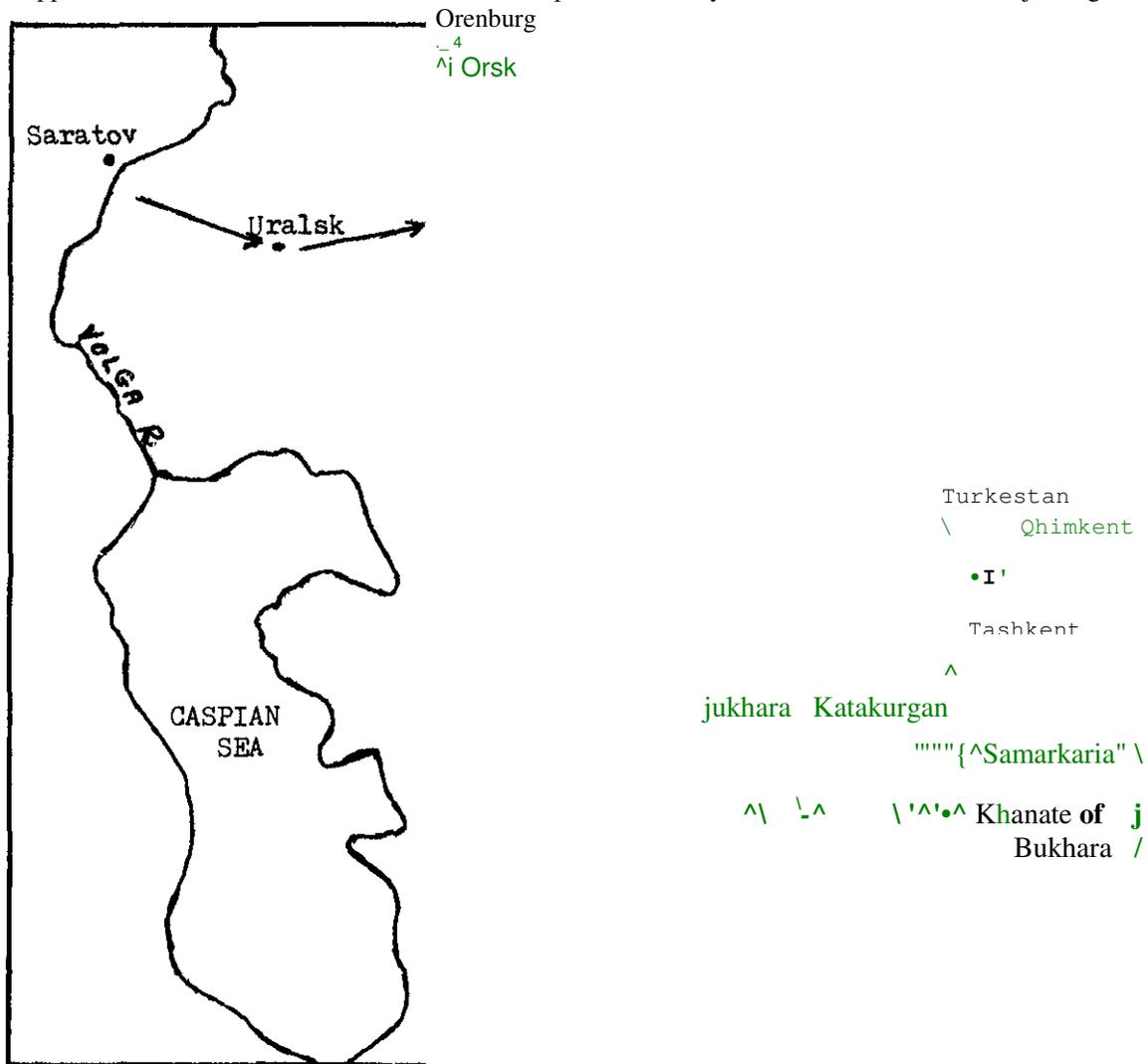
Beate Bonwetsch Starkel, daughter of Norka's fourth pastor and wife of its celebrated sixth (Photo courtesy of Reuben A. Bauer)

Both Mr. Bauer in *One of Many* and Fred C. Koch in *The Volga Germans* mention Pastor Staerkel's leadership in organizing the brotherhood Conference movement, *die Bruederschaft*. *** Koch also carefully delineates the Pastor's active role in stimulating immigration to the New World. (See *The Volga Germans*, pp.

205-6.) Bauer mentions Staerkel's writing talent and refers to his book, *Der Schluessel zur Offenbarung Johannes* ("Key to the Revelation of Saint John ") and relates that near the end of his ministry Starkel was decorated by Czar Nicholas II (pp. 38-9).

The sixth pastor of the Norka parish, Starkel was also distinguished as the longest tenured pastor in Norka's 150 year history according to Bauer (p. 39), having served for more than thirty years. Because of a number of ailments, including failing eyesight which eventually ended in blindness, the Pastor retired from active ministry seven years before his death in 1915. His wife preceded him in death in 1908 (Bauer, p. 39). Amalia Zwetzig (Mrs. Henry) Kniss of Bayard, Nebraska-whose husband grew up in Norka and spent many evenings reading to Pastor Starkel during his years of failing eyesight-recalls her husband's having mentioned that although they had no children of their own, Pastor and Mrs. Starkel raised as then-daughter an orphan who had been left quite literally on their doorstep. The child, named Hulda, eventually married Norka's Schulmeister Eichhorn, according to Mrs. Kniss.]

The pastor's younger brother, Jacob Starkel,³ was born on September 5, 1846. Early in the year 1866, when he was not yet twenty years old, he married Katharina Elisabeth Schafer of Grimm, a year younger than himself. This couple had thirteen children, of whom ten survived to adulthood, in spite of the hardships to which they were subjected by the family's migrations. Their birthplaces, of which descendants in America have a record, tell us something about the family's wanderings. The eldest son was born at Tscherbakowka; the next five children, in the years 1868 to 1875, at Anton, where Jacob appears to have been teacher-sexton. Then the family moved to Neu-Hussenbach in Pastor Staerkel's Eckheim parish on the Volga steppes. Here two more children were born. At this point the family undertook the first of its major migrations.





Route followed by the Jacob Starkel Family and their Mennonite Fellow-Travelers from the Volga Region to Central Asia to the Settlement at Lausan (L) in the Khanate of Chiva.

At Neu-Hussenbach Jacob Staerkel, who was of a pietistic turn of mind, had come into contact with a group of religious visionaries, led by Claas Epp, living in the neighboring Trakt Mennonite settlement. He was attracted to their views and, when they decided to migrate to Central Asia to find a place of refuge where they could safely wait for the Second Coming, he accompanied them. The Staerkel family left the Volga region on September 1, 1881, with the last of the five wagon trains that undertook the migration in the years 1880-1881.⁴ They suffered severe hardships on the journey, A son, Wilhelm, was born and died on the way. In October 1882 a large part of this fifth group, including the Staerkels, finally found a settlement site, which they named Lausan, in the then semi-independent Khanate of Chiva, south of the Aral Sea. Here another Starkel son, Nathaniel, was born in 1883.

The privations and hardships the Lausan settlers had to endure in this alien environment soon proved too much for them.⁵ In 1883, through correspondence with Mennonites in the United States, they obtained financial help to come to America. By April 1884 the long perilous journey back to the Volga and from there to the United States got under way.⁶ The Staerkels settled in Kansas, where the three youngest of their children were born. There must be many descendants of the children of Jacob Starkel in America. We would be interested in hearing from them.

