

50th Year of Paveleni (Pawlowka) Community

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[Note: Comments in square brackets in the document are those of the translator.]

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The Community of Paveleni (Pawlowka)
Cetatea-Alba (Akkerman) District, Bessarabia
On its 50th Year of Existence (1888-1938)
by Alexander Mutschaler, Mannsburg

It is Laudable, Christian, beautiful and comforting,
That a person at no time forgets—
Those loving, caring ancestors,
Who lived and worked before us!

Degener.

I. The Good Old Time

Just as the flat expanse, astounding to us due to its vastness, was given to us in the former Russian Empire, so also in regards to the private sector, the dimensions of the private land ownership in concentrated hands seemed fantastic in our terms, huge plots of agricultural land (*Latifundien*) of 30-50,000 *Dessjatinen* [1 *dessjatin* = 2.7 acres/1.09 hectares] and more were not uncommon. Also in southern Bessarabia, the so-called Budjak, there were owners of tens of thousands of *Dessjatinen* of land.

The land expanse in the extreme southeastern corner of Bessarabia, on the Black Sea, Dniester Liman and Dniester River up to Bender (Tighina) were awarded, after the transition of Bessarabia to Russia (1812), mainly to highly placed personalities and dignitaries of the Empire; namely: Prince Demidow, Prince Wolkonsky, Count Tolstoi, Prince Trubezkoi, and others.

The Demidow family had about 30,000 *dessjatinen*. of land here on the Black Sea, including the salt estuary which provides the Budaky health resort with the medicated iodine mud which has attracted visitors from all parts of Russia for the past 40 years. This estuary is also the place where the rare Kefal fish spawns and grows up, which was always considered a delicacy, which,

before the war, was transported to Odessa, Petersburg and all the big cities of Russia and at this time is sent off to Bucharest. To a certain degree, the Demidovs were to Russia what Krupp was for Germany, providing the Russian State not only the best unprecedented required weapons of war for the times, but were also groundbreaking for the development of the mining industry. In 1701, Nikita Demidov produced the great guns for Emperor Peter, giving the emperor the opportunity to defeat Sweden. Emperor Peter and his successors also favored and visibly supported the Demidov and elevated them and their descendants to the position of Prince. They turned over whole mountains in the Urals to Demidov which were rich in the best, nowhere else to be found iron ore which enabled the descendants of Nikita Demidov to produce the so-called "Demidowsche iron", not only the best in Russia, but appreciated and coveted far beyond the Russian borders. Since the Demidovs were energetic people, they developed a versatile activity and ended up with fabulous wealth, probably only to be compared with an Indian Maharajah.

The second prince, who had a tremendous amount of land in southern Bessarabia, was Prince Wolkonsky, of whom it is said that he was a private tutor of Crown Prince Alexander (from 1881-1894 Emperor Alexander III) and as a courtier is to have expressed the opinion about his pupil: "*Zarawitsch bolschoi Durak*" (the young czar was a big dumb head). Incidentally, it is maintained that he is to have belonged to the revolutionary Russian organization of the Decembrists. He fell out of grace with Alexander II and was exiled from the Imperial Court. He settled here in southern Bessarabia, where he built a castle on the higher ground of the estuary shore, near today's Seimeny, surrounded by a high fortress-like wall, and spent his life here as a "hermit" until the end.

The decrepit Russian landed gentry was forced to sell his lands at the end of the last century due to his drunken, careless, and irresponsible way of life. The Demidov folks also began to sell their lands to the south of Bessarabia during that time. There were mainly German colonists residing in this area, who had previously held much of this land in lease and had built villages there, and who acquired these lands which were for sale. It was the best opportunity for them to move to private ownership. The price and the terms of payment were quite favorable for the time.

German towns still existing in our area that were established on Demidov land: In 1863, Sofiental by emigrants from Kherson (*Chersonschen*); Neu-Posttal and Benkendorf.

On the lands of the other Russian magnates there emerged around that time: In 1863, Mannsburg on the land of Baron Ginßburg; 1867, Seimeny by emigrants from the Kherson on the estate of Prince Wolkonsky, which they had been renting and later obtained by purchase through his heiress; 1891, Besyrajamka on the land of Nobleman Belikowitsch; 1895, Halle and Romanówka on the land of Countess Kankrin Tolstoy.

