

History of Romanowka Municipality

Source: DAI Microfilm T-81; Roll 316; Group 1035;
Item VOMI 923; Frames 2446797-2446798 and also 2446802-2446805

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[Note: This brief history of the Romanowka Municipality was written just before the evacuation of the Germans from Bessarabia to the German Reich in 1940. Frames 2446797-6798 appear to be a 1st draft. Frames 2446802-6805 a re-working of the 1st draft with more information included. Comments in square brackets in the document are those of the translator.]

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[Translation Begins]

History of Romanowka Municipality

By Erwin Neht, Teacher

West of the river Alkalia, 28 kilometers [17.4 miles] west of the municipality of Mannsburg and 3.3 km [2.1 miles] west of the city of Ackermann, lies the municipality of Romanowka. The land of the municipality of Romanowka, covering an area of 1,492 *Desjatinen* (1,630 hectares) [4,028 acres], was purchased by Gottfried Schulz of Postal from Countess Tolstoy. Gottfried Schulz, as an intermediary, then looked for land buyers and sold the land in 1893 to the following people:

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 01. Anklam, Friedrich | 14. Rüb, Gottlob |
| 02. Rentz, Friedrich | 15. Denninger, Georg |
| 03. Gägele, Johannes | 16. Heubach, Jakob |
| 04. Wiedmann, Georg | 17. Rüb, Friedrich |
| 05. Mehl, Mattheis | 18. Hermann, Daniel |
| 06. Mehl, Karl | 19. Fruck, Jakob |
| 07. Rentz, Jakob | 20. Gägele, Christian |
| 08. Rentz, Friedrich | 21. Schäfer, Christian |
| 09. Hopp, Jakob | 22. Lagger, Johann |
| 10. Siewert, Christian | 23. Steinke, Gottfried |
| 11. Konrad, Johann | 24. Lagge, Elisabeth |
| 12. Rüb, Johann | 25. Lagger, Elisabeth |
| 13. Oßwald, Christian | |

However, the land could only be taken up in 1895, as it had been leased by a Bulgarian for several years. The pasture, which made up a larger part of the land, was plowed over by the Bulgarian in revenge for losing the land. The rest was spared by a tolerable agreement.

The entire land was purchased for 146,216 silver rubles [In 1850, 1 silver ruble = 75¢; so ca. \$10,966]. Since the money had to be paid out immediately, and the buyers could not do so, the land was transferred to the Kherson Bank, which paid it immediately and granted the buyers a long payment period.

The land was then finally paid up in 1922, in Romanian times. The buyers of the land were from different communities, such as, for example, Paris, Gnadental, Friedenstal, Benkendorf, etc., as they came together through the middleman Gottfried Schulz.

A difficult question now was the water. They were looking for the most suitable place for wells to establish the village there. Almost way to the southwest you could find such a place. In 1895, Matthias Mehl, Johann Konrad, Friedrich Anklam, Georg Wiedmann, Friedrich Renz and Jakob Hopp built their houses and moved into their new home. The remaining landowners gave their land to semi-farmers, or leased it until their sons became independent and also moved here. Some immediately sold their land to other Germans.

In 1896, the then landowners built a prayer house, an apartment for a sexton and the stables belonging to it. After several years, the prayer house proved to be too small and so in 1904 a larger prayer room was built, with school and apartment, which is still in good condition today and offers enough space. The old prayer house was converted into a kitchen and stables. In 1938, a cellar was also completed. The cemetery was beautified in 1932 with a stone wall and an attached beautiful iron gate. For the one serving the church, a house with stables was built in 1905.

Until 1898, all the water for the population and also for the household pets had to be fetched from 5 km [3.1 miles] to the northwest. In the search for water, great difficulties were encountered, so that the inhabitants were already willing to leave the country again. Finally, after a long search, the first well was dug in 1898 and bricked with stones that also had to be fetched 8-10 km [5-6.2 miles] from the surrounding villages. This well is 35 meters [38.2 feet] deep. The water is drawn with horses which needed to have someone employed. Until now, the “one drawing the water” was also a worker in the church. The northern well was completed in 1903. Also this time it had to be dug twice, because one encountered hard rock and yet no water was found. This well is 41 m [134.5 feet] deep. The drawing of water, as well as chains and buckets swallow up large sums of money every year. Completing such a well costs 100,000 lei in normal times.