The Letters

The letters printed below include a letter of August 1, 1898 from Pastor Wilhelm Staerkel in Norka to the Evangelical Mission Society, Basel, Switzerland; a letter of July 9 (June 27 O. S.), 1869 from Pastor Wilhelm Starkel in Norka to the Evangelical Mission Society, Basel, Switzerland; and a letter of March 15, 1928, from the Evangelical Mission Society, Basel, Switzerland, to Pastor William Reitzer, Flint, Michigan, answering an inquiry regarding Pastor Starkel.

Norka, Russia
August 1, 1868

Honorable Inspector:

You will undoubtedly have received the letter I wrote on my trip from Hamburg. I arrived back in my home village in mid-May. Since then I have visited my friends and relatives and celebrated my wedding. This [wedding] took place on July 4 of this year. May the Lord be greatly thanked that he gave me such a wife who suits me so well in all respects. Oh, He knows what His children need and according to His divine wisdom shares His gifts to each.

For a long period of time I have been unclear about the will of God, whether to stay here in Russia or to return to America, but finally I could decide to stay here and believe to have done this according to His will. Much is ascribed to God's will which is, observed in His light, purely self-will and a self-elected way. Yet, in spite of everything, the Lord rules and guides throughout, even among his enemies, and the misdirected will of man has to listen. My stay here seems to me to be the will of the Lord. When I wanted to go to Russia, He sent me to America. There I gradually killed this desire, and then it happened that I had to come back after all. On top of this, two positions became vacant after I returned and both villages asked me if I would accept their call. From one parish I have a nomination in hand. From the other I shall receive one shortly. This I do know, that the true God will lead me not in my way but in His way.

Greetings to you and the entire Mission House.

Your servant, W.
Staerkel

Norka, Russia 1869(O.S.)
June 27, July 9, 1869 (N.S.)

Dear Inspector:

This will probably be the last time that I shall write to you from Norka. Within the next three weeks I will move away from my father-in-law to the plains region on the other side of the Volga River, where about a half year ago I was elected pastor of a parish, but it wasn't until the beginning of June that I received the confirmation by the minister. The parish consists of ten colonies, newly established within the last ten to twelve years, and composed of settlers from the over-populated colonies along the Volga. The

parsonage is located in the center of the parish and yet the remaining congregations, according to distances, are still ten, fifteen, to thirty **versts** [1 **verst** = .66 miles] away. I must ride sixty **verst** [39.6 miles] from one end of the parish to the other. Naturally, the congregations are small, yet the total number of parishioners is over 4000. This is definitely quite a nice mission station in the Russian steppes. Three weeks ago I visited there and did not find the landscape beautiful. Oh, one sees only steppes, no mountain for contrast as in **dear** Switzerland; likewise, no green trees to enliven the view; no live stream flowing by, only dug wells with water which isn't the best. Consequently, it is considerably more desirable on the mountain side of the Volga where one can enjoy all these things. And yet I can also love the steppes. Is it not a master stroke of our God who has wisely ordered it? And while it is disliked by mankind, I feel myself the more closely drawn to it, knowing that in God's eyes, what man considers unlovely, belongs to the best and the most noteworthy. And I believe the great expanses of earth, despite their ugliness, are more valuable than we would deem them to be. Therefore, it gives me great joy to be able to go to the steppes. Even though many primitive mud huts still exist there, I will often find myself going in to these people who themselves were called together in this everlasting Palestine. Only may God grant me health as long as I may serve Him, or at least have the needed strength with a sick body to work, and supplemented with the power of the Holy Spirit from on high, who can make me diligent in regards to the Spirit and power, to work among these souls,

In this work I have had to experience various new things, until I gradually learned to differentiate between working for God's glory and seeking my glory. Oh, how the flesh does encroach into the work of the Kingdom! In all the eagerness to work for the Lord and through using all human methods to win souls, I find it comes to naught. And the Lord deliberately does not allow success to happen as long as the delusion exists that one's own strength and clever methods attempt to accomplish this. Only when one is freed from this delusion through a really humbling experience, and one comes to the realization how God's Spirit rules and acts in and through His Word, then, and only then, — we must acknowledge this power belonging to Him above - oh, then He imparts his blessings upon our words and allows them to kindle a flame in the listeners. Such experiences have I had and it has made clear the words of the apostles, "The kingdom of God exists not in words, but in power." Freely the tempests of the soul change. I find the cause of this tempest of the soul to be in large part due to a neglect of prayer. As long as I maintain an active prayer life, I can speak more warmly from the depths of my heart. If hardness enters here, then everything becomes frosty and cold. I must say to myself that I am my own destroyer. How happy will I be some time, when this mortal flesh will be put off and I will serve God **unhindered** and will carry out His will.

My father-in-law is very ill with peritonitis, which almost killed him. Yet the Lord helped graciously, so that we hope he will recover in a few weeks. It would have been a severe loss, not only for his family, but also for the Basel Mission House, which he faithfully serves in the name of the Lord. Who should take his place as an agent between Basel and here? Under the present situation and the remoteness of my parish, I cannot take his place, as much as I would like to do so, but I shall try to do what I can with God's help.

Your servant,
W. Staerkel

Basel, Switzerland
March 15, 1928

Rev. **Wm. Reitzer**
3525 **Marvin** Street
Flint, Michigan

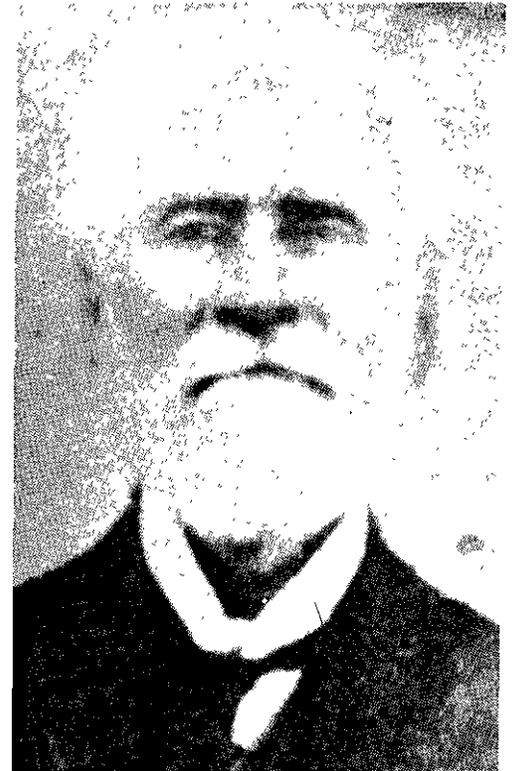
Most Honored Pastor:

In response to your inquiry concerning a former brother in our [Mission] House, Pastor **Wilhelm** Staerkel, we would like to respond with the following. The above mentioned was born in **Norka**, Russia, on December 13, 1839, entered our Mission Seminary in Basel on September 9, 1859, and traveled in October 1864 from Bremen to North America (**Kenosha**, Wisconsin); was ordained on July 17, 1864, in Ravensburg > **Wuerttemberg**, by Deacon **Eggle**. Later he proved to be quite effective in Burlington, Wisconsin. According to our records he sailed back from New York on April 28, 1868, arrived in Hamburg on May 13, and went on to his hometown of Norka, where he married **Beate Bonwetsch**, daughter of **Probst** [ruling clergyman similar to a bishop] Bonwetsch, on July 4, 1868. In the personnel records we find the last information

being a letter dated January 23, 1898 from [Norka](#). From this we learn that he underwent a serious operation in German. He tells of his trip back to Russia and expresses gratitude for his stay as guest in the Mission House. We cannot determine whether he attended the University of [Dorpat](#). The remaining letters, with the exception of one, originate during the time of his stay in North America. The time of his death is not known. We would point out that the spelling of his name differs. At first, it was spelled [Storkel](#) with "6" later with "a", then with "e".