II. The Founding of Pawlowka

In 1880, Akkerman merchant Jankel Herschmann acquired from Prince Alexander Pawlowitsch Demidow, the last male descendant of the Demidov family line, 2,000 *dessjatinen* of land, 1,150 *desjatinen* of which he sold in the years 1887 and 1893 to a group of 14 colonists who lived in Sofiental as tenants. In 1888, 50 years ago, this group founded the German village of Pawlowka.

It was named Pawlowka after the Russian hamlet on this land, which was named after the father of the last owner Pawel Demidow.

Of the 14 founders of Pawlowka, all Swabian, 13 came from Kherson, from the so-called Liebental District, where they grew up and from where they then moved to Sofiental with their fathers. One Pawlowka founder came from Gnadental. The names of the founders are as follows: Ludwig Härter and Friedrich Roller from Groß-Liebental, Philipp Stumpp, Adam Biffart, Jakob Biedermann, Christian Torno, Michael Biedermann, Wilhelm Biedermann, Gottfried Schüler, Philipp Schüler and Friedrich Berg from Alexanderhilf, Jakob and Johann Mutschler from Neuburg and Christian Walther from Gnadental. None of the founders of



Founders of Pawlowka and their Families

Pawlowka are living anymore today, except 3 of the widows: Magdalena Mutschler, Katharina Stumpp, and Elisabetha Biedermann.

III. The Time of First Love

There is a saying that goes like this: “Birds of a feather flock together” (*Gleich und gleich gesellt sich gern*). It was like that with the founders of Pawlowka. Raised under the same conditions, almost all the same age between 25-40 years, almost all with the same amount of land, this all held good for everyone to create a new home on the barren steppe. These were quite favorable preconditions, to put the Pawlowka settlers so close together, and it soon built a good friendly relationship among them; yes, one can say, a heartfelt brotherly love, producing beautiful fruit.

In the draw of lots for the farmyards, those who received more than one yard, not sure that both yards should necessarily be given, where lots made a determination, they were willingly for the second yard to be moved to the end of the village in order to avoid creating empty spaces in the village which could not be developed so soon. So all farmyards were built side by side in Pawlowka and because all the houses were designed according to the same pattern, the village took on a singular character, which is not the case in many villages in our area because for decades, in the middle of the villages, yards remained empty right from the outset .

When the founders of Pawlowka built the school and prayer house, no compulsory labor was called for. Everyone came and worked voluntarily; as a result, the construction of the community was able to be considerably cheaper.

Because the water in Pawlowka is very deep, there is only one well in the village, in the middle of the street, under a well-house and set up with a complicated horse operated system for drawing water from the well. During the repairs of the well, mainly when the chain breaks, which often happens, it was never figured out whose turn it would be to lend a hand. It was enough, when it was announced: “The well is broke!” (*d'r Bronna isch he!*), for men to show up immediately to make the repair to the drawing device without any concern about whether this or that person was supposed to assist.

On Sunday afternoon, all gathered somewhere and in the winter the room set aside for spinning could never accommodate all who came together for these gatherings, which one called “*Mayen*” [*]. At these gatherings, there was always such a good mood, happy entertainment, humor and



Pawlowka School and Prayer House

wit were at home here, jokes and fun were told and made. Whoever was missing at the “*Mayen*”, was simply summoned. Many other things could be mentioned which testify to the harmony of the old Pawlowka folks.

[*] “*Mayen*” means joy, bliss and especially understood in the “from back there” (*drübischen*) Swabian villages, including social pleasure as when friends and neighbors come together and take part in good-natured joyful conversation.

IV. The Culture Brought Over from the Kherson

It is an established fact that the so-called Welfare Committee (*Fürsorge Komitee*), the administrative-economic institution which was created by the existing Russian authorities and designed specifically for the foreign settlers to South Russia, and functioned from 1818 until 04 June, 1871, fulfilled an extraordinary cultural and economic relationship for the German colonists. It carried out its directives and measures with zealous sternness. Officials, the so-called inspectors, controlled the farmers on the spot, and the negligent received their punishment immediately, often even corporeal punishment then and there. So it happened that the mandates of the Welfare Committee were carried out most accurately by the settlers. Its orders and regulations focused primarily on agriculture and its branches, then on the beautification of the village, on the order in the farmyard and the farm; yes, even on matters of hygiene in the house.

