

# A Hegele Family History

with reference to Christian and Jakob Hegele, who emigrated from Alsace to Elsass,  
Ukraine in 1808

by M. Högele, 2023

## Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Sources .....	2
Documents.....	2
Books .....	3
Online sources .....	3
Explanation of the color scheme:.....	3
<b>Margraviate of Baden</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Life in Baden .....	4
Klingnau .....	4
Plague years in Klingnau .....	7
<b>Our family in Klingnau</b> .....	<b>8</b>
1358 AD Financial transaction .....	9
1528 AD Witness .....	9
1568 AD Magistrate .....	9
1586 AD Fire .....	9
1624 AD A death in the family.....	10
Land Registers .....	10
Family records 1608-1711 AD .....	12
Explanation of symbols and terms .....	12
Generation 1: Bernhard Hägelin .....	13
Generation 2: (Hans) Conradus Hägelin.....	13
Generation 3: (Hans) Petrus Hägeli .....	13
<b>Klingnau to Upper Alsace</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Upper Alsace</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Generation 4: Casparus Hegelin .....	16
Generation 5: Joannes Jacobus Haegli .....	17
<b>Upper Alsace to Lower Alsace</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>Alsace to Russia</b> .....	<b>19</b>
Catherine the Great.....	19
The French Revolution .....	20
A Great Migration .....	21
Our migration.....	23

Generation 6.1: Christianus Hegele .....	24
Generation 6.2: Jakobus Heglin .....	24
<b>Our life in Russia .....</b>	<b>25</b>
Odessa .....	26
Daughter colonies .....	27
The rules change .....	27
War comes to Russia .....	28
Civil war.....	29
Life under Stalin .....	30
Another world war .....	31
Seven treks .....	32
Generation 7.1: Christian Hegele .....	34
Generation 7.2: Franz Xaver Hegele .....	34
Generation 7.3: Emanuel Hegele .....	35
Generation 7.4: Josefina Hegele.....	35
Generation 7.5: Maria Agatha Hegele.....	35
Generation 7.6: Jakob Hegele .....	35
Generation 8: Franz Xaver Hegele .....	36
Generation 9: Franz (Hegele) Högele .....	36
Generation 10.1: Franz Högele .....	37
Generation 10.2: Maria (Marianna) Högele.....	37
Generation 10.3: Michael Högele.....	37
Generation 10.4: Nikolaus Högele .....	37
Generation 10.5: Margarete Högele.....	37
Generation 10.6: Markus Högele .....	37
Generation 10.7: Thomas Högele .....	37
<b>Further migrations.....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>A reunion with the homeland of Elsass in Ukraine .....</b>	<b>38</b>

## Introduction

During our research we were able to trace the ancestors of Christian and Jakob Hegele back to the town of Klingnau, a town that is now in Switzerland. The family were based there for at least 300 years. Today Klingnau is located in the canton of Aargau, but at the time the family lived there, it was part of the County of Baden.

## Sources

Information is available from historical documents, books and online sources.

## Documents

- Attenschwiller church registers, Village-Neuf, St. Louis, France
- Dokumentation Pfarramt Klingnau und Staatsarchiv Aargau, Urbarien [Documentation Klingnau parish office and Aargau state archive, urbaria]

- Klingnau, Switzerland church registers
- Microfilm-family search
- Rathaus Lauterbourg Zivilurkunden [Lauterbourg town hall civil documents]
- Einwanderungszentralstelle (EWZ), which translates to "Central Immigration Control Department" or "Central Office for Immigrants". The EWZ was a German government agency that processed ethnic Germans for naturalization and immigration to Reich citizenship 1939-1945. Ethnic Germans returning to Germany from Eastern European countries were required to complete forms to request German citizenship. The EWZ files contain information on about 2.9 million ethnic Germans.
- Saratov, Ukraine Archive, Family Listings
- My own family records and recollections of my parents and relatives (M. Högele)

## Books

- Anonymous, *Chlingenowe - Klingnau*, first edition, published by the municipality of Klingnau, Baden-Verlag, Baden 1989
- Biegler, Cecilie, *Origin of the Hegele Family*
- Bosch, Anton, *Russland-Deutsche Zeitgeschichte* [Russian-German contemporary history]
- Bosch Anton and Lingor Josef, *Entstehung, Entwicklung und Auflösung der deutschen Kolonien am Schwarzen Meer* [Development and dissolution of the German colonies on the Black Sea]
- Eisfeld, Alfred Dr., *Deutsche Ansiedlung im Schwarzmeergebiet* [German settlement in the Black Sea region]
- Huber, Johann, "Regesten of Klingnau and Wislikofen" [Registers of Klingnau and Wislikofen], 1878
- Huber, Johann, "über Kollaturpfarreien Zurzach" [On collature parishes in Zurzach]
- Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland, *Heimatsbuch*, edited by Dr. Karl Stumpp, 1955 [Heritage book of the Germans from Russia]
- Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland, *Russlanddeutscher Postkarten Heimatkalendar* 1950 [Russian German postcards home calendar]
- Mittler, Otto, *Geschichte der Stadt Klingnau 1239-1939* [History of the City of Klingnau 1239-1939] (Herr Mittler wanted to complete the book as an anniversary publication in 1939, but only managed to do so in 1947. In 1967 he published a second, expanded edition. The first edition is written in Sütterlin, which is difficult today for most folks to read.)
- Stumpp, Karl, *Die Auswanderung aus Deutschland nach Russland in den Jahren 1763-1862* [Emigration from Germany to Russia in the years 1763-1862]

## Online sources

- Wikipedia
- Geo Epoche

## Explanation of the color scheme:

- **Yellow**: ancestors of Christian and Jakob
- **Blue**: Christian and Jakob
- **Green**: later individuals in my line

## Margraviate of Baden

Before their emigration to Ukraine, our Högele ancestors lived, as far as can be traced back, in the Margraviate of Baden. A brief timeline of its history:

- 1112 AD: Baden becomes part of the Holy Roman Empire.
- 1535 AD: Baden is divided between heirs to become the Margraviate of Baden-Durlach (officially Protestant) and the Margraviate of Baden-Baden (officially Catholic).
- 1771 AD: The two margraviates reunite.

The former **margraviate** is now in different countries. Part belongs to Canton Aargau in Switzerland, part to Alsace in France, and part to Baden-Württemberg in Germany.

Today's **Alsace** is divided into a northern department called Bas-Rhin (Lower Rhine) and a southern department, called **Haut-Rhin** (Upper Rhine). Alsatian (a German dialect related to Alemannic and Swabian), which is gradually dying out, is still spoken, particularly in the countryside, and there are a long time two German-language daily newspapers published in Alsace.

Switzerland is divided into cantons. The canton of **Aargau** is located in the north-central part of Switzerland.

Germany consists of federal states, with the state of **Baden-Württemberg** to the northwest of Alsace.

### Life in Baden

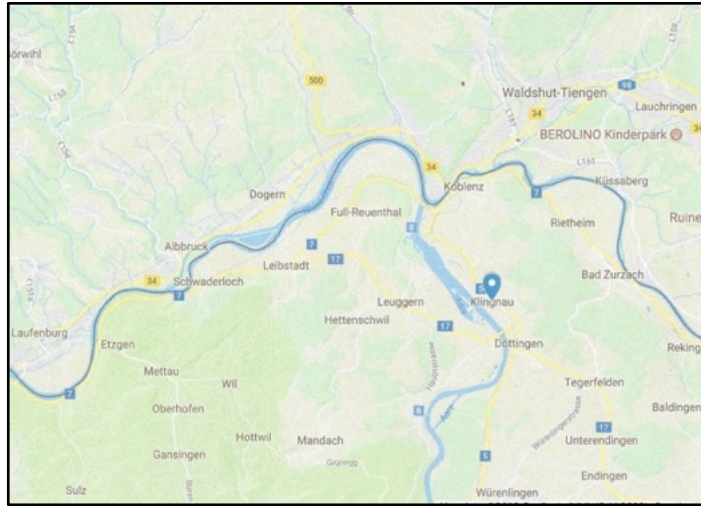
The sovereigns in the Baden area placed high demands on their subjects. The earning potential of the “common man” remained limited to a minimum. The residents were exposed to numerous wars, looting, special taxes, floods and requisitions. Property conditions deteriorated from generation to generation. It was true that serfdom had been abolished before 1789, but there were hardly any opportunities to acquire fertile land and ensure the family's food supply.

In 1793 the area was occupied by Prussians and Austrians, but at the end of the year they were driven back across the border. With the retreat of the troops, the residents, around 40,000 people, quickly left their homes and farms and fled across the Rhine. The area was depopulated. Only after the years (1795-1798) were these so-called emigrants allowed to set foot on their native soil again. But the government had sold its former assets to those who remained behind and those who had immigrated.

### Klingnau

[Klingnau](#) is a small town in what is today the Zurzach district of the Swiss canton of Aargau. It is located in the lower Aare Valley, around four kilometers south of the border with Germany. The river *Aare* flows through Klingnau and into the Rhine.

### Map – The situation of Klingnau



The town of Klingnau was founded in **1239** as a result of an agreement of December 26, 1239 between the St. Blasien Monastery and the Thurgau Baron Ulrich von Klingen. He swapped the river island of Beznau for a gravel hill a little farther down the Aare. It was on this hill above the Aare that Ulrich von Klingen built the town and castle.

The noble **Klingen** family gave their properties names that included the noble name. This is how Klingenau was created from “Klingen” and “Aue”. In Middle High German, “Aue” refers to water or an area at the water inlet.

**Illustration – Klingnau in the *Topographia Helvetiae* by Matthäus Merian, 1642**



Source: *Chlingenowe - Klingnau*, p. 140 (Baden-Verlag, Baden 1989, 1st edition, ISBN 3-85545-0404-4, “Image in the public domain”)

**Photo – Exchange agreement of December 26, 1239**



**Source:** *Aus Geschichte der Stadt Klingnau*, Otto Mittler

Ulrich's son, [Walther von Klingen](#), who inherited Klingnau after his father's death, indulged in medieval minstrelsy and tournament fights. But he was not only a connoisseur. He was also a religious person and diplomat with extensive connections. At Klingnau he founded the Sion Monastery. In 1269 Walther von Klingen sold the town to the Bishop of Constance.

Until 1415, confusing conditions prevailed in the exercise of state power: the king, bishop, the Habsburgs, the St. Blasien monastery, the Johanniter and the Zurzach monastery – everyone had something to say. In the Middle Ages, however, the Bishop of Constance became increasingly important. It is not surprising then that the Klingnau coat of arms shows the bishop's hat (miter).

**Illustration – the Klingnau coat of arms**



**Source:** Wikipedia

The years 1415 to 1798 were under the aegis of the Old Confederation (Swiss Confederation). In 1712 the Confederation succeeded in controlling the entire episcopal administration. The period was marked by sieges and quartering of foreign troops. The men of Klingnau had to perform military service with these foreign troops. The French



King Louis XIV urgently needed mercenaries for his wars and achieved a “wage alliance” in 1663, acquiring the right to recruit mercenaries for money with the Confederation.

The simmering confessional differences led to the First Villmerg War in 1656, in which small units took Klingnau. The Catholics won this war, but in the Second Villmerg War of 1712, their supremacy ended. Both denominations ultimately enjoyed equal rights. In Klingnau the Catholics predominated and determined the right to worship.

The town was constantly under foreign rule and could not really flourish because it never became a regional market place. The population lived from agriculture, viticulture and crafts.

### **Plague years in Klingnau**

Plague was a frequent occurrence, as it was in much of the rest of Europe:

- 1519
- 1611: 226 people died, about 1/3 of the inhabitants
- 1629
- 1635
- 1666

**Source:** Mittler and the writings of Johann Huber

In Klingnau there were two rows of houses in the upper town, starting from the castle, the Sonnengasse (Sunny Lane) and the Schattengasse (Shadow Lane).