With most revered greetings,

A. [Lenschner](#), Secretary Evangelical
Mission Society, Basel



*Pastor Staerkel about two years before his death
(Photo courtesy of [Der Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland](#).)*

NOTES

1. This information was given to me some years ago by an American descendant, [Anne Starkel Johnston](#) of [Fresno](#), California.
2. Information on his life is given in the third of the letters included herewith and in Joseph [Schmin](#), *Die Kirc fie uncle/as religioese Leben der Ruslanddeutschen* (Stuttgart: Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland, 1972), pp. 326, 344-345,350.
**Editor's Note:* [Reuben A. Bauer](#), *One of Many* (Edmonton: Published by the Author, 1965), p. 36.
^Editor's Note: Bauer, who relates Mr. [Sauer's](#) recollections on pp. 38-9 of *One of Many*, feels compelled to add that "hundreds of people witnessed this miracle," and that "many since have testified to the accuracy of this remarkable incident." ****Editor's Note:* See Bauer, pp. 37-8 and Fred [C. Koch](#), *The Volga Germans* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1977), p. 118.
3. The information about the Jacob Starkel family was provided by Anne Starkel Johnston, and by Fred Richard [Belk's](#) book, *The Great Trek of the Russian Mennonites to Central Asia 1880-1884* (Scottsdale,Pa.: Herald Press, 1976).
4. The route followed by this group is described in [Belk](#), pp. 129-136.
5. The journey to [Lausan in](#) 1882 and the experiences there are described in [Belk](#), pp. 154-170.
6. See [Belk](#), pp. 176-186.

A NOTE ON CATHERINE'S SIGNATURE

Alexander Dupper

Among the many documents signed by Empress Catherine II ("The Great") during her long reign (1762-1796) is a decree founding Odessa, the city that means so much to the Black Sea Germans. The decree begins, "Taking into consideration the favorable position of **Hadzhibei** by the Black Sea and the benefits that, can be derived from it, we have found it necessary to build there a combined naval harbor and merchant wharf . . ." ¹ On August 22, 1794 ² Admiral **J. de Ribas** laid the first stone of the harbour. ³ Although the plan of the harbor was altered during construction, the present layout of the downtown area of Odessa closely resembles the original plan. It is not certain when the name **Hadzhibei** was changed, but the city was already called Odessa at the beginning of 1795. ⁴

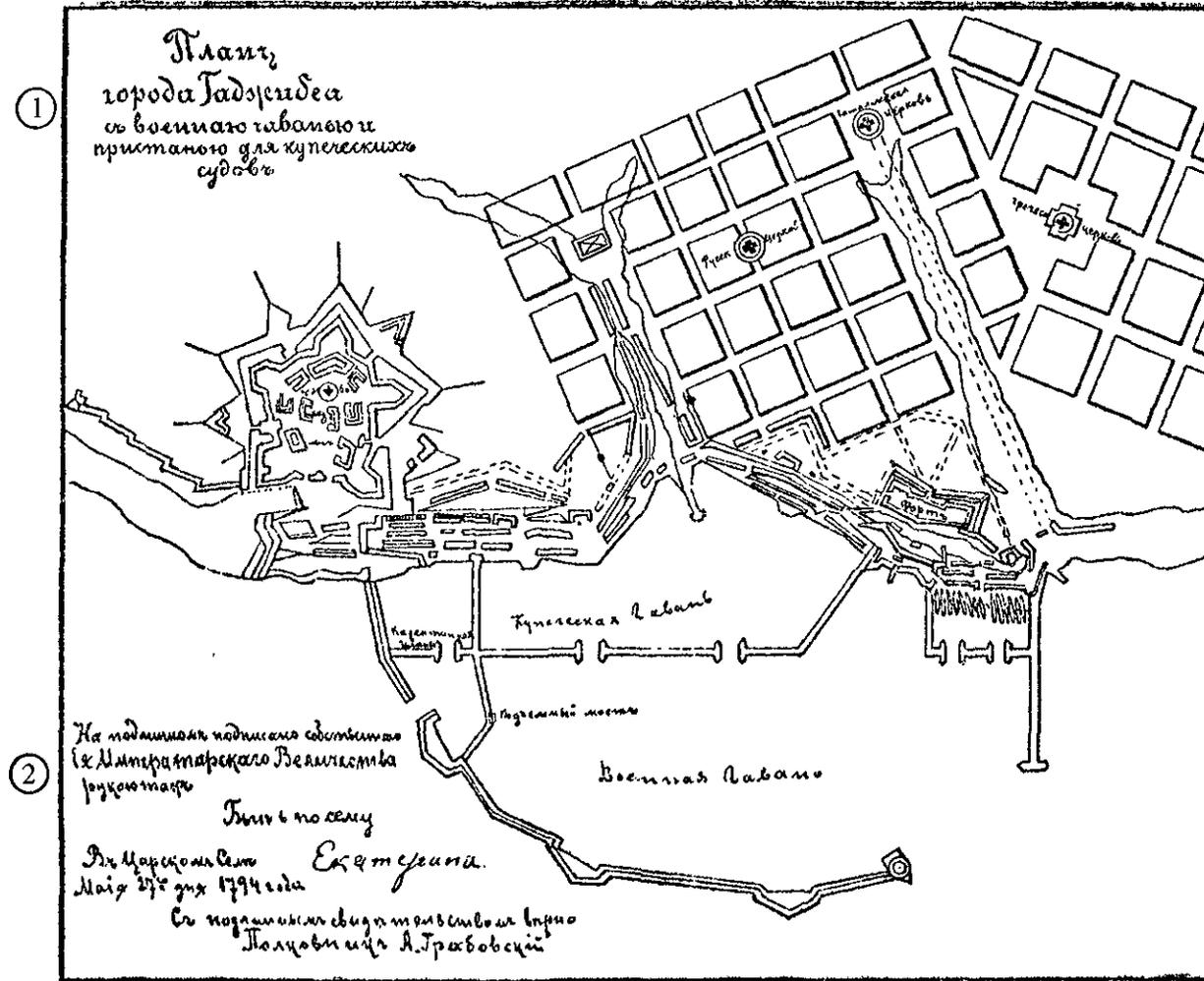
The original copies of the plan of **Hadzhibei/Odessa** and the decrees establishing the harbor there are now on exhibit in the Odessa Regional Historical Museum. ⁵ The copy printed on the facing page is of interest not only for the layout of the future city, but for the specimen of Catherine's signature in the lower left hand corner. It is interesting to note what Robert Sears has to say about the signature of Catherine II in his *Illustrated Description of the Russian Empire*. According to Sears, by the middle of the nineteenth century the old **Michailoff** palace in St. Petersburg (now Leningrad) had been converted into a school of engineers (which later on became the famous **Gorny** Institute, a school of mines), and the former banquet rooms were used in part to exhibit a collection of various objects used in engineering, as well as documents. He describes the documents:

In one of the rooms is an extraordinary number of ukases and military ordinances, having reference to the erection of defenses. They are signed, and many of them corrected, by the different emperors and empresses with their own hands. Catherine II., in particular, has made many corrections with a red-lead pencil; and Nicholas ⁶ always made with his own hand his amendments, alterations, annotations, and additions to his laws, decrees, and sentences. Here may be seen a hundred repetitions of those three important words, *Buit po semu* ("Be it so"), which are annexed to every ukase. Catherine's handwriting is bad, but the signature is never hurried; on the contrary, she seems to have taken trouble in painting every one of the Russian letters. All the long letters have a little flourish under them, which are made with a trembling hand; some are quite awry, nor are all the letters in a line; they are not **Joined**, but nearly every one stands alone, and tolerably perpendicular, without flow or rounding; it is like the handwriting of an old man. Even the individual letter will sometimes be formed of unconnected strokes. The whole is plain, and without any ornamental additions. After her name "**Ekaterina**" stands always a large dot, as if she would say, "And therewith *punctum basta.*" ⁷ [i.e. "Period! And that's the end of that!"].