Naturally, the Welfare Committee, with its headquarters in Odessa, deployed its most intensive effectiveness on the closest surrounding which was in the Liebental District. And the results of this activity were clearly observed here: hard-line farmers were established, where order and discipline were the habit. Agriculture blossomed. Viniculture and horticulture were operated successfully. Each village started forest ventures. The fathers of the founders of Pawlowka grew up under such conditions. Some of the good stayed with the sons after they came to Bessarabia and the “guardianship” of the Welfare Committee was removed. A certain “cultural way” (*Kulturstrich*) remained attached to them. The houses of the Pawlowka folks were built according to a pattern and plan and were similar to those already previously mentioned; the neatness and order in farm and yard always attracted attention, the cleanliness in the houses perfect. The field was thoroughly worked, the grain bound into sheaves either by hand or with the binder, threshing was only through the use of threshing machines; as a result, the Pawlowka folks were called “model farmers” (*Muschterbaura*) in the surrounding area.

Here you could meet up with the so-called “from back there” (*drübischen*) farm wagon with the “motion balance” (*Spielwaage*) up until the war, which the Pawlowka folks did not want to part with and repeatedly obtained them from Großliebental.

V. The Economic Situation

The land of the community of Pawlowka is in the shape of an almost level square. At the time, the level site allowed for the creation of the village right in the middle of the piece of land, so that the farthest section of field is less than 0.6 miles (1 km) away from the village. The field sections were each measured out at not less than 3 *dessjatinen*. In hindsight, it was economically advantageous. Along with this came the fertile soil which was still in almost a virgin state when it was acquired by the German settlers because it was used mainly as pasture until then. Thus, bountiful crops could be produced, which quickly established the prosperity of the settlers and also allowed them already during the first 2-3 years to put up really neat houses and farm buildings and to build their prayer house in 1894.

Over the past 50 years, Pawlowka had 5 very good harvests with grain on the average at approximately 120 *pud* [1 *pud* = 36 pounds/16.38 kg] per *dessjatine*, 2 good harvests with an average of approximately 90 *pud* per *dessjatine*, 15 medium-sized crops with an average of approximately 60 *pud*, 15 weak harvests with approximately 30 *pud*, and 2 total crop failures.

In addition to agriculture, the Pawlowka folks also always operated a dairy industry, which, besides agriculture, took top priority. The nearness of the district city of Akkerman and the commercial center of Odessa made it easy to market the milk and get good prices. This branch of farming was always a good source of income for the Pawlowka folks. At the beginning, it was the red cow, the so-called “*Molotschnaer*” or Crimean cow, which the settlers brought with them from Kherson and bred here. Later, the spotted Dutch cow (*Holländer Kuh*) was introduced. But they went back to the red cow again, which, in our situation, is still the most appropriate.

The people of Pawlowka have also given full attention to horse breeding. The beautiful, strong, superb Steppe horse has been bred by them. Since 1934, one has also turned to other breeds, mainly to the trotters (*Traber*).

It is worth noting that the Pawlowka folks kept no sheep up until 1925 because they were of the opinion that sheep destroy the pristine pastureland and that would not be good for the milk cow. But the sheep was also introduced since 1925, because the current pasture is no longer offering much to the dairy cow.

In 1921, land was re-measured into portions no smaller than 5 hectares [1 hectare = 2.471 acres]

VI. Pawlowka 25 Years Ago

We find a short description of Pawlowka in the “*Odessa House and Agriculture Calendar*” (*Odessaer Haus und Landwirtschaftskalender*) for 1914, written by the recently deceased Friedrich Strohmayer from Akkerman, woven into a series of descriptions of the villages of the administrative area (*Wolost*) and the Posttal church parish. Since this description is quite characteristic of that time, it is reproduced here:

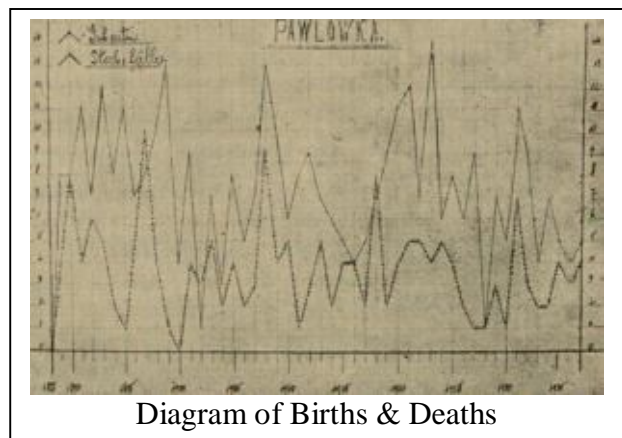
“Paulowka, with its 50 *Faden* [1 *faden* = 0.62 feet] wide street and right in the middle of it a well-house; at first glance, similar in many ways to Sophiental when viewed from the north side, except that the buildings are massive, solid, yet at the same time all turning out to be quite similar. There are also more trees here than there and the village is barely half the size, numbering only 114 souls, an equal number of male and female with 1,145 *dessjatinen* of land, of which initially, on 15 September, 1887, 800 *dessjatinen* was purchased from Demidow for 78 rubles, and then, after that, another 345 *dessjatinen* for 250 rubles, almost exclusively by colonists from Kherson: Neuburg, Alexanderhilf, Großliebental and Freudental, in total 14 farmers, most still alive and residing in Pawlowka. In the course of time, this number of independent agriculturally focused farmers increased from 14 to 20. There are no craftsmen; nearly every farmer has a kind of factory site: planes, saws and hammers, with an inclination to make plows, cleaning

mills, mowing machines and even steam threshing machines. Of the last one, there are 4, 5 self-binders, 20 rake mowers, 4 reel mowers, 35 plows, 7 row planters, 183 horses without foals, 350 head of cattle. You can find a separator in almost every house, because most of the women operate dairy farming, therefore also a relatively large number of cows, which the women brought from the Kherson as their hobby, which pays them well, being nearby the city (20 *versts* from Akkerman) [1 *verst* = 2/3 miles; 1.06 km]. A lot of poultry is also breed here since the little village is surrounded by meadow land. The land for cultivation is pretty close, all around the village; therefore, because they are early risers and in competition with each other, the people of Pawlowka are the first to be finished with any kind of work in the whole administrative area (*Wolost*). If the land in the Posttal administrative area is the crown in the Akkerman District, the people of Pawlowka are the gem of this crown; accordingly, the people are also: efficient farmers, upright and honorable. Hats off, respect for them! For sure, the school and prayer house is not much larger than the one in Sophiental, but tall, distinct (*hell*), and in good condition, properly fenced in and it even has enough room for the 27 students and also for the little congregation. With a low number of students, only one teacher, who is also the sexton and serves as the administration secretary. Teachers who have served in Pawlowka: Ch. Walter, P. Mutschler—at the time a member of the Akkerman *Semstwo* Office, Ch. Seib, Im. Sauter, Tr. Schock, and presently, K. Schöck. The magazines that were being read: 6 “*Odessa Zeitung*,” 12 “*Christlicher Volksbote*,” and one copy each of “*Immergrün*” and “*Christenbote*,” plus also a Russian newspaper, so that hardly could one find a house where nothing was being read. Crop failures were particularly hard in 1889 and 1899, very good in 1893 and 1910. In 1912, the hail caused about 4,700 rubles worth of damage. No orchards and vineyards of any value.”

VII. The Inhabitants

The inhabitants of Pawlowka consisted of 14 families with 71 souls at the time of the founding of the community (1888). Today, the community has 36 families with 217 souls. From the chart below, you can see exactly the number of births and deaths. Only 2 families moved out of Pawlowka, namely, Philipp Schüler and Michael Biedermann. Both moved to Seimeny. Nobody migrated to Pawlowak.