**Photo – Klingnau today, the Schattengasse on the left with the castle in the back and the Sonnengasse on the right**



## Photo – Castle



Photos by M. Högele

Source: *History of the city of Klingnau* by Otto Mittler

## Our family in Klingnau

Our earliest known ancestor came from the Hägeli line, which was based in Klingnau. Mittler reported that Hägeli was mentioned in Klingnau at the beginning of the 15th century. During a visit to the town of Klingnau we met Hägeli descendants. In their genealogical research they reported that the name Hägeli was mentioned in documents as far back as 1357.

The change in the spelling of the name arose from moving to different regions. Spoken language was often the basis of written language.

- In Klingnau, an “i” or “y” was added, thus Hegly, Hegeli, Hägeli, Hegelin
- In Alsace, Hegele, Hegelin
- In Ukraine, Hegel, Hegele
- In Germany, Hegele, Högele
- In America, Hagele, Hoegele, Hager

Another aspect is the spelling in the church records over several centuries, depending on the respective pastor or town clerk.

In addition, in Alemannic areas (today southwest Germany, northwest Switzerland and eastern France) it was common practice at the time to add a suffix **-in** to the surnames of women. That's why, for example, we read a daughter's last name in the files as Karrerin and not as Karrer.

Our family's name appeared in multiple Klingnau documents.



### **1358 AD Financial transaction**

Monday before St. Ulrich's Day (July 2nd), Baden

"Beninga, daughter of Heinrich des Slegel, of Baden, sold with the consent of her husband Heinrich Oltinger, to Hans von Mure, called Gebstorf, of Baden, for 31 pounds Zof. Penny 'her morning gift, i.e. her Brotbank\*, which is located in the bread scarf between those of Arnolz Zürcher and Heinrich Hegeli."

**Witnesses:** Johans Oltinger, Johans Polant, Henry Weldi, Ulrich Scherer, Rud Ballinger, Cunrat Nießli, Johans Basler, all from Baden

**Sealer:** Johans Zwicker, mayor in Baden

**Source:** Parchment with a freely hanging seal

**Reported in:** "Regesten von Klingnau and Wislikofen" by Johann Huber, 1878

\*A **Brotbank** is a sales stand for bread.

### **Beginning of the 15th century**

At the beginning of the 15th century, the Hægeli were referred to as "Bürgers".

In the European Middle Ages, a **Bürger** was a resident of a fortified city with a charter from a king or emperor. They enjoyed special civil and property rights and privileges.

**Source:** Mittler, p. 195, also Wikipedia

### **1528 AD Witness**

An Uli Hægeli was mentioned as a witness. He testifies that a citizen is not guilty of Anabaptism.

**Source:** über Kollaturpfarreien Zurzach [about collature parishes in Zurzach] by Johann Huber, vol. 1, page 25

### **1568 AD Magistrate**

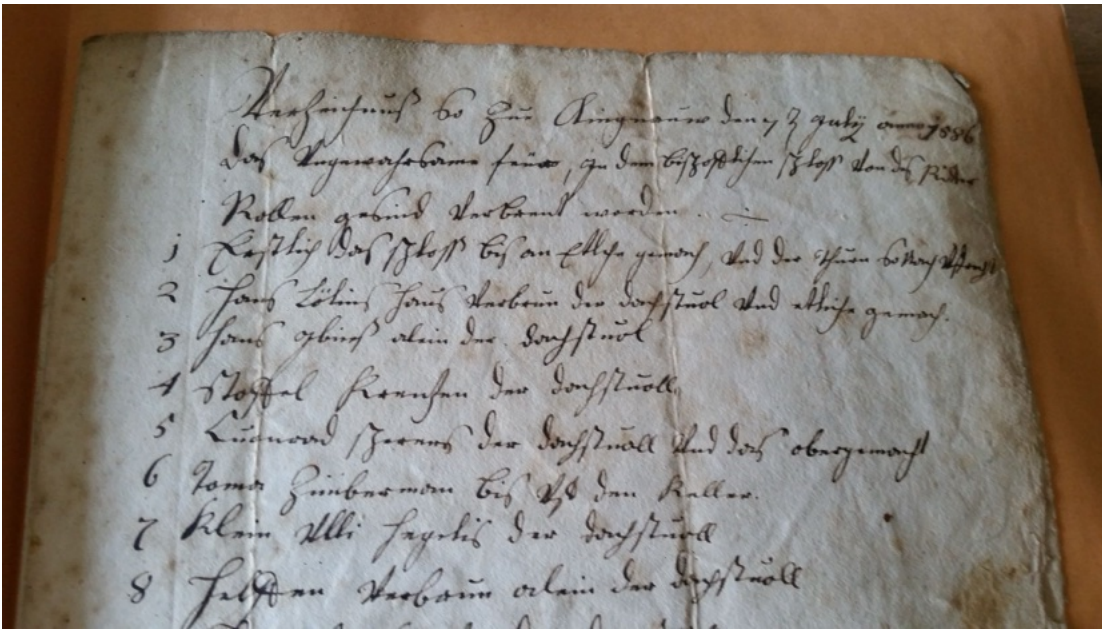
Little Uli Hægeli is listed as one of the community's judges. The court was made up of citizens from Sonnengasse, Schattengasse, the village and the area around the lake. Together with the town council, the court was responsible for civil matters.

**Source:** Mittler, p. 364

### **1586 AD Fire**

On Thursday July 7th, between 12 and 1 PM a fire broke out in the city, starting from the castle and spreading to the houses on Sonnengasse and Schattengasse. The document, which is a compilation of the damage, states "7. Little Ulli Hegeli's "Dachstuoll" (that is, "The roof structure of little Uli Hegeli burned down.").

**Photo – Damage compilation (by M. Högele)**



This house was located at what is now approximately no. 73 Schattengasse (left).  
 Source: Mittler, documentation Pfarramt Klingnau

**Illustration – Painting showing the 1586 fire in Klingnau**



Source: Baden-Verlag, painted by Geistlichen Johann Jakob Wick

**1624 AD A death in the family**

Uli Hegeli died May 8, 1624.

Source: Church registers

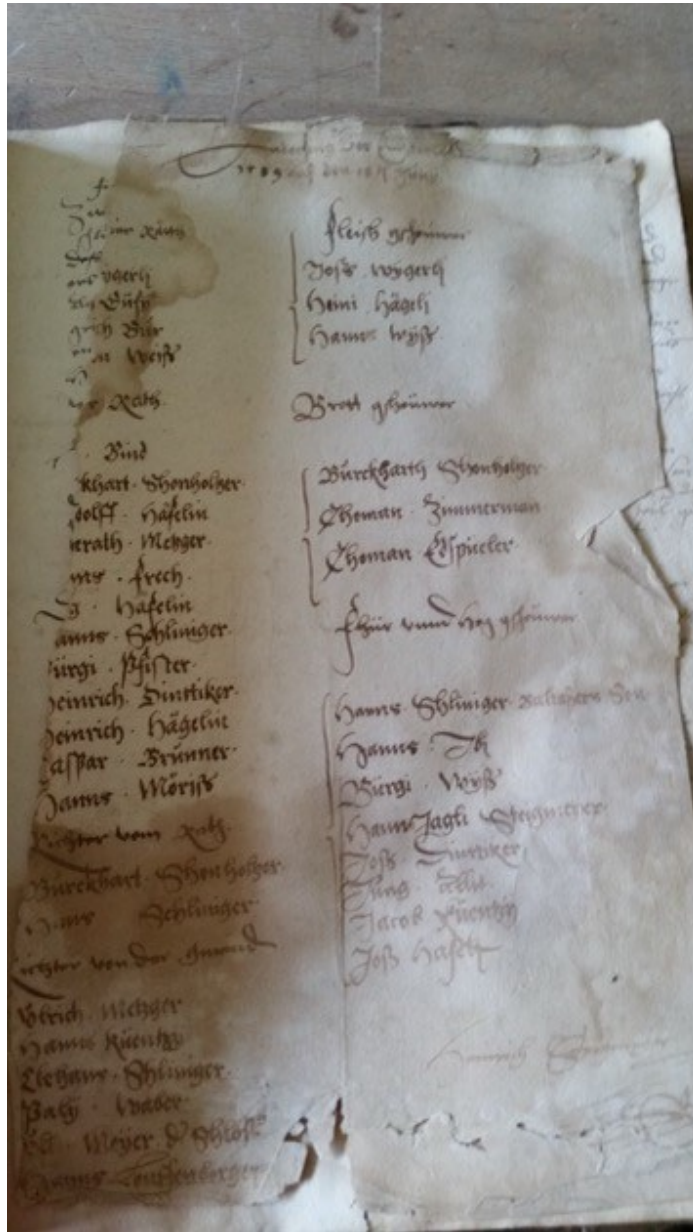


## Land Registers

An Urbar [land register] is a directory in which the ownership of a property is recorded. In addition to the ownership rights, the land registry also documented the services that the basic subjects had to provide to the rulers.