Catherine II, photocopy from a painting by Van Vuk. 1979 marks the 250th anniversary of the birth of Catherine the Great who was born Princess Sophia Frederika Augusta of Anhalt-Zerbst on April 21 /May 2, 1729 in Stettin, Pomerania, and died Catherine II, Empress of all the Russias on November 6/77, 1796 in Tsarskoe Selo (now Pushkin).



COPY OF THE ORIGINAL PLAN OF ODESSA (HADZHIBEI)
SIGNED BY THE EMPRESS CATHERINE II



Translation:

(1) Plan of the city *Hadzhibeï* with naval harbour and wharf for *merchants's* ships.

(2) The original is signed by Her Imperial Majesty's own hand thus

Be it so
Ekaterina.

In *Tsarskoe Selo* May 27th day 794th year

In agreement with the original
Colonel A. Grabovsky

NOTES

1. A. A. *Guy voron*, *Odessa Says Welcome* (Odessa: *Mayak*, 1966), p. 29.
2. All dates are given according to the old Russian (Julian) calendar.
3. Kai-J Baedeker, *Russia: A Handbook for Travelers* (A facsimile of the original 3914 edition. New York: Random House, 1971), p. 396.
4. A. *Dolzhenkova* and P. *Dyachenko*, *Odessa*, Third Edition (Odessa; *Mayak*, 1977), p. 8.
5. P. *Zantchvsky*, *The Constellation of the Black Sea Ports* (Odessa: *Mayak*, 1977), p. 14.
6. Emperor Nicholas I (reigned 1825-1855).
7. Robert Sears, *An Illustrated Description of the Russian Empire* (New York: Published by the Author, 1855), p. 414.

PASSENGER LISTS

Emma Schwabenland Haynes

June 28, 1875
(Arrival date in New York)
S.S. City of Brussels
Liverpool to New York

No colony given but these are presumably pietistic Volga German Protestants. They are mentioned on p. 125 of C. Henry Smith's *The Coming of the Russian Mennonites*. These people were sent to Bluffton, Ohio but two families, the Friedrich Joergs and Heinrich Truebers, came later to Sutton, Nebraska," *Work Paper*, No. 16, p. 17 (translated by Arthur li. Hegel).

TUCH

Heinrich, 38, m, miner
Catherine, 37, f, wife
Jacob (?), 10, m, child
Peter, 8, m, child
Adam, 6, m, child
Cath., 3, f, child
Elisabeth, 1, f, infant

SCHREIBER

Heinrich, 49, m, farmer
Elisabeth, 46, f, wife
Johann, 24, in, laborer
Elisabeth, 22, f, spinster
Peter, 19, m, farmer
Heinrich, 17, m, farmer

MULLER

Johann, 40, m, farmer
Anna, 39, f, wife
Catherine, 18, f, spinster
Elisabeth, 16, f, spinster
Johan, 14, m, laborer
Jacob, 11, m, child
Conrad, 7, m, child
Heinrich, 5, m, child
Anna, 3, f, child
Margaret, 1, f, child

TREIBER [TRUEBER]

Heinrich, 38, m, farmer
Elisabeth, 27, f, wife
Adam, 11, m, child
Catherine, 5, f, child
Elisabeth, 1, f, infant

HUERTKE

G.C., 21, m, mason
Catherine, 22, f, wife

JORG [JOERG]

Johann, 58, m, carpenter
Friedrich, 36, m, carpenter
Christina, 36, f, wife
Anna, 16, f, spinster
Catherine, 14, f, spinster
Luisa, 10, f, child
Heinrich, 9, m, child
Johan, 7, m, child
Petei, 4, m, child
Christian, 11, m, child

HOFFMANN

Heinrich, 20, m, laborer Peter, 18, m, laborer

GORG [JOERG]

Johann, 33, m, laborer
Grete, 28, f, wife
Johan, 8, m, child
Heinrich, 4, m, child
illegible, 1, m, child

KONZEN

Georg, 20, m, miner

August 18, 1875
(arrival date in New York)

S.S. Cimbria

Route: Hamburg to New York
From MARIUPOL colonies of Black Sea

OTTENBURGER

Heinrich, 50, m, farmer
Catherine, 45, f, wife
Ludwig [?], 19, m, child
Georg, 15, m, child
Charlotte, 9, f, child
Line, 8, f, child
Carl, 5, m, child
Johannes, 21, m, farmer
Sophie, 21, f, wife
Conrad, 4 mo., m, child
Heinrich, 4 mo., m, child

DEUTSCHMANN

Jacob, 40, m, farmer
Elisabeth, 38, f, wife
Caroline, 21, f, child
Anna, 17, f, child
Katherine, 14, f, child
Wilhelmina, 9, f, child
Martin, 9, m, child
Eduard, 8, m, child
Friedrich, 5, m, child
Peter, 11 mo., m, infant
Helene, 1 mo., f, infant

KLATT

Gottfried, 46, m, farmer
Carolina, 44, f, wife
Gottfried, 20, m, farmer
Reinfried, 19, m, farmer
Katherine, 18, f, child Peter, 9, in, child Ferdinand, 8, m, child
Marie, 8, f, child
Helene, 6, f, child
Cornelius, 4, m, child

TABERT

Jacob, 24, m, farmer
Marie, 19, f, wife
Benjamin, 19, m, farmer

JANZEN

Carl, 21, m, farmer

SIEMUND

Heinrich, 44, in, farmer
Elisabeth, 39, f, wife Heinrich, 19, m, farmer Peter, 17, m, farmer David, 16, m, child

Elisabeth, 14, f, child
Helene, 9, f, child
Johannes, 8, m, child
Regine, 6, f, child

SCHWENDIG

Michel, 56, m, farmer
Anna, 52, f, wife
Michel, 27, m, farmer
Cornelius, 22, m, farmer
Florentina, 9, f, child
Johannes, 8, m, child
Jacob, 7, m, child

LIEDKE

Friedrich, 21, m, farmer

HIEBKE

Johannes, 21, m, farmer

SCHNEIDER

Anna, 52, f, wife
August, 28, m, child
Martin, 23, m, child
Catherine, 20, f, child
Regine, 19, f, child
Helene, 17, f, child
Heinrich, 16, m, child
Peter, 14, m, child
Friedrich, 13, m, child
Marie, 13, f, child
Eduard, 9, m, child
Caroline, 7, f, child

BRECHT

Adam, 40, m, farmer
Dorothea, 47, f, wife
Nicolaus, 21, m, farmer
Johannes, 13, m, child
Regine, 9, f, child
Adam, 19, m, farmer
Christine, 16, f, single
Marie, 15, f, single

GOERTZ

Peter, 43, m, farmer
Elisabeth, 39, f, wife
Peter, 17, m, farmer
Regine, 15, f, child
Florentina, 9, f, child
Johannes, 4, m, child
Elisabeth, 11 mo., f, infant

BERSUCH

Johannes, 21, m, farmer

JANZEN

Reinhard, 41, m, farmer
Justine, 41, f, wife
Heinrich, 17, m, farmer
Marie, 9, f, child
Justine, 7, f, child
Carl, 11 mo., m, infant

BRAUN

Michel, 18, m, farmer
Maria, 13, f, child
Friedrich, 9, m, child
Carolina, 8, f, child
Michel, 7, in, child