Because of the great water difficulties, almost every inhabitant had a cistern dug to carry water there from the large well. Because a person had to get the water from so far, this saved a lot of trouble during the winter. [this paragraph found in 1st draft only]

The position of the village is northeast to southwest. There are 30 courtyards. One of these is 42.67 m [140 feet] wide and 256.03 m [840 feet] long. Half the street included. The street is in

and of itself 63 m [206.6 feet] wide and 640 m [2,099 feet] long. The land has a small valley on the western border and in the middle of the country, otherwise everything is flat. The soil is black earth, suitable for agriculture. There are no bodies of water on the land. The name of the municipality was determined in the Russian period by superiors, namely after the then hereditary imperial family Romanov.

Harvest results were in the following years: 1899—crop failure, 1904—bad, 1906, 1910, 1915 and 1919—very good; 1911, 1912, 1913, 1914, 1916, 1917 and 1918—medium; 1924, 1925, 1927, 1928—weak; 1938—good, 1940—very good (also corn and soybeans very good). Mainly wheat (*Weizen*), barley (*Gerste*), oats (*Hafer*), corn (*Mais*), rye (*Roggen*) and flax (*Lein*) were grown. Later came rapeseed (*Raps*), soybeans (*Soia*) and also some sugar beans (*Zuckerbohnen*) and sunflowers (*Sonnenblumen*). Potatoes (*Kartoffeln*), turnips (*Futterrüben*), watermelons (*Wassermelonen*) were grown for the necessary domestic use. Very few fruit trees were planted until 1938, when almost every garden had 50-150 fruit trees newly planted. Viticulture was also pursued only with self-bearing grapes (*Selbstträger*). In 1937, the community was surrounded by about 3 hectares [7.4 acres] of woodland.

Horses were kept only as many as everyone needed for their agricultural work. Cows were primarily kept according to the needs of the housewife. There is a small dairy in the municipality that collects the surplus milk and processes it into butter. Chickens are kept from 60-150 per farm. The eggs are sold at the nearest markets. With few exceptions, raising pigs was only carried out for personal use.

During the war, the municipality of Romanovka was more or less spared.

Reinhold Hehl [sp-?], Rudolf Haag [sp-?], and Eduard Sievert were left behind in the theatre of war. Special diseases and such were not in the community. Our community was medically looked after by the neighboring town of Bairamtscha. Particularly severe cases are brought to Dr. Dobler in Sarata.

We had hail in 1913 and 1934, which destroyed almost the entire harvest. Until 1930, there was no store in the community. From then on, a Jewess opened one who then moved away in 1939. The necessary purchases were made in Bairamtscha or on occasion in Sarata.

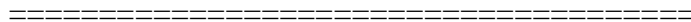
The administrative authority to which our municipality was a part of had its seat in Romanowka until the Romanian troops entered, from then on, in the Russian municipality of Manashi. 10 km [6.2 miles] southwest, in the Bulgarian municipality of Kulovcha [Kuleveca], the railway station was for us both the post office and railway station. For a long time, the municipality of Romanovka was a parish subsidiary of Sarata and Posttal. Then it became the main congregation (*Hauptgemeinde*) of the Andrejewka Parish. The people in charge, initially called “Village Mayors” (*Dorfschulze*), were the following: Georg Wiedmann, Christian Siewert, Georg Denninger, Samuel Knecht, Gottlob Denninger, Ferdinand Anklam, Christian Maier, Jakob Kern, Benjamin Siewert, Jakob Renz, Arnold Anklam and Emil Anklam.

Local leaders of the community were: Jakob Greil, Joseph Meske, Eichelberg, Wilhelm Höhn, Imanuel Schulz, Schäfer, Albert Gunsch, Schreiber, Theodor Wagner, Heer, Emil Machen, Imanuel Steuiler, Oskar Baumann, Eduard Scharzmann, Oskar Rüb and Erwin Neth.

There are 5 landless families in the municipality. Farmers own from 25 ha [61.8 acres] to 95 ha [234.7 acres] of land, so not all medium and rich farmers. Land is well worked. Hired hands are mostly Russians from the surrounding villages. German hired hands from Katlebug, Tschemtschelly and Kantemir have also been employed.

The population is pleased that the hour has finally come when we go back home to our beloved motherland, the Greater German Reich.

[Translation Ends]



Stump Map of Bessarabia reworked by Rolf Jethon—not in original document