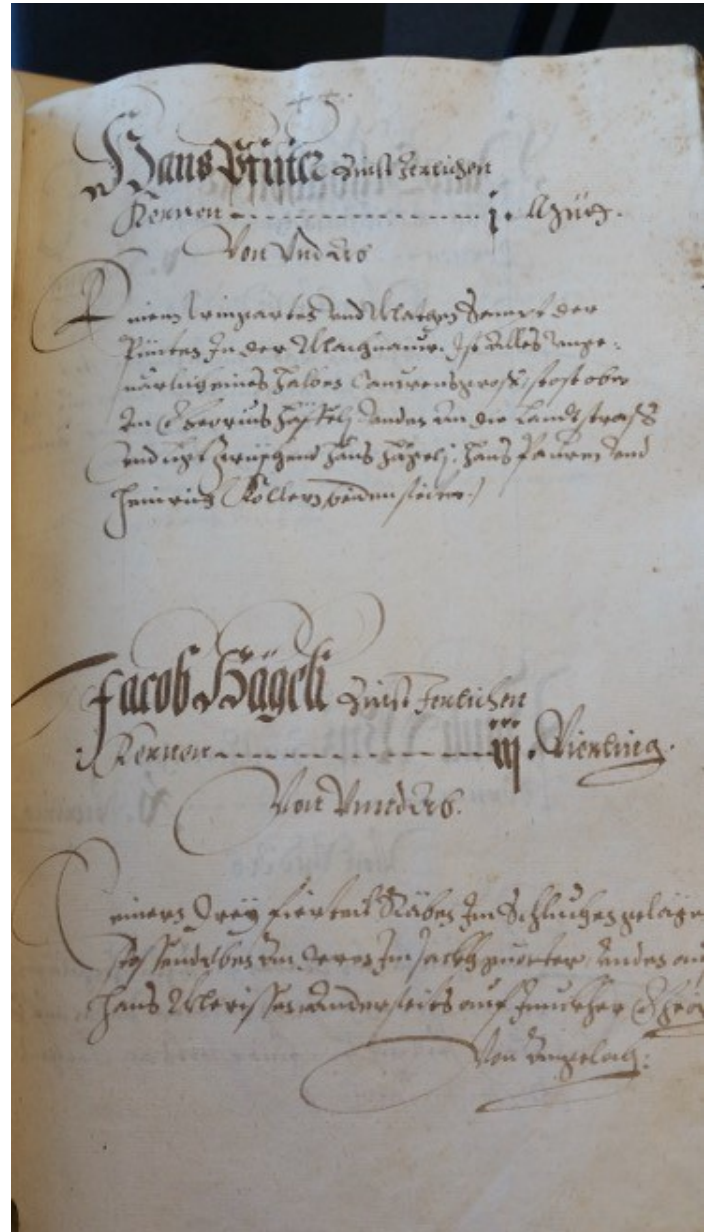
### URBAR 1589

Heinrich Hägeli



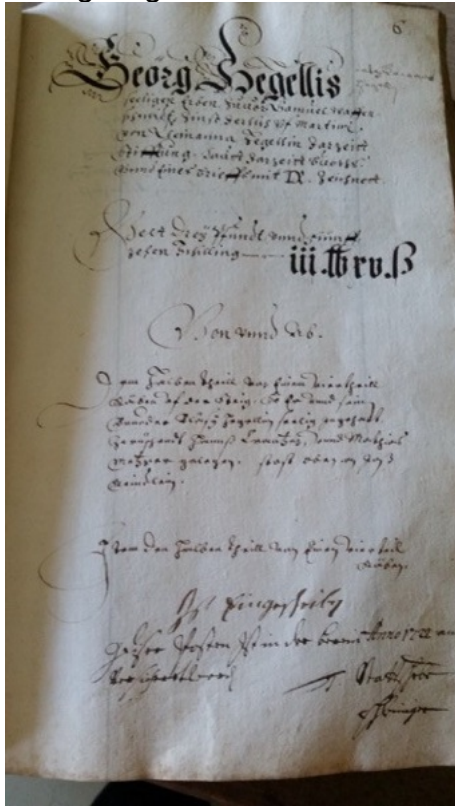
### URBAR 1605

Jacob Hägeli died 1611

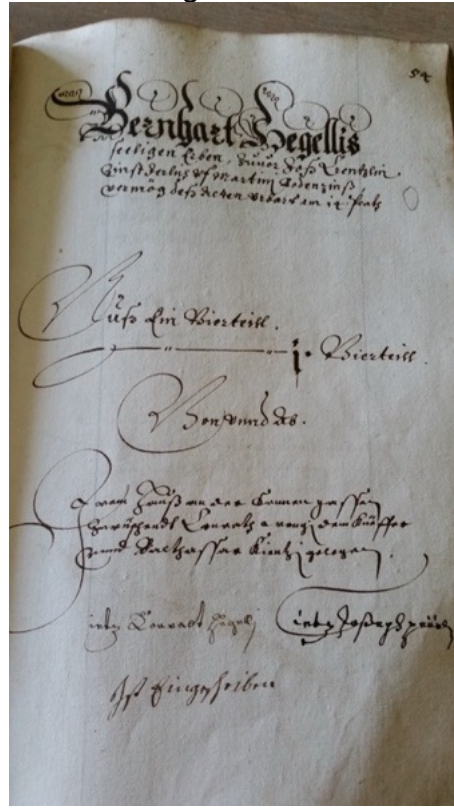


**URBAR 1635**

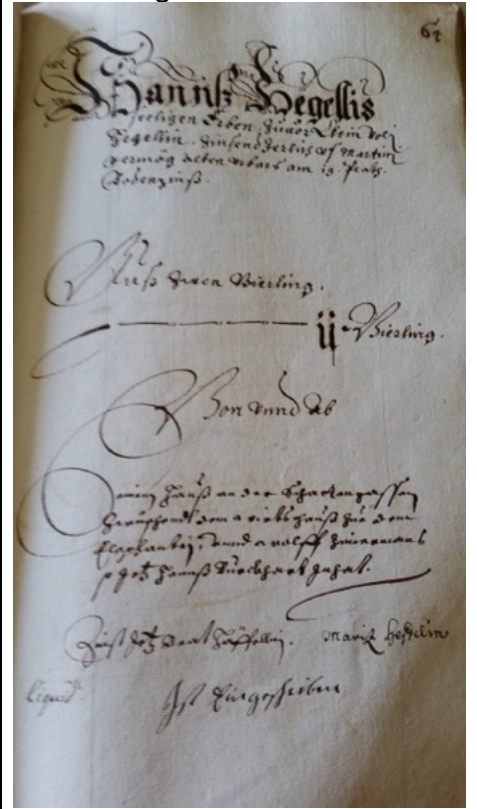
Georg Hegellis



Bernhart Hegellis



Hanss Hegellis died 30.11.1635



Photos by M. Högele

**Map – Left to right: Attenschwiler, Saint-Louis, Village-Neuf and Klingnau.**



**Family records 1608-1711 AD**

The baptisms from this church register were Catholic baptisms. The children were usually given the first names of their godparents. The first name was often preceded by Maria or Johannes/Joannes/Hans, as was Catholic practice at that time and place. Male names were sometimes spelled with the Latin ending -us. The spellings here attempt to adopt those of the respective entries in the records.

**Explanation of symbols and terms**

* = born	1. = first, for example, first marriage
∞ = married	2. = second



† = died Confirmati = confirmed	3. = third ca = circa (around)
------------------------------------	-----------------------------------

Dates are in the **DD.MM.YYYY** format.

### Generation 1: Bernhard Hägelin

**Bernhard Hägelin** † 08.05.1640 in Klingnau

1.∞ 30.1.1611 in Klingnau Magdalena **Holderbäuch** † 07.06.1617

2.∞ 15.12.1617 in Klingnau Barbara Bargin † 17.04.1624

Children:

- 1) Joaem \* 23.06.1619 Klingnau
- 2) Anna Maria \*13.08.1620 Klingnau
- 3) Petrus 26.09.1621 Klingnau
- 4) Verena \*02.01.1623 Klingnau

3.∞ 02.06.1624 in Klingnau **Verena Straumännin**

Children:

- 5) Joanne Caspari \*08.04.1626 Klingnau
- 6) Christiana \*04.06.1627 Klingnau
- 7) **Conradus** \* 11.09.1629 godparents: Conrady **Wengi** und Anna \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) Verena \*08.01.1632 Klingnau
- 9) Magdalena \* 02.08.1633 Klingnau
- 10) Joann Bernhardus \* 21.08.1634

### Generation 2: (Hans) Conradus Hägelin

**(Hans) Conradus Hägelin** \* 1629 † vor 1703

∞ 28.01.1651 **Elisabetha Meyer(in)** in Klingnau

\* ca 1630 † 09.01.1703 Klingnau

Zeugen: Jo....Landös und Petry Meyer und Jo... Schlininger

Children:

- 1) Joannes **Hägelin** \* 18.12.1651 Klingnau
- 2) Anna **Hägelin** \* 13.01.1653 Klingnau
- 3) Joannem **Hägelin** \* 20.04.1654 Klingnau
- 4) Jo. Conrad **Hägelin** \* 06.08.1655 Klingnau
- 5) Maria **Hägelin** \* 29.01.1657 Klingnau
- 6) Verena **Hägelin** \* 29.04.1658 Klingnau
- 7) Jo. Jacobus **Hägelin** \* 27.09.1659 Klingnau
- 8) Jo. Jacoby **Hägelin** \* 02.03.1661 Klingnau
- 9) Elisabetha **Hägelin** \* 20.11.1662 Klingnau
- 10) Joan Bapta **Hegel** \* 2.6.1664 Klingnau
- 11) Josephy **Heggelin** \* 9.1.1666 Klingnau
- 12) Sebastian **Heggelin** \* 20.01.1668 Klingnau
- 13) Eva **Heggeli** \* 22.10.1669 Klingnau
- 14) **Hans Petrus Heggeli** \* 28.12.1670 Klingnau
- 15) Eva **Heggeli** \* 11.01.1677 Klingnau



### Generation 3: (Hans) Petrus Hägeli

(Hans) Petrus Hägeli \* 28.12.1670 Klingnau † 03.10.1702

1. ∞ 07.11.1694 Klingnau Elisabetha Schröri \* in Coblenz, Grafschaft Baden  
(today: district Zurzach, Kanton Aargau/Schweiz)

Children:

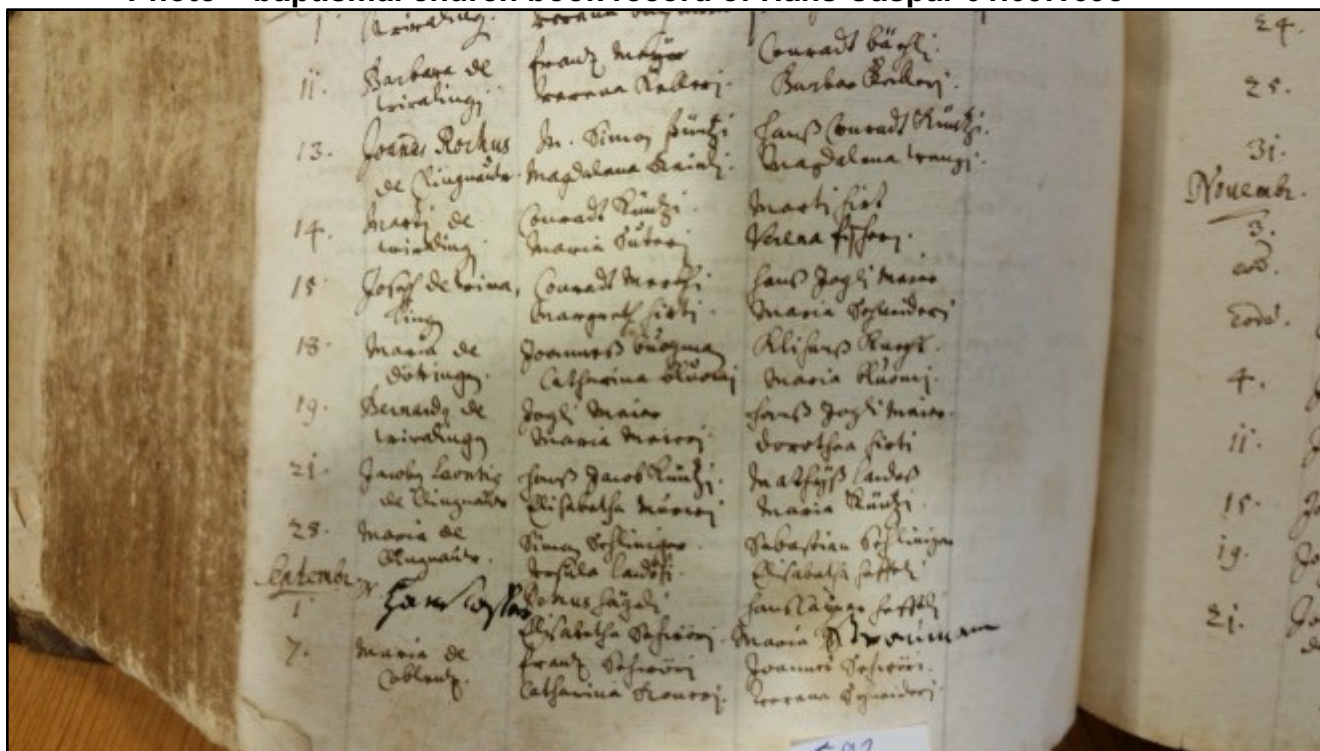
- 1) Hans Caspar Hägeli \* 01.09.1695 Klingnau Godparents: Hans Caspar Heffeli, Maria Straumänni  
2) Josephy Hägeli \* 05.01.1697 Klingnau  
3) Anna Maria Hägeli \* 21.03.1699 Klingnau

2. ∞ 22.11.1699 Klingnau Anna Schrörin

Children:

- 1) Michael Hägeli \* 10.09.1701 Klingnau

#### Photo – baptismal church book record of Hans Caspar 01.09.1695



Sources: Klingnau church register, Photo by M. Högele

### Klingnau to Upper Alsace

Our ancestor, Casparus Hegeli, moved from Klingnau to Alsace (today the Haut-Rhin department of France) early in the 18th century. He was probably called Caspar, but priests in those days tended to record names in their Latin forms in their church registry books.

Unfortunately, the reasons for his move are unknown. Economic, political circumstances, foreign military service or family ties are possible, but also religious reasons or moving as an itinerant craftsman. Family connections must have existed, as other Hegeli already lived in Attenschwiller. It is

noteworthy that Klingnau was a purely Catholic town. The already described, lost 2nd Villmerg War with the victory of the Reformed could have been an influence.

It is possible that Casparus was recruited as a Swiss mercenary, met his father-in-law, who was still in the military in 1729, and then settled in Attenschwiller. Casparus also only married at the age of 32 (as a young man), which supports this hypothesis.

Klingnau historian Otto Mittler writes in his book [translated]

“At the beginning of the 17th century, the plague decimated the population. The high birth rates in the next few years compensated for this. In order to naturalize new citizens, there was an obligation to rebuild a farm that had burned down. There was a constant emigration of young craftsmen who no longer returned from their years of wandering but instead found a new home. A large number of people moved to Alsace, Vienna and Hungary.”