Josephine, 4, f, child
Johann, 6 mo., in, infant

STEGMANN

Johannes, 68, in, farmer
Elisabeth, 55, f, wife
Catherine, 22, f, child
Anna, 20, f, child
Marie, 19, f, child
Elisabeth, 11 mo., f, infant
Anna, 1 mo., f, infant
Fritz, 1 mo., f [sic], infant

LIEDKE

Johannes, 50, m, farmer

HOCHBAUER

Peter, 46, m, farmer
Catherine, 45, f, wife
Peter, 23, in, farmer
Regine, 18, f, spinster
Catherine, 18, f, spinster
Marie, 14, f, spinster
Martin, 9, m, child
Gottfried, 8, m, child
Justine, 4, f, child

DEUTSCHMANN

Beckmann, 37, m, farmer
Marie, 34, f, wife
Beckmann, 15, m, child
Elisabeth, 9, f, child
Justine, 5, f, child
Martin, 3, m, child
Gottfried, 6 mo., m, infant

OHM

Rcinhard, 63, m, farmer Talgunda
[?], 65, f, wife Jacob, 37, m, fanner
Marie, 35, f, wife Mark', 9, f, child
Carolina, 8, f, child
Catherina, 7, f, child Jacob, 6, m,
child

January 6, 1876

(Arrival date in New York)

S. S. City of Montreal

Liverpool to New York

No colonies given. These are pietistic Volga
German Protestants, some of whom joined
the Mennonite Brethren or the Baptist
church in Kansas.

GILLIG

Johan, 55, in, farmer
Maria, 54, f, wife
Peter, 20, m, miner
Elisabeth, 22, f, wife
Elisabeth, 1, f, infant
Catharina, 11, f, child

EBELING

Johannes, 40, m, miner
Anna, 40, f, wife
Hannah [?], 15, f, spinster
Catherina, 14, f, spinster
Christina, 5, f, child

HSHCHEN

Adam, 32, m, laborer
Catherina, 31, f, wife

Catherina, 9, f, child
Catherina, 7, f, child
Adam, 4, m, child
Johannes, 1, m, child

SCHRIFNER [SCHUFNER?]

Chris., 46, m, farmer
Elisabeth, 45, f, wife
Wenzel t?, 18, m, laborer
Christina, 16, f, spinster
Joliaiina, 4, f, child

HINUERGRATH JHUENERGARDT]

Georg, 30, m, laborer Marie,
27, f, wife Johanna, 4, f, child
Marie, 1, f, infant

KRAIT

Georg, 35, in, laborer
Maria, 36, f, wife
Barbara, 11, f, child
Jacob, 9, ill, child
Catherine, 7, f, child
Margarete, 5, f, child
Johannes, 3, m, child
Peter, 1, m, child

HILL

Adam, 54, m, farmer Catherine, 49,
f, wife Heinrich, 3, m, child Jacob,
2, m, child Valentine, 9, m, child
Cutenne [?], 6, f, child

SCHAFFER [SCHAFFER?]

Frank, 48, in, farmer
Edith, 46, f, wife
Jacob, 8, m, child

KRAFT

Peter, 27, in, mason
Sophie, 28, f, wife
Heinrich, 8, m, child
Anna, 6, f, child
Heinrich, 4, m, child
Johannes, 1, ni, infant

GRUEN*

Heinrich, 39, m, farmer
Christine, 36, f, wife
Heinrich, 19, ni, laborer
Phillip, 16, m, laborer
Johannes, 12, m, laborer
Heinrich, 10, m, child
Conrad, 7, m, child
Johannes, 4, f [sic], child
Catherine, 8, f, child
Johannes, 1, f [sic], infant
Catherine, 19, f, spinster

STUBING

Franz, 62, m, fanner
Catherine, 55, f, wife
Anna Cath., 16, f, spinster

RUPPELL

Friedrich, 31, m, laborer
Christine, 21, f, wife
Jacob, 7, m, child
Johan, 6, in, child
Catherine, 4, f, child
Christine, 2, f, child

MENG

Franz, 52, m, laborer
Barbara, 57, f, wife

LORENZ

Friedrich, 28, m, miner
Christine, 29, f, wife
Marie, 5, f, child
Carl, 3, m, child

ROTHE*

Heinrich, 52, m, miner
Catherina, 41, f, wife
Johann, 22, m, laborer
Georg, 19, m, laborer
Anna, 17, f, spinster
Catharina, 13, f, child

* [These are the Heinrich Gruen and the
Heinrich Rothe families mentioned by
George Burgdorff.]

SINNER

Peter, 20, m, miner
Lisbeth, 9, f, child
Christine, 7, f, child

MARTINI

Marie, 20, f, spinster

SCHEFFLER

Conrad, 25, m, miner
Marie, 29, f, wife

STUBING

Jacob, 55, m, laborer
Eva, 52, f, wife
Johann J., 30, m, laborer
Johann, 26, m, laborer
Eva Cath., 24, f, spinster
Conrad, 15, m, laborer
Jacob, 14, m, laborer
Heinrich, 10, m, child
Friedrich, 6, m, child
Christian, 8, m, child
Eva Cath., 26, f, spinster
Eva, 5, f, child
Johanna, 3, f, child
Jacob, 1, f, infant

WAGNER

Georg, 42, m, laborer Catherine,
42, f, wife Johannes, 20, m,
farmer Anna, 18, f, spinster
Johanna, 16, f, spinster Georg, 12,
m, farmer Edith [?], 10, f, child
Conrad, 8, m, child Amelia, 6, f,
child Eva, 3, f, child Phillip, 1, m,
infant

NAYTE[NAGTE]

Johannes, 32, m, farmer Anna,
34, f, wife Catherina, 14, f,
spinster Emilie, 9, f, child
Catherina, 6, f, child

MEYER

[illegible], 37, m, laborer
Madalena, 37, f, wife
Heinrich, 12, m, child
Marie, 11, f, child
Barbara, 9, f, child

Johan,4, m, child
Catharina, 3, f, child
Johannes, 58, m, farmer
Marie, 58,1', wife

RUBELLHAHN [?]

Conrad, 34, m, farmer
Catherine, 32, f, wife
Anna, 11, f, child
Heinrich, 10, m, child
Johan, 8,m, child
Friedrich, 3, m, child
Jacob, 2, m, child
Edith, 1, f, infant

SCHEFFLER

Wilhelm, 37, m, miner
Barbara, 37, f, wife
Jacob, 14, m, laborer
Christine, 7, f, child
[illegible], 9, m, child
Edith, 1,f, infant

ASCHEMEYER

Conrad, 49, m, farmer
Catherine, 46, f, wife
Heinrich, 22, m, mason
Peter, 17, m, mason
Phillip, 14, m, mason
Christine, 20, f, spinster
Edith, 10, f, child
Conrad, 5, m, child
Wilhelmina, 4, f, child
Elisabeth, 2, f, child

JENTENRICH

Heinrich, 29, m, laborer
Maric, 22, f, wife
Alexander, 2, m, child

TAUTFEST

Michel, 32, m, farmer
Catherine, 30, f, wife
Benjamin, 5, m, child

STUBING

Anna, 20, f, spinster

June 26,1876

S.S. *City of Berlin*
Liverpool to New York.
Pietistic Volga German
Protestants called Mennonites.

BERTEL

Gottfried, 30, m, laborer
Catherine, 22, f, wife
Catherine, 4, f, child Maria, 3,
f, child

BAING

Jacob, 31,m, laborer
Catherina,28,f,wife
Conrad, 4, f {sic} child
Peter, inft. m, infant

BlIRTLE [?]