When it comes to the inhabitants of Pawlowka and their relationship to the State, like all Germans, they were always true and loyal. Their achievements during the 4 years of the war (25 families at the beginning of the World War) were significant in that many of the larger Russian villages in the surrounding area had only weak horses, small wagons and inadequate harnesses. Nevertheless, during the time of the war, they were with hate called “*Germaantzi*” and were under the suspicion of



not being true to the State; they had to also experience the decrees of the then Russian authorities such as prohibition for the use of German in the sermon in the church, in the instruction of the

children, and for forth. The people of Pawlowka were even under the law, according to which their movable property was to be expropriated and they supposed to be expelled to Siberia because their little village was within the 18 miles (30 km) zone along the Black Sea. With the greatest of good fortune, this law was not carried out here, as for example, in Podolia and Volhynia, because the Russian Revolution came too quickly upon the necks of the authors of the law and they themselves were swept away. It was extremely insulting for our colonists that they, simply because they were a minority, were so tormented, set back, disenfranchised and received the largest harassment, considering that they were really loyal citizens of the Russian Empire and because they provided not only the human material in the war, like the people of the majority, but also on average supplied ten times more of the war material goods. In times of peace, they paid the State 10-20 times more taxes and duties on average than the people of the majority. It could be considered a small satisfaction that the Russian chauvinists with the rectification by Wladimir Purischkewitsch, the President of the so-called Union of the Russian people at the top, with the slogan: "Russia for the Russians", at the end of the war changed their mind and Purischkewitsch is to have poisoned himself, saying that if all citizens of Russia had supplied so much and so good the war material as the Germans of South Russia, and the Russian soldier would have been equally as faithful and steadfast as the German soldier, then the Russian front would not have collapsed.

We find ourselves today again in a similar situation, such as at the time of the World War, where one sees it happening again where things are against the Germans from all sides?! We would like to hope that with respect to this there is a turn-around for us. The words His Majesty the King, which he on 19 June, 1937, on the occasion of his visit to Cetatea-Alba, expressed that namely the same benevolent treatment must be applied to all minorities as it is to the people of the majority, giving us the hope that the time is not far off; what must contribute greatly to the prosperity and the consolidation of the country.

VIII. Administration of the Village, Church and School

From 1888 bis 1893, the office of administrator (*Vorsteher*) of the Pawlowka community was occupied by Jakob Mutschler, who, together with Adam Biffart, was also the municipality attorney (*Bevollmächtigter*) for the land matters.. Mayors (*Schulzen*) and administrators (*Vorsteher*) of the Pawlowka community were the following men: Jakob Mutscher (1888-1893); Christian Torno (1893-1895); Jakob Mutschler (1896-1898); Jak. Biedermann (1899-1901); Philipp Stumpp (1902-1904); Jak. Biedermann (1905-1907); Chr. Chr. Torno (1908-1910); Friedrich Berg (1911-1913); Chr. Chr. Torno (1914-1916); Karl Torno (1917-1918); Jak Joh. Mutschler (1919-1920); Karl Torno (1921-1922); Jak Jak. Mutschler (1923-1925); Karl Torno (1926-1928); Jak. Jak. Mutschler (1929-1930); H. Biedermann (1931-1933); and David Biffart since (1934).



Jakob Mutschler
1st Pawlowka Adminis-
trator & Attorney for
Land Affairs

Up to the year 1894, Pawlowka belonged to the so-called Benkendorf-Akkerman Church Parish, which then separated into 2 parishes, and it then belonged to Posttal, where Pawlowka belongs today, and then to Eigenheimer, and later to the Andrejewka Parish.



Adam Biffart
Pawlowka Attorney
for Land Affairs

The first Caretaker of Souls (*Seelsorger*) for Pawlowka was Pastor Johann Solwer, residing in Akkerman. The Pawlowka congregation was the sweetheart of this pastor which he always openly made known, owing to the harmony and the unity in the community and love which was among the church members. The size of the parish, which consisted of 24 congregations, covering a territory of about 30 miles (50 km) in length, from the shores of the Black Sea until to Raskajetz, hardly allowed the pastor to visit the community of Pawlowka

but 3-4 times a year. For that reason, it was always an “event” (*Ereignis*), when the pastor came. Everyone that could rushed to the worship service and the head of households (*Hausväter*) came together to converse with the pastor. The pastor even stood in very high esteem and great respect and was very loved by his parishioners, whom regularly visited him as often as they spent time in the city of Akkerman, and through whom they also subscribed to their religious magazines.