The following is taken from Swiss history:

“From the 16th to the early 19th century, many people from Aargau went into foreign military service, especially in France, Spain, Venice, Naples and the Netherlands. The wage service was considered an important economic sector for the entire Swiss Confederation. Many were recruited to escape the increasing poverty faced by the growing population in the 17th and 18th centuries. Professional advertisers spoke to the young men. They had to commit to four years of service, about 20 percent died and another 30 percent escaped the dangers. The captain kept the payment for the armament and equipment, so that someone could only be discharged debt-free.”

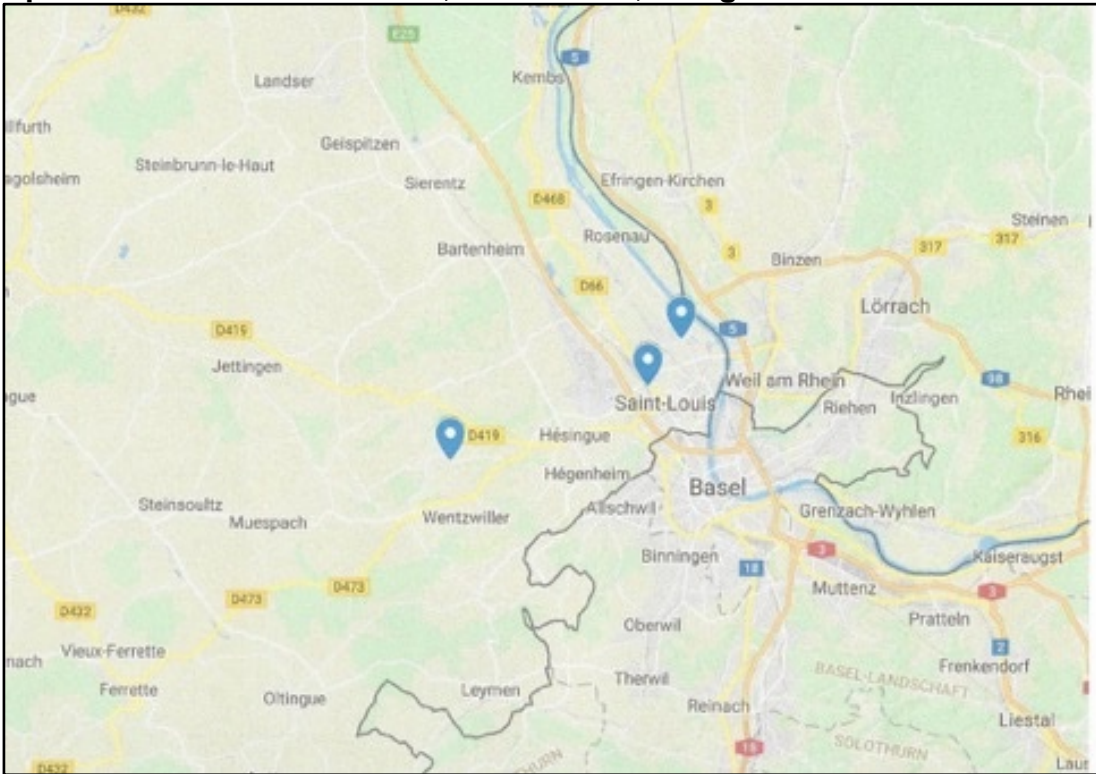
## Upper Alsace

Upper Alsace, today Haut-Rhin, is located in southern Alsace. North of the city of Basel lies the commune of **Saint-Louis**. The communes of **Village-Neuf** and **Attenschwiller** are part of it..

Here is a background timeline for this area and an explanation of the name changes:

- **1679**: Louis XIV built the Hünigen fortress at this strategically important location on the Rhine, replacing the previous farming and fishing village of Hünigen. The residents were settled in the newly-founded **Village-Neuf** (meaning “new village”), on the road to Basel, where some houses were already located. This place consisted mainly of the houses of a few border guards and hostels.
- **1684**: By decree of Louis XIV, the small settlement was renamed **Saint-Louis** after King Louis IX.
- **1793** Following the French Revolution, Saint-Louis became its own municipality, called **Bourglibre**, as names of saints and kings were no longer wanted.
- **1815**: After the fall of Napoleon and the restoration of the crown, the **Saint-Louis** name returned.

### Map 3 - The area around Basel, Saint-Louis, Village-Neuf and Attenschwiller



On November 24, 1727, **Casparus Hegeli** married **Barbara Karer(in)** in Attenschwiller, St. Louis, in what is today the Haut-Rhin department.

The family lived there for another 50 years. Some of their descendants later moved north to Beinheim, near Lauterbourg, in the Bas-Rhin (Lower Alsace) department.

After about 50 years, Christian and Jakob would emigrate with their families to Ukraine, Russia.

#### Generation 4: Casparus Hegelin

##### Translation of the marriage record of Casparus Hegelin from the church register

“In this mass on November 24, 1727, the young foreigner Casparus Hegelin from Helvetus Badensis [Baden in Switzerland] from Klingnau and the demure virgin Barbara Karer(in) from Attenschwiller are married in the presence of the Attenschwiller parish and several witnesses present.”

A “**Karrer**” signs the introductory text of the church register baptismal entries in Attenschwiller in 1793 and a “Jakob Hägeli” signs the baptismal entries.

According to the records, Joannes **Karrer** is in the military in 1729.

**Casparus Hegeli** \* 01.09.1695 in Klingnau † 13.04.1761 Attenschwiller

∞ 24.11.1727 in Attenschwiller **Barbara Karer(in)**

\* 18.02.1703 Attenschwiller † 06.04.1755 Attenschwiller

of Joannes **Karrer** \* 25.05.1680 † 14.02.1754

(of Stephanus **Karrer** † 30.01.1689 and

∞ 06.11.1679 Attenschwiller Maria **Sutter** † 04.02.1705)

and ∞ 1702 Margaretha **Ziegler** \* ....Brinckheim † 23.02.1708 Attenschwiller

Children:

- 1) Petrus Joannes **Hegelin** \* 26.07.1728 Attenschwiller Twin
- 2) Joannes Jacobus **Hegelin** \* 27.07.1728 Attenschwiller Twin
- 3) **Joannes Jakobus Hegelin** \* 26.07.1729 Attenschwiller  
21.5.1736 Confirmati Attenschwiller  
† 12.10.1788 Village-Neuf, Ober Elsass
- 4) Maria **Hegelin** \* 17.01.1733 Attenschwiller † 21.11.1741 Attenschwiller
- 5) Petrus **Hegelin** \* 18.04.1740 Attenschwiller Twin
- 6) Jacobea **Hegelin** \* 18.04.1740 Attenschwiller Twin
- 7) Josephus **Hegelin** \* 09.01. 1745 Attenschwiller † 24.09.1748 Attenschwiller

### Generation 5: Joannes Jacobus Haegli

Casparus' son **Joannes Jacobus** Haegli was probably known as Jacob, but it was the practice in those days for religious reasons to precede the name by a form of "John" for boys and "Maria" for girls.

He is listed in records as a tailor. His sons Joseph and Johann were recorded as witnesses at his funeral.

In 1772, after his third marriage, the family moved to the nearby larger city of Saint-Louis.

**Joannes Jakobus Hegelin** \* 26.07.1729 Attenschwiller † 12.10.1788 Village-Neuf

1. ∞24.02.1752 Attenschwiller Ursula **Weis** \* ca. 1730 Wentzwiller Ober Elsass  
† 11.04.1755 Attenschwiller  
of Joannes **Weis** und Catharina **Schordan**  
(Sister of Ursula: Catharina **Weiss** \*ca. 1723, † 7.2.1798)

Children:

- 1) Joannes Johann **Hegelin** \* 26.01.1755, Taufe am 26.01.1755 Attenschwiller  
21.07.1783 Magdalena **Frants** \* 04.05.1757  
(of Abraham **Frants** out of Kleinaspach und ∞ 26.02.1753 Magdalena  
Werlerin)

Children:

- 1) Martin \*27.03.1785 Village-Neuf † 01.12.1799
- 2) Elisabeth \*29.08.1786 Village-Neuf
- 3) Johann Nicolaus \*14.12.1788 Village-Neuf

2. ∞23.07.1755 Maria Ursula **Schneider** \* 12.03.1727 Attenschwiller † 22.01.1767 Attenschwiller  
of Christianus **Schneider** \* 1685 † 1753 und Maria Ursula **Bochler**  
† 1735 given away by Joannis Weis

Children:

- 4) Elisabetha **Hegelin** \*21.02.1760 Attenschwiller † 22.02.1760 Attenschwiller
- 5) Anna Maria **Hegelin** \* 09.04.1761 Attenschwiller
- 6) Ursula **Hegelin** \*15.04.1764 Attenschwiller

3. ∞5.5.1767 in Attenschwiller **Elisabetha Bubendorf**

\* ca. 1746 Ranspach, Ober Elsass † 05.01.1806 Village-Neuf  
of Laurentio **Buebendorff** und Franziska \_\_\_\_\_



Children:

- 5) Josephus **Hegelin** \* 20.03.1768 Attenschwiller † after 1788
- 6) Markus **Hegelin** \* 25.04.1770 Attenschwiller † with 68 years  
[Bartenheim customs office employee]  
31.10.1798 Bartenheim Elsass with Maria Ursula **Schiellin** \*ca. 1772  
(of Jean Georges **Schiellin** out of Bartenheim \*ca. 1735 † 1798 und Maria Ursula **Ritz**)
- 7) Elisabetha **Heglin** \* 20.01.1773 St.Louis  
Godparents: Georg **Schumacher** und Cath. **Gendarm**  
∞ 01.05.1801 Village-Neuf Johann Peter **Oberhoffer**
- 8) Maria Elisabeth **Heglin** \* 15.12.1775 St.Louis † 19.12.1775
- 9) **Christianus Heglin** \* 09.04.1777 St.Louis, † 1836 Elsass, Ukraine  
Godparents: Christian Enderlin und M. Magdalena **Frants**
- 10) Maria **Heglin** \* 09.01.1780 St.Louis
- 11) **Jakobus Heglin** \* 23.10.1782 St.Louis † 27.04.1836 with 53 years Elsass, Ukraine

Source: Attenschwiller church records, Village-Neuf, St. Louis

Photo: Birth of Christianus Hegelin in 1777

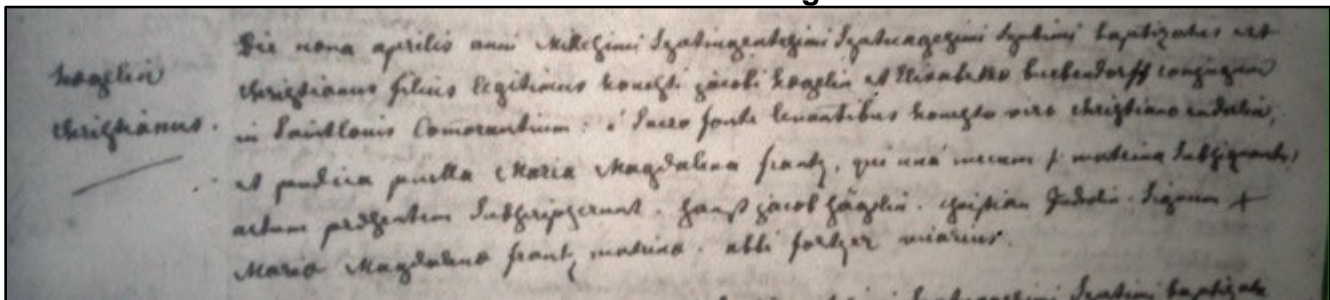
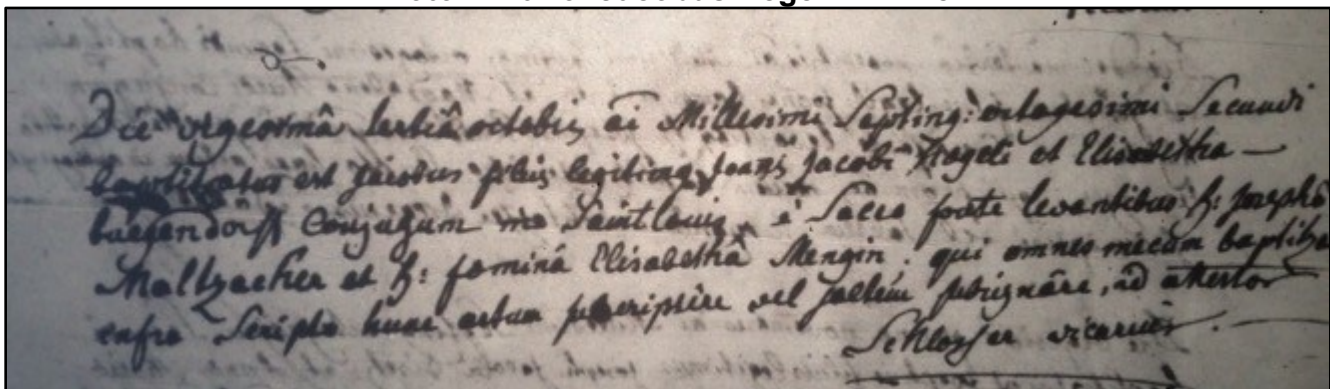