Adam, 42, m, laboier
Catherina,42,f,wife
Adam, 19, m, laborer
Peter, 9, m, child
Catherina, 12, f, child
Christian, 4, f [sic], child

BEINKENNER

Jacob, 32, m, laboier
Catherina, 32, f, wife
Jacob, 10,f, child
[?],8,m,child
Peter, 5, m, child
Agnes, inft., f, infant
[?], inft., f, infant

MEYER

Georg,20,m,mason
Eva, 25, f, wife

SCHREIBER

Adam, 28, m, laborer
Cath., 30, f, wife
Lisbeth,6,f,child
Maria, 4, f, child
Gutho(?),3,m,child
Heinrich, 18, m, laborer

HOFFMANN

Gottfried, 38, f, wife [sic-Many mistakes
are made.)
Catharina, 38, f, spinster [sic]
Catharina, 15, f, child
Frederick, 11,m, child
Gottfried, 8, m, child
Catherina, 5, f, child
Johann, 3, f [sic], infant
Conrad, inft., m, mason [sic]

HAMERZELL

Jacob, 49, f, wife [sic-should be m,
mason]
Dorothea,48,m,laborer, [sic]
Heinrich, 17, f [sic], child
Jacob, 9, m, laborer [sic]

GROSCH [?]

Christian, 33, f, wife, [sic]
Catherine, 32, f, wife
Henrich,4,f [sic], child
Catherine, 3, f, child
Margaretha, inft., f, infant

EDMAN

Heinrich, 19, in, laborer

HENRICH

Conrad, 21, m, laborer

KAIBEL

Phillip, 34, m, laborer
Catherina, 34, f, wife

LANBACH

Franz, 49, m, laborer
Elisabeth, 48, f, wife
Heinrich, 21, m, laborer
Marg., 26, f, spinster
Haman [?] 12, f, child
Elisabeth, 7, f, child Jacob, 3, in, child
Philip [?], inft, m, infant

DENIES [DEINIS?]

Christian, 33, ni, manson
Agnes, 31, f, wife
Catherine, 8, f, child
Hannes, 5, f [sic], child
Annie, inft., f, infant

MICHEL

Heinrich, 23, ni, laborer
Cath., 21, f, wife

Heinrich, inft., m, infant

SCHNEIDER

David, 26, m, mason
Catherine, 29, f, wife
Catherine, 4, f, child
Lise, inft., f, infant

SCHNEIDER

Gottfried, 30, m, laborer
Sophie, 29, f, wife
Catherine, inft, f, infant

DUNKLAGEN

Peter, 44, m, laborer
Catherine, 48, f, wife
Catherine,! 2, f, child

DEWALD

Gustav, 25, m, laborer
Barbara, 24, f, wife Jacob, 4, m,
child Lisa, 3, f, child
Malia, inft, f, infant

ALBRECHT

Heinrich, 33, m, laborer
Maria, 34, f, wife
Jacob, 7,m, child
[?],inft.,m, infant

PUTZ[PELZ?]

Jacob, 24, in, laborer
Marie, 22, f, wife
Maric, 3, f, child
Marie, inft. ,f, infant

FRICK*

Jacob, 32, m, laborer
Elisabeth, 31, f, wife
Hannes, 11, f [sic], child
Philip, 9, m, child
Conrad, 7, m, child
Cashmir [?], 5, m, child
Jacob, 3, f [sic], child
Anna, inft., m [sic], infant

*[Jacob Frick was a good friend of George Burgdorff. He settled in Durham, Kansas, and remained a Baptist.]

HUBER [?]

Adam, 44, m, laborer
Christina, 44, f,wife
Hannes, 34, m, laborer
Adam, 20, m, spinster [sic]
Catherine, 17, f, child
Georg, 12,m, child
Catherine, 9, f, child
Mali, 6, f, child
Heinrich, 4, m, child
Lisbeth, inft., f, infant

GEIS

Heinrich, 46, m, laborer
Catherine, 48, f, wife
Heinrich, 26, m, laborer
Philip, 26, ni, laborer
Catharina, 4, f, child
Mali, inft, m, infant
Carl, inft, m, infant
Jacob, 18, in, laborer
Catherine, 15, f, spinster
Jacob, 12,m, child
Franz, 10, m, child
Henrich, 6, m, child

Jacob, 25, m, laborer
Anna, 21, f, wife

JORST [JOST?]
Ludwig 45, m, laborer
Catherine, 44, f, wife
Peter, 19, m, laborer
Hannes, 16, m, laborer
Philip, 9, m, child
Catherine, 6, f, child
George, inf., m, infant

BRETMEIER
Ludwig, 37, m, laborer
Catherine, 34, f, wife
Johannes, 18, m, laborer
Catherine, 17, f, spinster
Nicholas, 16, m, laborer
Adam, 12, m, child
Lisbeth, 9, f, child
Catherine, 6, f, child

SCHENELL [?]
Johanna, 22, f, spinster

OTTO
Rudolph, 36, m, laborer
Carolina, 39, f, wife
August, 10, m, child
Friedrich, 19, m, child
Alwin, 2, m, child

KACHER
Marie, 25, f, spinster

SCHNELL
Peter, 38, m, laborer
Margaretha, 28, f, wife
Lisbeth, 5, f, child
Catherina, 4, f, child

REISWIG
Philip, 36, m, laborer
Margaretha, 27, f, wife
Lisbeth, 4, f, child
Henrich, inf., m, infant

WINTER
Gottlieb, 47, m, laborer
Catherine, 46, f, wife
Lea [?], 16, f, spinster
Friedrich, 14, m, child
Lisbeth, 11, f, child
Catherina, 9, f, child
Mali, inf., m, infant

DUMLER
Jacob, 43, m, laborer
Barbara, 37, f, wife
Catherina, 12, f, child

Henrich, 10, m, child
Amalia, 8, f, child
Carl, 5, m, child
Friedrich, 3, m, child
Alex, inf., m, infant

MEYER
Ambrosius, 43, m, laborer
Julian, 44, f, wife
Anna, 15, f, spinster
Andreas, 11, m, child
Catherina, 8, f, child
Sophia, 6, f, child
Anna, 4, f, child

JAKOBSEN
Andreas, 40, m, laborer

BEUILLE [?]
Constantin, 29, m, laborer
Christina, 27, f, wife
Sophia, 6, f, child
Catharina, 5, f, child
Conrad, 3, m, child
Adam, inf., m, infant

CHRISTIANSON
Sofia [?], 23, m, laborer
Augustus, 15, m, laborer
Josephina, 11, f, child
Johann, 8, f [sic], child

EHRlich
Heinrich, 31, m, laborer
Catherina, 21, f, wife

SPAHN
Adam, 22, m, mason
Margaretha, 22, f, wife
Catherina, inf., f, infant

INBICKEL [?]
N., 31, m, laborer
Lisbeth, 31, f, wife
Christina, 6, f, child
Lena, inf., f, infant

DENIS [DEINES?]
Adam, 35, m, laborer
Catherine, 35, f, wife
Elizabeth, 12, f, child
Magdalena, 10, f, child
Conrad, 3, f [sic], child
Magdalena, inf., f, infant

SCHAFER
Conrad, 26, m, laborer
Barbara, 25, f, wife
Barbara, 6, f, child
Catherina, 4, f, child
Christian, inf., f [sic], infant

SALONESKE (SOCOLOFSK Y? I)
Gottfried, 21, m, laborer
Catherine, 22, f, wife
Gottfried, 3, m, child
Friedrich, inf., m, infant
Johann, 12, f [sic], child

BINCKMAN
Peter, 21, m, laborer
Malia, 19, m, laborer

KNISS
George, 25, m, laborer

HENIS
Peter, 23, m, laborer
Catherine, 20, f, wife
Trinhard, inf., m, infant

EHRlich
Peter, 28, m, laborer
Marie, 28, f, wife
Emilie, 6, f, child
Leida, 4, m, child
Friedrich, 19, m, laborer