Pastor Johann Solwer
1st Seelsorger of
Pawlowka until
15 Nov. 1895

After Pastor Johann Solwer, the following pastors were chosen: Oskar Schneider, Woldemar Jürgens, Wilhelm Mayer and Albert Schön. Inbetween, Pastors Wilhelm Beck out of Freudental,



Teacher Peter Mutschler with his Students (1897)

Julius Peters and Siegfried Wolleydt out of Klöstitz, vicared (*vikarierten*) here. Since 7 September, 1924, the congregation has been taken care of by Pastor Adolf Härter.

The following teachers worked in the school here, who occupied the office of sexton and community secretary at the same time:

Philipp Allmendinger (1888); Christian Walther (1889-1894); Georg Hommel (1894-1896); Peter Mutschler (1896-1902); Christian Seib (1902-1908); Immanuel Sauter (1908-1910); Traugott Schock (1910-1911), Karl Schöck (1911-1932); Ernst Sauter (1932-1933); Artur Ruck (1933-1934); Gustav Faas since (1934). The position of State sponsored school teacher is currently occupied by Teacher Karl Schöck.

IX. Various Other Things

Each Pawlowka household has a 1 hectare garden in the yard which is planted with fruit trees and grape vines. However, from 1907 to 1909, all vines were destroyed by the phylloxera (*phylloxera vastatrix*), which caused huge devastation across southern Russia at the time. In 1922, the American vine was introduced and today quite a few farmers in Pawlowka have already planted vineyards in the field. Since 1935, the community has a new forest planting.

In front of the house is the traditional “little flower garden” (*Blomagärtle*), which contains cheerful and checkered blossoms from spring to late autumn. The flower varieties are somewhat similar to what was already planted and maintained in grandmother’s time: “*Stangarosa*”, “*Pfaffakäppla*”, “*Ilken*”, “*Strohblumen*”, “*Georginen*”, “*Astern*”, “*Tulpanen*”, “*Abendduft*”, “*Sammetröbla*”, “*Nägela*”, “*Nachtschatta*”, and several others.

In the course of time, Pawlowka was not completely spared from epidemic diseases. In 1897, diphtheria (*Halsbräune*) came among the children and in 1918, the “Spanish” flu ravaged 7 adults.

A brass band was organized by the Pawlowka students in 1897. With the departure of the founder teacher Peter Mutschler to Mannsburg, the brass band was started up again in 1902.

At the time of the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), no one was mobilized from Pawlowka and the community experienced no misfortune otherwise from the war; while during the World War, 21 members of the community were drawn into the battlefield. Two of them never returned, the brothers Ludwig and Matthaias Härter, both were declared as missing in action.

In earlier times, Pawlowka did not have a store. A community store was established in 1924, which existed until 1930 and then it was taken over by a private person. Today, the village is being served by this private shop.



Magdalene Mutschler, born Torno, 79 years old, called “d. Madlebas” by everyone, generously provides the service of a district nurse, visits and cares for the sick, comforts the dying with the Word of God.

A Brotherhood has existed here since 1930, their training gatherings conducted by Jakob Jakob Mutschler, who provides the necessary space for this purpose.

There is also a Youth Club in Pawlowka since 1930, which numbers 35 members and presents some fine evening entertainment with the other youth groups of the village.

The worship services in the community on high festival days and other festive occasions are embellished by the local church choir.

For some years now, the Pawlowka folks have worked a piece of land together for the purpose of gathering a fund to build a church. Today, the community has already acquired a considerable part of the necessary stones and fired bricks.

Closing

This now is the brief history of the small town of Pawlowka. It is our wish that the good star, which has already stood over this town for half a century, protect them in the future and guide their destiny. May the community furthermore always grow and thrive and evolve morally, economically and culturally more and more and the residents always remain good Germans and keep their character. Yes, may the people of Pawlowka walk in the footsteps of their brave ancestors, holding sacred their conviction and traditions and always be found as German-Bessarabian colonists of pure grist (*Schrot*) and grain (*Korn*).

May God make this happen!

[Translation Ends]