Photo: Birth of Jacobus Hegelin in 1782



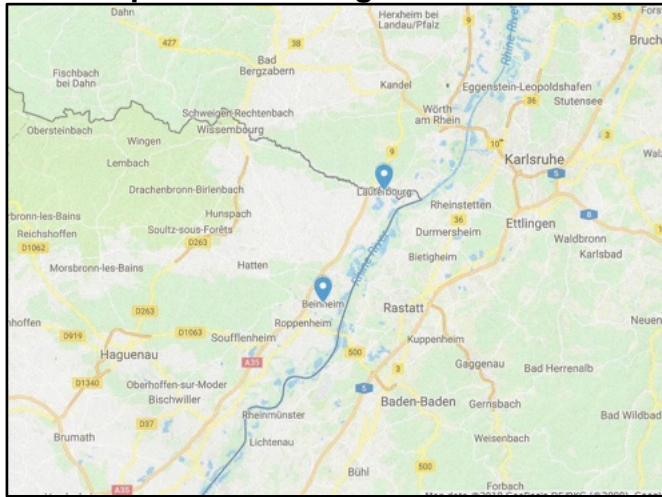
Sources: microfilm family search

## Upper Alsace to Lower Alsace

Of the children of Elisabeth and Joannes Jacobus, **Christian** married in the border town of **Lauterbourg** in 1799 and moved north from St. Louis to the border town of **Beinheim**, where 5 of his children were born.



## Map – Lauterbourg and Beinheim



Since it was a civil wedding, it must have taken place here in the city hall, which was built in 1731.

### Photo: Lauterbourg city hall



Photo by M. Högele

## Alsace to Russia

After having migrated from Baden to Alsace, and lived there for eighty years, Christian and Jakob next contemplated a much larger migration.

### Catherine the Great

The Tsarina Catherine II (reigned 1762-1796) married Tsar Peter III and wanted the vast Russian empire to “europeanize”.

Catherine was German-born herself, originally Sophie Friederike Auguste, Princess of Anhalt Zerbst in Stettin, and married Karl P. Ulrich Duke of Holstein-Gottorp, the later Russian Tsar Peter III. Her husband would have little interest in ruling so Catherine made virtually all the decisions.

## Painting – Tsarina Catherine the Great



On the one hand, she tried to attract Western Europeans in the areas of business, art, culture and science, but just as importantly, she wanted Germans to farm the depopulated areas around the Black Sea, including Crimea, Bessarabia, and parts of the Caucasus that Russia had conquered from the Ottomans.

On December 4th, 1762 she launched a first call to all those wishing to emigrate from Western Europe to these lands. Then on July 22, 1763, she published a 2nd manifesto. It promised the following:

- Free exercise of religion
- Exemption from taxes for 10 to 30 years in the country and for 10 years in the cities
- Interest-free loans for all purchases
- Exemption from military service “in perpetuity”
- Ownership of community and school administration
- Free allocation of 30-80 desjatins (1 desjatinen was 2.702 acres) of land from the crown to each family.

## The French Revolution

In 1789, many things changed in France with the French Revolution. A state in which the king alone had the say was becoming a democracy. The people took their fate into their own hands and fought for freedom, equality and fraternity. Until 1789, Catholicism was the state religion in France. It was the only valid religion and one could not freely choose one's religious affiliation. During the Reformation, Catholicism was already vigorously defended against every Protestant movement. Now, with the Declaration of Human and Civil Rights, Catholicism was abolished as the state religion. In addition, as part of a secularization policy the Church's property was transferred to the state. Monasteries were closed and divorce was permitted. The priests were now paid by the state and were supposed to take an oath to the new constitution. Many pastors refused and were no longer allowed to preach. Many sought protection abroad. The power of the church was greatly reduced by these measures.

But the revolutionaries wanted to completely push Catholicism out of everyday life. A “de-Christianization” phase followed in 1793 and 1794. Christian symbols were removed and churches desecrated. They became “temples of reason.” Bells were not allowed to be rung and church processions were banned. The new calendar introduced in September 1792 also contributed to de-Christianization, as it eliminated the Christian holidays as well as the Christian-influenced week.

However, from 1795 onwards there was a cautious relaxation. Church services were allowed again, but without the ringing of bells. Many a priest returned from exile. At least outwardly, there was a reconciliation between the Catholic Church and the French state in 1801. Napoleon and Pope Pius VII concluded a concordat.

## **A Great Migration**

The people of Europe, especially the farming population, were affected by the wars, impoverished and uprooted. Industry and trade were in ruins. In these times of need, the promises of the manifesto seemed very tempting. The Relocation to the Volga region began around 1767. The emigrants came from

- Rheingau
- Hessen
- Baden
- the Palatinate
- Alsace
- Niederlande
- Switzerland

To their surprise, after their long journey they were not allowed to rest in the cities, but were forced to move on to the countryside of the lower Volga.

Despite the promises made in the Manifesto of Empress Catherine II, the colonists were not able to realize self-government via governmental divisions. They were abolished without further ado in 1782 and the settlers placed under the control of the Russian state administration.

Other aspects began changing even before Catherine’s death (d. November 17, 1796). The political situation altered radically through censorship and the banning of foreign media literature and its distribution. The colonists were often at the mercy of the Russians, subjected to blackmail and bribes.

It was only in 1797 under Tsar Paul, successor to his mother Catherine II, that the first settlers were given their original self-government again. However, Paul fell victim to a conspiracy in 1801.

Tsar Alexander I (1801–1825) published another call for emigration on February 20, 1804. His manifesto, with the same privileges as previously guaranteed by the Tsarina, called on emigrants to come to southern Russia. However, they now had to meet certain conditions:

- Minimum assets 300 guilders
- Good reputation certificate from the home authority
- Model farmers with good agricultural knowledge, including in viticulture
- well-educated craftsmen

In addition, the number of immigrants per year was limited.

During these years, often because of the French Revolution, over a thousand people left

- the Weißenburger Kreis
- the Hagenauer Land
- the Southern Palatinate
- the Duchy of Baden

Many of them became the later settlers of the Catholic colonies in the Kutschurgan and Berezan lands, in the Odessa region.

The emigrants from the cantons of Selz and Lauterbourg crossed the Rhine and gathered in Plittersdorf near Rastatt. Their pre-ordered vehicles were already there ready for the trek.

There were also emigrants from Baden who joined us. There were two routes to Russia, one by water, the other by land.

Those headed for the river route traveled in columns through Swabia to the assembly point in Ulm, from where they traveled on the Danube with the so-called *Ulmer Schachteln* “Ulm boxes” boats to Vienna. The month-long journey, the unfamiliar climate and the lack of nutrition brought illnesses that affected entire families. When they arrived in Odessa, more than half had fallen victim to hardships and illnesses.

### Illustration – Ulmer Schachteln



The group that chose the overland trek had to go through Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and Galicia to the Russian border town of Radziwillow. They spent the winter there, then continued via Podolia to the mouth of the Dniester. This journey lasted up to two summers and one winter and also had its own scares. Many did not survive the trek.

By 1859, almost 110,000 Germans had emigrated from Alsace, Württemberg and Baden to the Black

Sea region. A total of 304 mother colonies and 3,232 daughter settlements would be founded in Russia in 130 years. By 1897, around 130,000 immigrants had become an ethnic group of 1.7 million.

Before World War I, more than 2.4 million Germans lived there.

### **Our migration**

The brother emigrants, **Christian** and **Jakob Hegele**, migrated in 1808 and came to the Kutschurgan area near the large city of Odessa, in Ukraine, then part of the Russian empire. The Kutschurgan region was named after the river of the same name.

The colonies (later known as “mother colonies” because they in turn spawned yet more colonies) founded in the Kutschurgan Valley were named after places the colonists had left:

- Kandel
- Selz
- Mannheim
- **Elsass** (variant spelling of Alsace)
- Strasbourg
- Baden

### **Christian’s story:**

- Passport issued: August 3, 1808
- Date of arrival in Russia: September 10, 1808
- Age: 31
- Spouse: Maria (29)
- Children: Christian (9), Franz Xaver (8), Bernhard (6), Emanuel (2), Josefina (4 months)
- Others: Maria’s widowed sister Maria Elisabetha and child, of Johann Peter Oberhoffer
- Origin point: village of Beinheim

### **Jakob’s story:**

- Date of emigration: September 10, 1808
- Age: 26
- Spouse: Magdalena (28)
- Children: Jakob (4)
- Origin point: village of St. Louis
- Last sighting in Baden: registered in Village-Neuf on May 1, 1808

With a total of 60 families, they founded the Catholic colony of Elsass, which is 47 km north of Odessa.

By 1908 the village had developed to the following state:

- 2,000 inhabitants
- 400 farms, each with 178 acres of land
- 178 acres of vineyards
- 9,860 acres of arable land
- Outside the municipality several Alsatians cultivated 40,772 acres of their own arable land.

The community had large quarries that provided residents with 600,000 stones, ensuring a good additional income. The church was built in 1892 and a new school in the 1890s.

In 1926 the community owned



- four grocery stores
- a wine bar
- a beer hall

There were also

- five wagon makers
- five blacksmiths
- four shoemakers
- three tailors

From emigration to the birth of my grandfather **Thomas Högele**, 88 years passed during which further generations were born.

### Generation 6.1: Christianus Hegele

In the records, Christian is listed as a customs officer.

**Christianus Hegele** \* 09.04.1777 St. Louis/Haut Rhin † Elsass, Ukraine, Customs officer

1. ∞ 19.01.1799 Lauterbourg / Bas-Rhin

**Maria Agatha Lacher** \*22.01.1779 Leutersweiler/Leitersweiler (today Germany) † Elsass, Ukraine  
daughter of Sebastian Lacher \* 1752 (of Joannes Lacher und Anna  
Maria Lorch) ∞ 1779 and his first wife Margaretha Zimmermann \*  
1749 † 02.09.1790 Eberbach, Bas-Rhin

Children:

- 1) **Christian Hegele** \* 1799 Beinheim, Bas-Rhin
- 2) **Franz Xaver Hegele** \* 1800 Beinheim, Bas-Rhin
- 3) **Bernhard Hegele** \* 1802 Beinheim, Bas-Rhin (no record after 1816)
- 4) **Emanuel Hegele** \* 1806 Beinheim, Bas-Rhin
- 5) **Josefina Hegele** \* 07.05.1808 Beinheim , Bas-Rhin † 1900
- 6) **Maria Agatha Hegele** \* 1811 Elsass, Ukraine
- 7) **Jakob Hegele** \* 1813 Elsass, Ukraine
- 8) **Wilhelm Hegele** \* 1815 Elsass, Ukraine (no record after 1815)

2. ∞ 12.01.1836 Mannheim/Ukraine Maria Eva Hohlbein widow Selz 56 years  
(of Johannes Adam Holesin and Maria Eva, daughter of Bernhard Schmitt)

### Generation 6.2: Jakobus Heglin

In the records, Jacob is listed as a carpenter. He is registered among the Village-Neuf residents list on May 1, 1808. Jakobus immigrated to Russia on September 10, 1808 at the age of 24.