MUSINGER
Peter, 54, m, laborer
Marie, 53, f, wife

WALTER
Johann, 53, m, laborer
Catherine, 28, f, wife
Johann, 12, m, child
Jacob, 9, m, child
Heinrich, 7, m, child
Georg [?], 5, m, child
Carl, inf., m, infant
Catherina, 8, f, child
Margareth, 4, f, child
Anna, inf., f, infant

SCHNEIDER
Daniel, 55, m, laborer
Maria, 50, f, wife
Anna, 10, f, child

WEISS
Daniel, 38, m, laborer
Maria, 38, f, wife
Maria, 16, f, spinster
Johan, 12, m, child
Georg, 10, m, child
Friedrich, 7, m, child
Gottfried, 5, m, child
Conrad, 2, m, child
Eva, inf., f, infant
Diebert [?], 30, m, laborer
Anna, 30, f, wife

The American Historical Society of Germans from Russia solicits articles related to the history, culture, and folklore of the Germans from Russia in the Old Country and the New World. The Editor welcomes original research materials, translations, book reviews, short stories, drawings, photographs, poetry, letters, journals, diaries, recollections, and materials previously published elsewhere which may be of interest to members of the Society. Submissions will be edited to conform to the second edition of the [MLA Style Sheet](#). Materials should be sent to the Journal Editor at [AHSGR Headquarters](#), at 631 D Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68502.

A PASSENGER LIST FROM CANADA

Adam Giesinger

In the 1840's Germans from Bessarabia and the Odessa district left Russia to settle in the **Dobruja**, then a Turkish province, later Rumania. In the spring of 1885 a group of these left the Dobruja to come to Canada. They arrived in Halifax on April 29, 1885 on the **S.S. Manitoban** of the Allan Line, which had sailed from Liverpool on April 16. After settling briefly at New **Tulcea** (now **Edenwold**) northeast of **Regina**, Saskatchewan, most of them moved on to Cathay, North Dakota, where many of their descendants now live.

The following were passengers on the S.S. *Manitoban* on that voyage:

ANWEILER Heinrich, 30 Adolf, 18	HELM Jacob, 46 Catherine, 44 Friedrich, 25 Elizabeth, 17 Jacob, 11 Johann, 5 Phillip, 3 Peter, infant	PEPPLE Michael, 31 Willielmina, 31 Gottlieb, 18 Johann, 5 Friedrich, 3 Magdalene, infant	Wilhelm, 5 Georg, 4 Christian, infant Lena, infant
BANEK Christian, 30 Marian, 28 Elizabeth, 7 Maria, infant Caroline, infant	KALK Gottlieb, 25 Magdalene, 19 Anna, infant	PEPPLE Thomas, 25 Maria, 22 Mathilda, infant	SEIBOLD Friedrich, 44 Sophia, 40 Barbara, 11 Friedrich, 11 Maria, 10 Caroline, 9 Sophia, 7 Edith, 1 Rosina, infant
BLUMHAGEN Christian, 23	KRUEGER Bertha, 18	PITT [PIEUT?] Johann, 26 Maria, 23 August, 8 Caroline, infant Elizabeth, infant	SEIBOLD Jacob, 51 Lena, 48 Friedrich, 16 Catherine, 11 Elizabeth, 7 Caroline, 5 Magdalene, infant F
BUTZ Elizabeth, 53 Johann, 28 Phillip, 26 Margareta, 18	LEIDNER [LEITNER?] Franz, 25 Elizabeth, 23 Maria, infant	ROTHACKER Adam, 25 Maria, 17	
DERMAN Sophia, 18	LEADNER [LEITNER?] Georg, 60 Christina, 48 Christian, 25 Georg, 18 Jacob, 17 Johann, 14 Friedrich, 11 Ferdinand, 10	RUST Ferdinand, 18	SEIBOLD Johannes, 60 Caroline, 56 Elizabeth, 20 Johann, 15
EDINGER Friedrich, 35 Susanna, 35 Rosina, 11 Jacob, 10 Friedrich, 8 Johann, 5 Josef, 4 Ludwig, infant	LUTZ Thomas, 53 Anna, 52 Thomas, 17	SCHMIDT August, 30 Ernilie, 35 Maria, 10 Louisa, infant	SEIBOLD Johann, 27 Julia, 21 Samuel, infant
EDINGER Josef, 25 Rosina, 19	PEPPLE Georg, 35 Maria, 32 Catherine, 11 Jacob, 8 Caroline, 5 Friedrich, infant Magdalene, infant	SEIBOLD Christian, 38 Minna, 35 Friedrich, 18 Johann, 15 Jacob, 11 Christina, 8	SEIBOLD Johann, 25 Christina, 18
FECHNER Adam, 32			
GENTNER Friedrich, 31 Anna, 25 Andreas, 11 Maria, 7 Jacob, 5			

GOOD NEWS! LOOK FOR A SECOND CLUES!

We are growing in membership and with this expansion has come more and more material for publication in *Clues* and the *Journal*. It's a happy circumstance when there is more than we can print in a given issue. Beginning with this year, therefore, we will have two issues of *Clues*. All *Surname Exchange* information will be carried in this publication, as well as all "Queries," the "Can You Help?" listings. Doing this will also free a number of pages for more historical articles in *the Journal*. This is yet another example of increased services from your Society.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

Translator DOUGLAS J. AUSTIN is Director of Real Estate for the Union Pacific Railroad in Salt Lake City, Utah. A graduate of Brigham Young University, he received his master's degree in business from the University of Utah. Mr. Austin perfected his knowledge of German during two extended stays in Germany, first as a missionary for the Church of Latter Day Saints, later as a military intelligence liaison officer for the United States Army. He traces his ancestry to the Volga *Bergseite* village of Jagodnaja Poljana by way of his mother, Elsie Felker Austin whose parents Mr. and Mrs. Peter Voelker (original spelling) came to the United States in 1903.

A charter member of the AHSGR, ALEXANDER DUPPER was born in Neu-Berlin and grew up in Odessa on the Black Sea. He is a graduate of St. Paul's *Oberschule*, and of the University of Odessa. In 1951 he received his doctorate in geology from the University of Gottingen, Germany. In 1952 Dr. Dupper immigrated to the United States where he was employed as a civil engineer for ttf California until his retirement two years ago. Dr. Dupper has served the Society as a member of the Board of Trustees of the International Foundation since its inception and as the perpetual secretary of the Lodi Chapter of the Society. He will speak on his experiences in Stalinist Russia of the Tenth International Convention of the AHSGR.

Elected President of the AHSGR at its Tenth Anniversary Convention last June, ADAM GIESINGER is the author of *From Catherine to Khrushchev: The Story of Russia's Germans*, now in its second printing. Professor Giesinger, who retired in 1976 after having taught at the University of Manitoba for thirty-four years, has been a member of the Society's Board of Directors since 1968 and has made frequent and invaluable contributions to the Society's publications. Professor Giesinger traces his ancestry to the Beresan village of Rastadt and to Mannheim near the Black Sea. He and his wife make their home in Winnipeg.

EMMA SCHWABENLAND HAYNES whose meticulous researches have been the basis for numerous articles in Society publications was born in Portland, Oregon, the daughter of the Reverend and Mrs. John C. Schwabenland who came to the United States in 1891 from the Volga village of Straub. Mrs. Haynes was educated at the University of Colorado where her master's thesis, "German-Russians on the Volga and in the United States" was a pioneering English language study of our people. She also attended the University of Breslau, Germany and later served as a translator during the Nuremberg Trials. She is the author of *A History of the Volga Relief Society* and an editor of *The Czar's Germans*. She and her husband, Thomas V. Haynes, live in Arlington, Virginia and are active in the Nation's Capital chapter of the AHSGR.