**Jakobus Heglin** \* 23.10.1782 St.Louis † 27.04.1836 Elsass, Ukraine

∞Magdalena Nauertz (of Xaver Nauertz)

\* 1783 † 24.06.1866 with 83 years Cholera? Elsass, Ukraine

Children:

- 1) **Jakob Haegeli** \* 1808 Elsass, Ukraine † 1836
- 2) **Magdalena Hegele** \* ca. 1809 †after 1866 Elsass, Ukraine
- 3) **Johann Jakob Hegele** \* 28.07.1811 11 o.21.10.1835 Katharina Volk  
of Matthias of Josef und Catharina Schiele of Martin

† vor 1866 Elsass, Ukraine

4) Franziska **Hegele** \*ca.1813 1833 Andreas Gerein MH † 27.04.1873 Georgental, Ukraine

5) Anna Maria **Hegele** \* 1816 Elsass, Ukraine

6) Peter Anton **Hegele** \* 19.02.1820, † 1893

∞ Marianne Klein \*1822 †after 1893 daughter of Michael Klein

7) Margarethe Hegele \* 25.04.1825, † 26.09.1866 with 41 years Elsass, Ukraine

∞ Stephan Volk

8) Maria Agatha Hegele \* 24.08.1830 †after 1866 Elsass, Ukraine

∞ Ignatz Schneider † 10.07.1880 with 52 years Elsass, Ukraine

**Sources:** Microfilms, Attenschwiler baptismal records, Village-Neuf, Beinheim  
Church records Mannheim/Ukraine

## Our life in Russia

At the beginning, each family was allocated 60 desjatinen (about 162 acres) of land, as well as equipment and tools and - where necessary - money and interest-free loans. If possible, the colonists rented additional land from large Russian landowners and the Russian nobility who knew nothing about the land. The land was a barren steppe area and had to be cultivated first. A short time later they were able to purchase the land. Through hard work, the colonists or their children quickly acquired their own land.

In the first years after settlement, the colonists had to build primitive earthen huts called in Russian *Semlyanki*. The houses built later had their front gable facing the street, which was wide and dead straight. The one-story houses were built from clay and stone, which came mainly from the quarry in Elsass. At first the roof was mostly covered with reeds. Later there were also occasional tin or tiled roofs. There were also stables and a summer kitchen on the site.

The Russian side founded a welfare committee for the first immigrants through the Ukas (tsar's decree) on March 22, 1818. It was responsible for the development of the settlements and provided organizational, advisory and material assistance.

Each community elected its executive bodies by majority vote:

- village mayor
- sexton
- teachers
- church elders
- village clerk

The official language was German. The church and school administration was therefore the responsibility of the Germans. Reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history, religion and singing were also taught in schools in German. A school was built at every church. The teachers trained younger people again. They also created a German press.

Initially the situation of the immigrants was marked by deprivation and difficulties. They lived in an unknown country with a language and customs that were foreign to them. They had barely built their first shelters when plague broke out in 1812, claiming many victims. Even later, the individual villages were not spared from plagues such as diseases, livestock epidemics, plagues of locusts and the like.

But the emigrants did not give up and their initial poverty was quickly overcome thanks to their work and good harvests.

The colonies were linked by their beliefs, language and culture, origins and history. The community was based exclusively on church laws. They hardly took part in political events. Every German community had a German school created with its own resources. It was permitted to purchase land from private individuals in order to improve the economy. The colonists adhered to their traditional customs, music and the various dialects from their ancestral homeland.

**Photo – Plowing the land**



Source: *Russlanddeutscher Postkarten Heimatkalender 1950*  
[Germans from Russia Postcards Hometown Calendar 1950]

However, as in other countries, diseases also afflicted people:

- 1829: smallpox
- 1832: cholera
- 1843: rubella
- 1843/45: scarlet fever

## **Odessa**

The cities soon experienced an economic boom. The city of Odessa, founded in 1790 by Prince Potemkin with the Spanish General de Ribas, also developed into a trading center of southern Russia, later under his successor, the clever, educated and far-sighted Duke Richelieu as governor of Odessa (1805). Many business people, manufacturers and large landowners moved to the beautiful city on the Black Sea, as did doctors, teachers and merchants. They mostly came from Germany and Austria.

There were Germans in Russia long before this large-scale immigration. The previous Russian tsars, especially Peter the Great, were interested in foreign, especially German, technicians, scientists, military men, merchants, etc. Odessa was the freest city in the entire Tsarist Empire. Twenty languages were spoken here, first Italian, then French. Odessa was called the Russian Marseille, with its opera - one of the most beautiful next to Paris, Milan and New York - and the Odessa region with its black earth along the sea coast - the granary of Europe. There were also German newspapers: *The Odessaner Zeitung*, the school paper of the German colonists and religious magazines as well as a German theater. The German colonists played a key role in the rapid construction and good development of the city of Odessa.

It was not until 1857 that the wave of emigration came to a complete standstill.

## Daughter colonies

Finally, in the second half of the 19th century, the colonies and their inhabitants had increased so much that there was a shortage of land everywhere. In the first decades, a farmer/owner was not allowed to share the farm as an inheritance. So people came together who, with the help of their home colony, often hundreds of kilometers away, founded and built a new village typically with the addition of “New” in its name. For this purpose, land was first rented from large Russian landowners or the nobility and could then be purchased within a short period of time.

Many daughter colonies emerged, such as **Neu Elsass** in 1886.

The Germans, in the Odessa region on the Black Sea, distinguished themselves early through prosperity or wealth. They achieved this through their tireless hard work. The farmers developed and worked the land. The craft workshops such as wagon building, rake, fork and blacksmith workshops quickly developed into small industrial centers, including in Selz, Kandel and Strasbourg. The colonists in the Kutschurgan valley had created a prosperous country after around sixty arduous years of construction.

Map – detail of the Kutschurgan area, 1940



**Source:** *Heimatbuch Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland*, edited by Dr. K. Stumpp 1955 edition

However, the special privileges, such as tax exemption and exemption from military service, aroused a lot of suspicion, envy and distrust among the Russians.

## The rules change

In 1871, Tsar Alexander II decided to revoke the rights and privileges granted to the colonists in the various manifestos. This put them on an equal footing with ordinary Russian peasants, who were only freed from serfdom in 1862, and they had to submit to the same laws and obligations. The schools were Russified. The German settlements were given Russian official names, which had to be used officially.

From 1874, compulsory military service was introduced for the colonists. These changes caused consternation and anger. The colonists viewed this as a breach of contract by the Russian crown. Russian was to become the exclusive language of the public, acquiring additional arable land for the growing number of German colonists became increasingly difficult and they lost any right to self-government in their villages.

Many thought about leaving Russia, but were hesitant to emigrate because of the long journey across the ocean. Nevertheless, from 1872 onwards many decided to emigrate to the United States, Canada and South America. Many settlers settled in the Dakotas in particular. From 1901-1911 around 105,000 German settlers emigrated to America and arrived at Ellis Island – the Gate of Hope, which opened in New York in 1892.

When Alexander III ascended to the Russian throne in 1881, Russification became the official policy and brought even more dire consequences for the colonists. Inciting brochures were published and defense documents were formulated as forms of protest, but it was all in vain.

A short-term improvement occurred when the government was forced to take a step towards meeting the Germans' aspirations for freedom during the revolutionary years at the beginning of the 20th century. High schools were opened in the colonies and a university was even planned.

### **War comes to Russia**

Then came the First World War (1914-1918), which changed many things in Europe. The German soldiers fought alongside their Russian comrades under pressure from their commanders.

The war brought a lot of resentment against the Germans. In St. Petersburg the German embassy was stormed by the Russians and Petersburg was renamed a more Russian-sounding Petrograd. Then a ban on the use of German in public, in school, in the press, during sermons in church and a ban on gatherings of more than three people was issued. This was followed by the liquidation laws for the Germans in southern Russia on February 2nd and 13th.

In December 1915, the Duma (Parliament) passed and Tsar Nicholas II approved:

- Plan to disenfranchise and liquidate Germans in Russia
- Forced sale of property and forced evacuation Population.

This was a serious violation of citizens' rights. However, hatred of Tsar Nicholas II, who had been in power since 1894, had been building up in the Russian Empire for decades. He ruled as a despot and ignored the reform demands of the Duma, which had existed since 1906, but was powerless. The war effort led to economic and social crises. There were also calls for an end to the war. Finally, on March 2, 1917, the Tsar announced his resignation and his son's renunciation of the throne. Russia's monarchy ended after almost 400 years of tsarist rule.

Due to the February Revolution of 1917 and the feared negative effects on the economy, the liquidation laws of 1915 were no longer fully implemented. At this point, however, many people had already been displaced and dispossessed.

With the Tsar's abdication, power passed into the hands of a Provisional Government, which continued the war. Alongside the government, the Petersburg Soviet - the Workers' and Soldiers' Council - quickly developed into an independent force. In it, the representatives of the Bolsheviks gained importance, especially after Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (1870-1924), the leading figure of this group, returned from Swiss exile with the support of the German Supreme Army Command, who hoped



thereby to destabilize Russia.

The Provisional Government's refusal to redistribute the land and end the war played into the hands of its opponents and so the Soviet majority, led by the Bolsheviks, initiated November 1917 (October 24 according to the Julian calendar) led to a coup that deposed the Provisional Government. The Bolsheviks introduced one-party rule. Lenin's agricultural program envisaged confiscating all property belonging to the nobility, the church and the crown and handing it over to the farmers in order to secure the support of the rural population. The banks were nationalized, churches and monasteries lost their property and companies were expropriated and placed under the control of an economic council.

In the Russian Empire, the opposition looked forward to the elections on November 12, 1917 with hope. The result was indeed a disaster for the Bolsheviks. They won only 24 percent of the at least 44 million votes. The Socialist-Revolutionaries (Whites supported from abroad by foreign armies), which consisted of parts of the old tsarist military and volunteers, reached about 38 percent. The Bolsheviks immediately declared the election fraudulent, banned other party meetings and had leaders arrested.

They also began building a volunteer army, but with only moderate success. The poorly-equipped force was no more a match for the armies of the Germans and their allies who advanced deep into Russian territory during World War I than the Red Guards had been before them.

For this reason and because they used the army to consolidate their still insecure position, the Bolsheviks had been in power since the end of the 1917 Peace negotiations with the occupiers and had to pay a high price. They gave up territories formerly controlled by Russia, Poland, Finland, Estonia and Lithuania, which were henceforth subject to German protectorate, and also recognized the independence of Ukraine (which was now occupied by Germany and its ally Austria).

### **Civil war**

Supporters of the deposed government gathered troops and wanted to remove Lenin's dictatorship with the help of foreign powers. As more and more opposition members rebelled, the country lurched into civil war in 1918. In the summer of 1918, the revolutionary troops already numbered 40,000 men. And they gained a powerful ally: Germany supplied them with weapons in the Don region from occupied Ukraine. In return the Germans received wheat. Other world powers also intervened in the civil war. British and American soldiers landed in the northwest and southeast of the country. Although they hardly took part in the fighting, they supported the revolutionaries with money and weapons.

The civil war that devastated Russia continued to escalate. The communists responded with terror, imposed martial law and turned the country into a kind of military camp. Large-scale industry was nationalized and all grain was declared state property. Lenin appointed Stalin as special commissioner for food supplies in the Volga region. But he directed his powers more and more in military directions. At the beginning of 1919 the military situation turned in favor of the Bolsheviks.

Lenin was forced to introduce a new economic policy (founding a cooperative). The farmers now got some land for their own use again. New hopes arose. The land they tilled was theirs. From now on, farmers were allowed to freely sell what was left of their harvest after paying the tax. So people felt a little better again. In the schools there was now communist teaching in an atheistic sense. This economic situation was only meant to last for a short time. After suffering several strokes, Lenin died on January 21, 1924.

The civil war caused a lot of instability. For example, after the withdrawal of the troops still in Russia during the war, the government system in Odessa changed 22 times until the Soviets came to power.

The consequences of the First World War were catastrophic.

Overall, Russia lost a third of its population - 55 million people - as a result of the world war, as well as an equally large proportion of its agricultural land, more than half of all industrial enterprises and almost 90 percent of its coal mines.

The transport system collapsed. Epidemics and typhus broke out. There were many deaths. On top of all the misery came the bad harvest in 1921 terrible famine for people and animals. 40-50,000 people starved to death in the Black Sea region.

Since the Bolsheviks came to power, efforts have been made to disempower the church in Russia. Church and state had to - according to the atheistic understanding of society Socialists - be separate. As early as January 1918, Lenin had the Orthodox Church expropriated by the state. Priests were persecuted and murdered, places of worship were closed, and church bells were melted down. Seen in this light, the introduction of the Gregorian calendar was just one of many measures to banish the church from social life.

### **Life under Stalin**

Stalin's position of power also brought further terror to the country. When bad weather in 1927 meant that the harvest was only mediocre, the population was still able to supply themselves with it, but the government created a grain crisis: those state trading agencies that bought large quantities of the harvest and supplied the city shops drove down the price more and more because more money could be made by exporting the grain abroad. Therefore, farmers preferred to hoard their grain or feed it to their livestock. In the fall of 1927 they sold half as much grain as the previous year to state traders and sold the rest at private prices on private markets. Stalin was alarmed. In the industrial centers there was a supply crisis. Advisors predicted a famine in Moscow and he also saw his project of massive industrialization in danger. If enough grain could not be exported, Stalin would be without the foreign currency that he had already budgeted to finance all the new power plants, factories and railways and to rearm the army.

Stalin saw the cause not in poor government planning, but in the farmers. The culprits were quickly identified: the "kulaks," those wealthy farmers who ran larger farms and had employees. In January he ordered "extraordinary measures".

The leadership soon sent task forces and secret police into the countryside to bring hoarded grain into state possession. They closed markets, searched barns, arrested "kulaks" and confiscated grain.

Rural residents were asked to report neighbors who were hiding grain. When harvests fell again in 1928 and 1929, the brigades became increasingly aggressive.

Stalin's will to massively increase steel and iron production in order to advance the country's industrialization had fatal consequences for the rural population. He had an enormous industrial city built by volunteers and forced laborers in an empty steppe in the South Urals, however with great sacrifices. He transformed agriculture and drove farmers into collective farms. They were supposed to hand over their land, livestock and harvesting equipment and from then on cultivate the land collectively with other farmers, as state wage workers, so to speak. Stalin wanted to force the complete restructuring of agriculture. The collective farms were supposed to replace the small farms

and - equipped with modern tractors and machines - operate according to the latest scientific findings.

At the end of 1929, Stalin officially declared that the “kulaks” had to be liquidated as a class. According to arbitrary criteria, the regime divides those now being persecuted into three categories.

1. “Counter-revolutionary kulaks” – 60,000 heads of families – were to be arrested, executed or sent to labor camps
2. 150,000 households of “half-kulaks” were to be banished to inhospitable regions of the country.
3. Finally, half a million “regime-loyal kulaks” were to be resettled on poorer land within their district.

Special brigades dispossessed and deported millions of rural residents. They searched the farms, confiscated cows and horses, and collected plows and seed drills for the new collective farms. These were months of lawlessness and arbitrariness and people lived in fear.

Many farmers preferred to slaughter their animals rather than hand them over to the collective farms. Resistance grew and Stalin was temporarily forced to condemn the coercive measures, at least publicly in the newspapers. The farmers fled the collective farms. For a moment it looked as if the farmers had won. But then the regime began to finally break the resistance. Thousands were sentenced to death in 1930, many were sent to labor camps or exiled to remote regions. The Catholic and Protestant clergy, academics, doctors, teachers, former officers and wealthy farmers were arrested and deported. By the end of 1931 Stalin deported almost two million people from their villages.

Agricultural productivity fell dangerously quickly. Although the collective farms received thousands of tractors, the technology could not compensate for the loss of horses and cattle. In addition, many machines were defective.

On August 7, 1932, the Politburo passed a decree - probably written by Stalin. Thereafter, any theft of collective farm property, no matter how small, was punished with the death penalty or ten years in a labor camp.

Another famine began. In total, five to six million people died in Europe *Holodomor*. In the West, however, the mass extinction went virtually unnoticed. The regime in Moscow did everything it could to cover it up. It was not until 1935 that the party leadership allowed farmers to keep some land and livestock for basic needs.

### **Another world war**

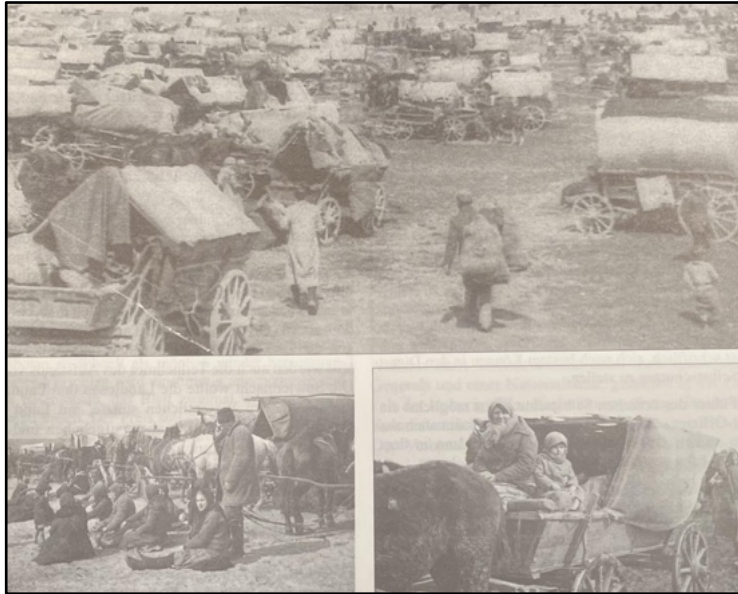
In 1939, Hitler swept the world with his war - and Stalin was initially his most important ally. But when the German dictator wanted to attack Russia soon afterwards, Soviet agents found out about it very early. Stalin was undeterred and ignored the danger.

The German Wehrmacht conquered Crimea as well as Ukraine, Belarus, the Baltics and large parts of Russia by the winter of 1941/42. Leningrad was surrounded and the tanks approached Moscow. But Hitler's concept of blitzkrieg failed due to winter and time.

Stalin eventually entered into an alliance with the British and when the USA also went to war in December 1941, Moscow gained another ally and soon received American weapons. As the German Wehrmacht Russia was overrun, many Germans were able to return to their old villages, but then the

turning point came when the German army was surrounded near Stalingrad. The German army then began its long, slow retreat. The German Wehrmacht tried to evacuate the Germans from Russia with the front line behind them.

**Photo: trek from Ukraine to Poland**



**Source:** *Deutsche Ansiedlung im Schwarzmeergebiet*, Dr. Alfred Einfeld  
[German settlement in the Black Sea region]

### **Seven treks**

There were seven treks that set off:

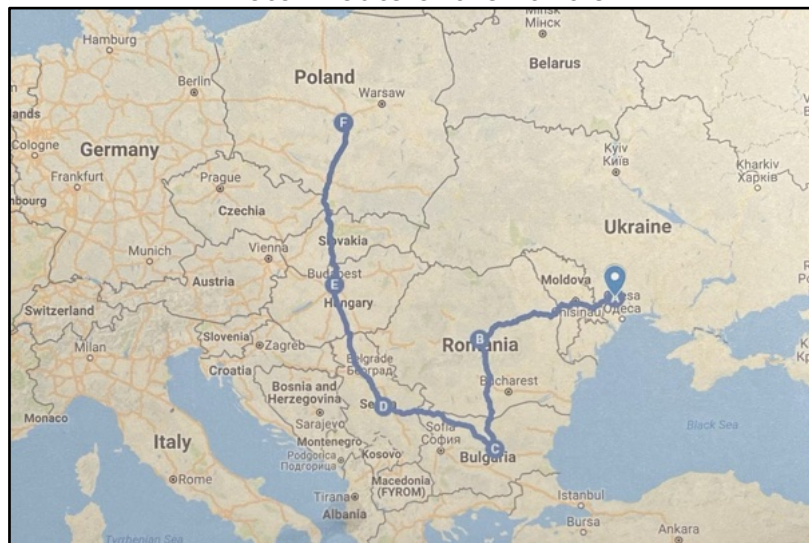
1. The so-called 1st trek involved around 4,800 Germans from the Leningrad area and prisoners of war. These people came to Poland or to work in the German Reich.
2. In the second trek in 1943, 10,000 Germans from Belarus and the so-called Army Group Center were resettled in the Warthegau and partly into the German Reich.
3. At the beginning of 1943, around 11,800 Germans from the North Caucasus, the Kalmyk steppe and eastern Ukraine were captured in the third trek.
4. The fourth trek in 1943 led from the areas of Kherson, Nikolayev, Nikopol, Kiev, Kharkov, Krivoy-Rog, Melitopol, Mariupol, Dnepropetrovsk, Kirovograd and Zaporozhye.
5. A fifth trek followed from August 1943 to May 1944 and affected 73,000 Black Sea Germans.
6. The 6th affected approximately 44,600 Germans from Volhynia.
7. The 7th trek involved around 135,000 people who had the front line behind them.

The evacuation planned for 2 routes in the last trek:

- a. the northern route with 72,000 people from the Beresan and Glückstal colonies from April 16, 1944
- b. the southern route with Germans from Odessa, Großliebental and Kutschurgan from April 23, 1944. It led along the Danube through Romania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and by rail to Poland.



### Photo: Route of the 7th trek



The people gathered in their villages, drove to assembly points, met treks from other villages and were welcomed by the Volksdeutsche organizationally-managed middle office. There were bombing raids, diversions through the front line and difficult, busy routes.

The description of the memories varies greatly. We think that many people shared the paths and perhaps took different paths from a certain point onwards.

The destination of the trek was the Warthegau in Poland. The final journey was often made by train. The animals and wagons had to be left behind. In Warthegau, people were registered at the immigration office and naturalized. Some documents have been lost, but many EWZ documents still exist today in microfilm and include a handwritten CV and sometimes a photo.

The refugees were distributed to surrounding villages and towns and worked there. Men who were subject to military service joined the military involuntarily; after the war or, if necessary, being taken prisoner of war, they tried to find their relatives through the Red Cross tracing service or through acquaintances.

The refugees who remained in the Warthegau were resettled to Germany (then the German Reich) in 1944/1945. Our relatives came to what is now the state of Lower Saxony (Germany).

They also worked there or lived in a camp. The Russians tried to take the people back to Russia. They promised that they could go back to their old villages. This plunged many people into great distress. They didn't know what to do because they didn't know where their relatives lived or whether they were still alive. People believed the Russians and were eventually deported to labor camps in Siberia; others who refused and were under the protection of the Allies remained in Germany.

Families were torn apart for years and may never see each other or their children again.

In April 1945, Soviet soldiers finally raised the red flag over the bombed-out Berlin Reichstag.