Folklorist TIMOTHY J. KLOBERDANZ has just completed his third year as a member of the Department of Anthropology/Sociology at North Dakota State University where he regularly offered a course in "Germans from Russia." This spring Professor Klobberdanz was a featured speaker at the conference of the Folklore Institute of North Dakota, addressing the body on "Russian German Funerary Folk Art on the Northern Great Plains" and on *Brauchen*, the practice of supernatural folk healing, among the Germans from Russia in North Dakota. He serves the AHSGR as chairman of the folklore committee, as editor of *Journal's* annual folklore forum, as a frequent convention speaker, and since 1975 as a member of its Board of Directors. Recently named the recipient of a research grant from the AHSGR Foundation, Professor Klobberdanz will continue his work among the Germans from Russia in northern Iowa, south-central North Dakota, and western Canada during the summer months. He has accepted a fellowship from the University of Indiana to continue his study of folklore on the doctoral level this fall.

Proverb collector MARY KOCH retired in January after serving for thirty-seven years as clerk, accountant, and office manager of the city light and water department in McMinnville, Oregon. A licensed lay speaker for the Methodist Church, Miss Koch spends much of her time in children's church work and devotes her spare time to gardening, travel, and handcrafts. The source of her delightful collection of folk sayings gathered during the last twenty years is her mother, Anna Katharina Beisel Koch who will be ninety next New Year's Day. Mrs. Koch, who continues to provide new items for the collection almost daily, was born in the *Bergseite* village of Dreispitz. Her husband's family has roots in the Volga villages of Muller and Franzosen. Mary Koch is the second of their nine children.

LEWIS R. MARQUARDT, who traces his ancestry to the Black Sea villages of Kandel and Selz, teaches courses in humanities, the Middle Ages, and research methods at Arizona State University. He was born and raised in North Dakota and educated at Minot State College there. After having spent three years in Germany as a Russian linguist for the U.S. Army, he returned to South Dakota where he taught music and served as a representative to the state legislature. He and his wife, Judith Woods of North Dakota, and their five children make their home in Phoenix. A charter member of the AHSGR and newly-elected President of the

Arizona Sun Chapter of the Society, Professor [Marquardt](#) will be a featured speaker at the Tenth International Convention of the [AHSGR](#).

Poet JOAN [MCAFEE](#) is a former Kansas resident now living in [Waverly](#), Iowa. Her poems have been published by The American Poetry Press, The Fine Arts Society of Indiana, and The Kansas Society of Poets.

Translator PAUL G. [REITZER](#) is Head of the Department of History and Political Science at Baptist College at Charleston (South Carolina). Professor [Reitzer](#) holds degrees from [LeTurneau](#) College, [Baylor](#) University, Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, and Florida State University. He has also studied at the universities of Bonn and Oslo. Though he is not himself of German-Russian descent, he inherited an interest in Germans from Russia from his father, the Reverend Dr. William Reitzer who after coming to the United States from Germany served as minister to congregations of Germans from Russia in Michigan and Colorado,

Novelist [INGRID RIMLAND](#) was born in the German-Russian village of [Halbstadt](#) five years before the Nazi occupation of the Ukraine. At the age of seven she joined her people's several winter's westward trek across eastern Europe in the wake of the shattered forces of the *Wehrmacht*, arriving in Germany in time to suffer the brutal bombardments of the invading Russian army. At the age of twelve she settled with a remnant of German-Russian survivors in [Volendam](#), a [Mennonite](#) colony in the jungle of eastern Paraguay. Drawing on her own recollections of these harrowing events and on the experiences of her mother and her staunch Mennonite grandmother who also survived the Russian revolution, civil war, and [Stalinist](#) terrors, Ms. [Rimland](#), who did not begin to learn English until 1967, wrote *The Wanderers*, a book which among other awards was designated "the best first novel of 1977 by a California writer." Ms. Rimland is a graduate of [Wichita](#) State University, a licensed educational psychologist, and the mother of two children with whom she lives in [Stockton](#), California. When not engaged in writing or lecture tours, Ms. Rimland works toward a doctorate in the education of exceptional children.

Head of the Department of History at the University of Calgary, JOHN B. [TOEWS](#) is a widely-published author and the recipient of a number of major research grants from the Canada Council, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Institute for Research in the Humanities. Professor [Toews](#), whose major research areas include the fifteenth century papacy and empire, German minorities in the Soviet Union, and radical reformation, holds degrees from Tabor College and the University of Colorado. He has also studied at Puller Theological Seminary and at the University of Wisconsin. A native of Alberta, Professor Toews traces his ancestry to [Alexanderkrone](#) in the [Molotschna](#) Mennonite settlement in the Ukraine. He is a frequent contributor to the *AHSGR Journal*.

One of the foremost authorities on the music of the Germans from Russia, LAWRENCE A. [WEIGEL](#) was born in Hays, Kansas and grew up in the neighboring German-Russian village of [Herzog](#) (Victoria). He has spent a good part of his life collecting folklore and folksong of the Germans from Russia and can list more than two-hundred articles, two-hundred radio broadcasts, and two record albums, *Volga German Music* and *Heritage of the Volga Germans* among his credits. In addition to his continuing *Journal* series, "We Sing Our History," Mr. [Weigel](#) has served the Society as a convention speaker and as a member of the International Board of Directors. He is at Present involved in the establishment of a Volga German study center at Fort Hays State College.

Translator ROGER L. [WELSCH](#) is a professor of English and anthropology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. A well-known [folklorist](#) and much-sought after lecturer, Professor [Welsch](#) is the author of *A Treasury of Nebraska Pioneer Folklore*, *Shingling the Fog and Other Plains Lies*, *Sod Walls: The Story of the Nebraska Sod House*, and *Tall Tale Postcards: A Pictorial History*. A featured speaker at this spring's conference of the Folklore Institute of North Dakota, he also serves as an advisor on folk arts in North Dakota to the National [Endowment](#) for the Arts. Professor Welsch traces his ancestry to the Volga villages of [Jost](#), [Kukkus](#), and [Schafer](#).

PASSAGE TO RUSSIA: WHO WERE THE EMIGRANTS? Part III: The Unequal Settlers <i>Lew Malinowski</i> <i>Translated by Douglas Austin</i>	46
THE WANDBRERS: WHAT IS FICTION? WHAT IS FACT? <i>Ingrid Rimland</i>	48
ADDITIONS TO THE LOAN COLLECTION <i>Reviews by Emma Schwabentand Haynes,</i> <i>Adam Giesinger, and Timothy J. Kloberdanz</i>	50
WE SING OUR HISTORY <i>Lawrence A. Weigel</i>	59
A VOICE FROM THE OLD COUNTRY: THE STARKEL LETTERS <i>Translated by Paul G. Reitzer</i> <i>Introduction and Notes by Adam Giesinger</i>	60
A NOTE ON CATHERINE'S SIGNATURE <i>Alexander Dupper</i>	66
PASSENGER LISTS <i>Emma Schwabenland Haynes</i>	68
A PASSENGER LIST FROM CANADA <i>Adam Giesinger</i>	72
CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE	73

COVER: A Mennonite madonna and child arrive in China as refugees. Between 1929 and 1934 hundreds of Mennonite, Lutheran, and Catholic colonists fled from Russian totalitarianism, war, and revolution by crossing the Amur River into northern China. The fascinating historical background of this flight and the experiences of one of the participants appear in Professor John B. Toews's article, "Flight Across the Amur into China" in this issue of the *Journal*. The cover photograph is courtesy of the Institut fuer Auslandsbeziehungen, Stuttgart.