### Generation 7.1: Christian Hegele

Christian Hegele \* 1799 († 04.10.1880 with 82 years in Elsass, wife was still alive  
† 04.10.1882 with 82 years Elsass/Ukraine

∞ Magdalena **Pflüger** \* 11.05.1803

Daughter of Meinrad **Pflüger** and Sabina **Wesbecher (Weissbeck)** Au-am Rhein Baden

Children:

1) Franziska **Hegele** \* 11.09.1822 Elsass, Ukraine † 10.09.1866 Elsass, Ukraine

∞ 1843 Heinrich Ziegler

2) Elisabeth **Hegele** \* 15.07.1824 Elsass, Ukraine

3) Paulina **Hegele** \* 27.06.1826 Elsass, Ukraine † after 1880

4) Christian **Hegele** \* 01.10.1828 Elsass, Ukraine † 12.09.1866 Elsass, Ukraine of tuberculosis

∞ 1848 Veronica **Birkenstock** \* 1827

5) Jakob **Hegele** \* 06.07.1830 2.7.183 Elsass, Ukraine, † 1895 Georgental

1. ∞ 17.11. 1852 Mannheim, Ukraine Katharina **Wingerter** 21 Jahre †after 1861  
(of Kasimir **Wingerter** and Katharina **Adam**)

2. ∞ Agnes **Schneider** \* 09.02.1846 Mannheim, Ukraine † 27.12.1935 NorthD  
daughter of Franz Josef **Schneider** and Christina **Bleischwitz**

6) Sebastian **Hegele** \* 16.06.1832 Elsass, Ukraine, † after 1882

∞ 1855 Magdalena **Bartsch** \* ca. 1834

7) Emmanuel **Hegele** \* 01.03.1834 Elsass, Ukraine, † after 1882

1. ∞ 1856 (name unknown)

2. ∞ 1882 Margaretha Hyk? widow 45 years old out of Landau

8) Christina **Hegele** † 19.06.1835

9) Franz **Hegele** † 1836

10) Josef **Hegele** \* 19.01.1839 Elsass, Ukraine, †after 1882

1. ∞ Katharina \*1840

2. ∞ Barbara

11) Marianna **Hegele** \* 1840 Elsass, Ukraine †after 1882

∞ 1858 Ignatz **Schneider**

12) Johannes Georg **Hegele** \* 09.08.1841 Elsass, 08.04.1842 † after 1882

∞ Katharina **Schwab**\* ca. 1842

13) Julianna **Hegele** \* 14.01.1842 Elsass, Ukraine, † 13.10.1912 Elsass, Ukraine

∞ 1863 Johannes **Merk** \* 1841 † 1919

## Generation 7.2: Franz Xaver Hegele

**Franz Xaver Hegele** \* 1800 † 1836 Elsass, Ukraine

∞ ca. 1830 **Elisabetha Zerr** \* 1812 Selz, Ukraine † 1836 Elsass, Ukraine  
daughter of Andreas **Zerr** \* 1789 Neeweiler Weißenburg, Bas-Rhin  
and 17.05.1816 Katharina \* 1790

Children:

1) Johannes **Hegele** \* 25.04.1831 Elsass, Ukraine

1. ∞ ∞ 11.02.1852 21 Jahre Maria Agatha **Schloß** 20 Jahre \* ca. 1832  
of Katharina **Hemerle** and Peter **Schloß**

2. ∞ Elisabeth **Schloß** \* ca. 1837

2) **Franz Xaver Hegele** \* 06.02.1833 Elsass, Ukraine † 1919 Elsass, Ukraine

3) Sebastian **Hegele** \*09.09.1834 Elsass, Ukraine

1. ∞ 07.11.1860 Magdalena Schnall (Schnell) \*1838 † 15.09.1865 Elsass  
von Jakob Schnall und Magdalena Eberle

2. ∞ 1870 Stephania Becht \* 1840 Selz, † ca. 1874  
Witwe von Paul Becker (von Franz)

### Generation 7.3: Emanuel Hegele

Emanuel **Hegele** \* 1806 † 10.09.1866 with 64 years Cholera Georgental, Ukraine

1. ∞18.11.1829 Maria Anna **Ripplinger** \* ca. 1812 Selz, Ukraine  
daughter of Franz **Ripplinger** \* ca. 1780 (son des Nikolaus) and

2. ∞ Magdalena **Becker** \* ca. 1780

Children:

1) Emanuel **Hegele** \* 15.10.1830 † 1830/1831

2) Marianna **Hegele** \* 20.12.1831

3) Margareta **Hegele** \* 26.01.1834

03.11.1853 20 Jahre Johann **Heinrich** 21 Jahre  
of Johann **Heinrich** and Margaretha **Silbernagel**

4) Katharina **Hegele** \* 1836 Elsass, Ukraine

5) Franz Josef **Hegele** \* 22.01.1839 Georgental

18.10.1860 20 Jahre and Elisabeth **Schumacher** 18 Jahre \* ca. 1842 Straßburg  
of Josef **Schumacher** and Katharina **Erk** Kleinliebental

6) Magdalena **Hegele** 1841

7) Rosa **Hegele** 1842 † 28.11.1842

6) Emanuel **Hegele** \* 20.09.1849 Georgental, Ukraine, † 18.07.1918 Kanada

Margaret **Schumacher** \* 25.11.1850 Selz<sup>1</sup> † 14.01.1921 Kanada , † 1920

In 1886 the family emigrated to Alberta, Canada.

### Generation 7.4: Josefina Hegele

Josefina **Hegele** \* 1808 † 1900

∞1827 Sebastian Philipp **Ziegler** \* 1803/1804 Jöhlingen

Son of Georg **Ziegler** (\* 1755 Jöhlingen Karlsruhe, † 1828 St. Gallen Schweiz)  
and 1794 Margaretha **Klein** (\* 1762 † 1860)

### Generation 7.5: Maria Agatha Hegele

Maria Agatha **Hegele** \* 1811

1. ∞ 1834/1835 Paul **Senger**

2. ∞ 1860/1861 remarried as a widow in Strassburg, Ukraine

### Generation 7.6: Jakob Hegele

Jakob **Hegele** \* ca. 1813 † 19.02.1866 Mannheim, Ukraine

29.04.1835 Mannheim, Ukraine

∞ Anna Maria **Fahn** \* 24.05.1804 † 04.01.1873 Elsass, Ukraine

of Maria Agatha and Sebastian **Lacher**, Anna Maria remarried as widow

### Generation 8: Franz Xaver Hegele

**Franz Xaver Hegele** \* 06.02.1833 Elsass, Ukraine

1. ∞03.02.1853 **Johanna Klein** 18 years old † 2.9.1866 Elsass, Ukraine of cholera of Michael **Klein** and Johanna **Keller**
2. ∞ 08.11.1866 widower 34 years old Rosina Ziegler widow H(G)ermann 26 years old \* 1841 Elsass, Ukraine † 1922 Elsass, Ukraine of Ludwig Ziegler and Rosina Müller Zeuge: Sebastian Hegele and Josef Meier

Children:

1) Magdalena **Hegele** \* 1854 † 22.08.1866 with 12 ½ years Elsass, Ukraine

2) Johannes **Hegele** \* 10.02.1856 ( 1877 drafted ) 27 years old

∞ 17.10.1883 Katharina **Volk** 24 **Jahre** of Konrad **Volk** and Johanna **Trautmann**

3) **Franz Hegele** \* 12.02.1858

4) Alexander **Hegele** \* 07.03.1860 Elsass, Ukraine Twin

∞ 08.10.1884 years old and Margaretha **Lorenz** 22 years old

of Konrad **Lorenz** and Magdalena **Volk**

5) Michael **Hegele** \* 07.03.1860 Elsass, Ukraine, Twin

∞ Margarete \* ca. 1863

6) Juliana **Hegele** \* ca. 1862

Children:

7) Brigitta **Hegele** \* 14.03.1868 † 23.4.1941 Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada

8) Marianna **Hegele** † 09.08.1872 with ¼ year Elsass, Ukraine

9) Katharina **Hegele** \* 29.07.1875 Elsass, Ukraine

10) Lambert **Hegele** \* 16.09.1877 † 25.11.1958 Sacramento CA

∞ Margareta Gerein \* 31.05.1881 Elsass, Ukraine, † 12.10.1960

of Franz Josef Gerein

### Generation 9: Franz (Hegele) Högele

**Franz (Hegele) Högele** \*12.02.1858 in Elsass, Ukraine † 18.02.1928 Neu Elsass

∞ 26.10.1880 in Neu Elsass, Ukraine **Christina Schaan** \* 18.02.1856 in

Georgental, Ukraine, † 18.05.1920 Neu Elsass

daughter of Franz **Schan** \* 20.03.1819 Elsass, Ukraine, † 1881 Elsass, Ukraine and Margareta **Schiffmacher** \* 1823 Elsass, Ukraine, † after 1881

Children:

1) Franz **Högele** \* 06.09.1885 in Neu Elsass, Ukraine † 1.6.1967 in Germany

2) Marianne **Högele** \* 08.10.1886 in Neu Elsass, Ukraine

3) Michael **Högele** \* 1888 in Neu Elsass, Ukraine

4) Nikolaus **Högele** \* 1890 in Neu Elsass, Ukraine 15.09.1937 sentenced to forced labor

5) Margarete **Högele** \* 27.10.1892 in Neu Elsass, Ukraine



6) **Thomas Högele** \* 29.12.1896 in Neu Elsass, Ukraine † 5.8.1965 in Germany

7) **Markus Högele** \* 1900 in Neu Elsass, Ukraine, † 06.05.1938, shot

There were two further children – Josef \* 06.08.1881 and Sebastian \* 07.10.1884 – who probably died very young.

### Generation 10.1: Franz Högele

Franz Högele

∞ Elisabeth **Steiert** \* 01.03.1890 in Neu Elsass, Ukraine † 18.09.1957 in Germany  
daughter of Anton **Steiert** \* 02.02.1861 Krasnow/Bessarabien  
and Anastasia **Volk** \* 02.03.1869 Elsass, Ukraine

### Generation 10.2: Maria (Marianna) Högele

Maria (Marianna) Högele \* 08.10.1886 in Neu Elsass, Ukraine 25.09.1886

∞ 04.02.1908 Ponjatowka Josef **Huber** \* 27.11.1879 in Selz, Ukraine  
son of Valentin **Huber** \* 1849 Selz Ukraine † 1932 Ponjatowka, Ukraine

### Generation 10.3: Michael Högele

Michael Högele \* ca. 1888 Neu Elsass, Ukraine, † abducted

∞ Magdalena **Schell** of Quinton (Vincent Schell?)

### Generation 10.4: Nikolaus Högele

Nikolaus Högele \* 1890 in Neu Elsass, Ukraine 10.09.1937 abducted

∞ Margarete **Schell** \* 1890 in Neu Elsass, Ukraine, † 26.03.1959 in Germany  
daughter of Vincent (Quinton) **Schell** \* 16.1.1864 and Genovefa

### Generation 10.5: Margarete Högele

Margarete Högele, \* 27.10.1892 in Neu Elsass, Ukraine

1. ∞ 1913 Anton **Volk** † ca. 1915 im 1. world war son of Jonas **Volk** and Dorothea **Fritz**

2. ∞ 18.05. 1919 Neu Elsass, Ukraine Gabriel **Volk** \* 13.06.1888 Neu Elsass, Ukraine  
Son of Jonas **Volk** and Dorothea **Fritz**

### Generation 10.6: Markus Högele

Markus Högele \* 1900 in Neu Elsass, Ukraine † 06.05.1938 Ukraine shot

Magdalena **Bachmeier** \* of Phillip \* 1873 Josephstal, Ukraine, † 1928 UKR

### Generation 10.7: Thomas Högele

**Thomas Högele** \* 29.12.1896 in Neu Elsass, Ukraine † 5.8.1965 Germany  
29.5.1921 in Neu Elsass

∞ **Juliana Staus** \* 02.03.1898 in Schönfeld, Ukraine † 09.07.1998 in Germany

**Sources:** Saratov Archive, Family Listing, EWZ and my own family records

For the sake of privacy and clarity, other children and descendants are not listed here.

## Further migrations

The descendants of the Högele/Hegele/Hager line moved to many different countries after World War II. Some stayed after the war, or became prisoners of war in Germany. Other family members were abducted by the Soviet regime to Siberia and lived there for years in labor camps under the command of the Russians. It was only about 10 years later that they were able to settle in Kazakhstan. Many of these left for Germany in the 1990s.

Other descendants emigrated to America or other countries.

It should also be noted that there are still relatives in Klingnau and Alsace.

## A reunion with the homeland of Elsass in Ukraine

These pictures were taken on a trip to Ukraine in 2012.

**Photo – Welcome to Elsass**



**Photo – Memorial Cemetery in Elsass, Ukraine**





Translation:

Territory

German Cemetery

Gravesite of five generations of colonists

Volk, Mayer, Wentz, Denis, Müller,

Keller, Gruber, Pflüger, Schell,

Wagner, Mertz, Schwartzenberg, Merck,

Klein, Heilmann, Fischer....

Years buried 1808-1944

**Kozlovka – Neu Elsass**



## See you again with New Alsace – Kozlovka



Photos by M. Högele

This journey was very emotional, but beautiful for my father. The house he had lived in was now empty, but it was still standing 68 years later.

Questions or comments: [helfen\\_versichert0g@icloud.com](mailto:helfen_versichert0g@icloud.com)