

History of Tschukurova (Ciucorova) Community, Dobrudscha

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

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[Translation Begins]

History of the Tschukurova (Ciucorova) Community Tulcea District (Tultscha), Dobrudscha (Dobrudja) Written on the Occasion of its 75th Anniversary of Existence by Johann Adam

Our Fathers' deeds
With love them constructing,
Spread their seeds,
The old soil trusting. (Uhland)

The name Ciucurova (pronounced: Tschukurova) in Turkish means something like depression or ditch (*Grube*). This designation pretty much describes the location of our village. It is namely nestled between two forested hills and you can see it only when one is immediately above it. The Kireschliwa Mountain Range extends to the south—because Kiresch means limestone in Turkish, Kireschliwa has been translated into the German as Limestone Mountains (*Kalksteingebirge*). To the east, our area borders the open country of Eskislawa, today Tscherkesslawa. In this location, our ancestors often had border disputes with the Circassians (*Tscherkessen*) who plowed up and seeded parts of our land. Only after Martin Wiersch had beaten them with a plow chain while they were trying to escape, they stayed away from our areas and our fathers were no longer disturbed by the Circassians who are cowards by nature. The Jedina Mountains lie to the northeast, which could be called in German the Seven Mountain Range (*Siebengebirge*), because Jedin, in Turkish, means seven. To the north, our open country originally extended as far as the Tschatalek Hill, so named for its location in a forked valley (*Gabeltale*) called Tschatal, the same as a fork (*Gabel*). However, in 1867, the Bulgarians in Baschkoi, with the help of their compatriot Bey Dimitrachi, Prefect from Tulcea, were able to take back that part of our district that went as far as the Sevri-Tepe Hill, whereby, over 500 hectares [1 hectare=2.471 acres] of the best land for Tschukurova was lost. To the west, our

land borders on the territory of the Germans from Atmadscha [Atmagea]. In the middle of this mountain complex rises a nice spring, which is surrounded by a large open space and on the north side, in earlier times, there was also a well which was known in the surrounding area only by the name of Priest Well. In this area, a Bulgarian priest from Tscherna [Cherna] wanted to build a monastery for which purpose he left a round clearing in the forest. The project did not materialize because there was not enough money for it and he was shot by the Turks in 1850.

The old Tschukurowa, inhabited by the Gagauz (*Gagausen*) people, was 2 km [1km=0.6214 miles] further up in the same valley, actually at the spring where the watering of the livestock is located today. This former Tschukurowa was destroyed during the war in 1828 by the *Lasen* [people from the southeastern part of the Black Sea, by the Caucasus Mountains around Georgia], who then grew tobacco on the ruins. All that is left of the old Gagauz village is just an old stone bridge, everything else, even the ruins, which the *Lasen* held on to, disappeared in the course of time. It is very unlikely that this bridge was built by them, certainly it already stood there earlier. It is quite possible that it was part of the Roman military road between Herschowa (Warusch) and Babadag. In the thirties of the last century, Ukrainians came into the Dobrudscha and established villages in various places. So, of these, also eight families settled down in Tschukurowa and are also to be considered as the actual founders of the village of Tschukurowa. These first settlers managed cutting of planks and charcoal burning. Our ancestors then also took over this employment and carried on. Since this unusual work was difficult for them, we were given information of a request that the Germans from Tschukurowa submitted to the Prussian Consul Blücher in Constantinople, of which I will get back to once again later.

To better illustrate the development and emergence of our community, I want to say something beforehand about the general settlement of the Germans in the Dobrudscha. In 1840, many German colonists emigrated from Bessarabia in the Moldova, where they moved from one estate to another. They heard much already in Moldova from the Baltic-German Jacobson, who was Prefect of Braila at the time. These emigrants turned to the pro-German man. Jacobson received the German colonists and showed them vast lands in the vicinity of Braila. The settlers named the newly established village Jacobsonthal in honor of their protector. However, the village, due to its low location, was constantly exposed to the danger of flooding by the Danube River. Despite the great affection they learned to have for their settlement, some of the colonists decided to move on again. These people from Jacobsonthal founded in Dobrudscha the village of Atmadscha in 1848. The old colony Jacobsonthal survives to the present day; for decades long it formed an important transit point to the Dobrudscha and, as a result, becomes of utmost importance for the history of its German villages.

Even before 1845, now and then, German colonists surfaced in the Dobrudscha, for example, Swabian Catholics had already founded Malkotsch near Tultscha in 1843. Long before that, there were German craftsmen already in the town of Tultscha. In 1848, Atmadscha was formed as the first definitive German colony of Dobrudscha. The first two German families came to Tschukurowa in 1853 and settled down there in the middle of the Ukrainians. They were: Ferdinand Beyer (Prussian) and Joseph Jud. However, the actual founding of the German community came about in 1856-57. At that time, 28 more settlers arrived in Tschukurowa, which were disbursed due to the big overflow from Jakobsonthal: E. Berndt, the elder; M. Berndt, the younger; J. Berndt, the younger; G. Fandrich; Schukur; Chr. Ziehl (Pomorian);

Kohls, (Prussian); J. Martin (disappeared already in the first years after the settlement); Johann Maier, the elder, (Swabian); Johann Maier, the younger, (Swabian); Jakob Maier, the younger, (Swabian); Joachim Blumhagen (from Mecklenburg-Strelitz); F. Frank; G. Büttner; Martin Weirsch; Jung; Kranich; Kowalski; G. Dermann; P. Radetzki (Prussian); Chr. Ponto, (Prussian); Chr. Hock; G. Ponto, (Prussian); G. Suckert; Joseph Mühlbach, (Swiss); Walther, (Swabian); Schißler, (Swabian); Fieber, (builder of the first horse operated mill in Tschukurowa). These were the actual founders of the German community. And now a word about the year of the founding. It is often incorrectly assumed that Tschukurowa was not plotted in 1856, but in 1858. This misconception led to our community celebrating its 50th Anniversary of existence on 03 May, 1908. To prove that the year 1856 is the actual founding year, I want to quote two documents here:

1) The German settlers from Tschukurowa considered their employment of forest clearing and charcoal making so difficult that they were absolutely sure they wanted to leave; they therefore filed a complaint dated 29 December, 1858 to Consul Blücher in Constantinople and Colonel (*Obersten*) Malinowsky in Tultscha. However, Blücher directed this petition to Omar Pascha, President of the Danube Commission in Galatz. The latter, being a great friend of the Germans, did not want to hear anything about a migration, because he did not know where they could find a better place to settle. He furnished the written complaint of the people of Tschukurow with the following remark:

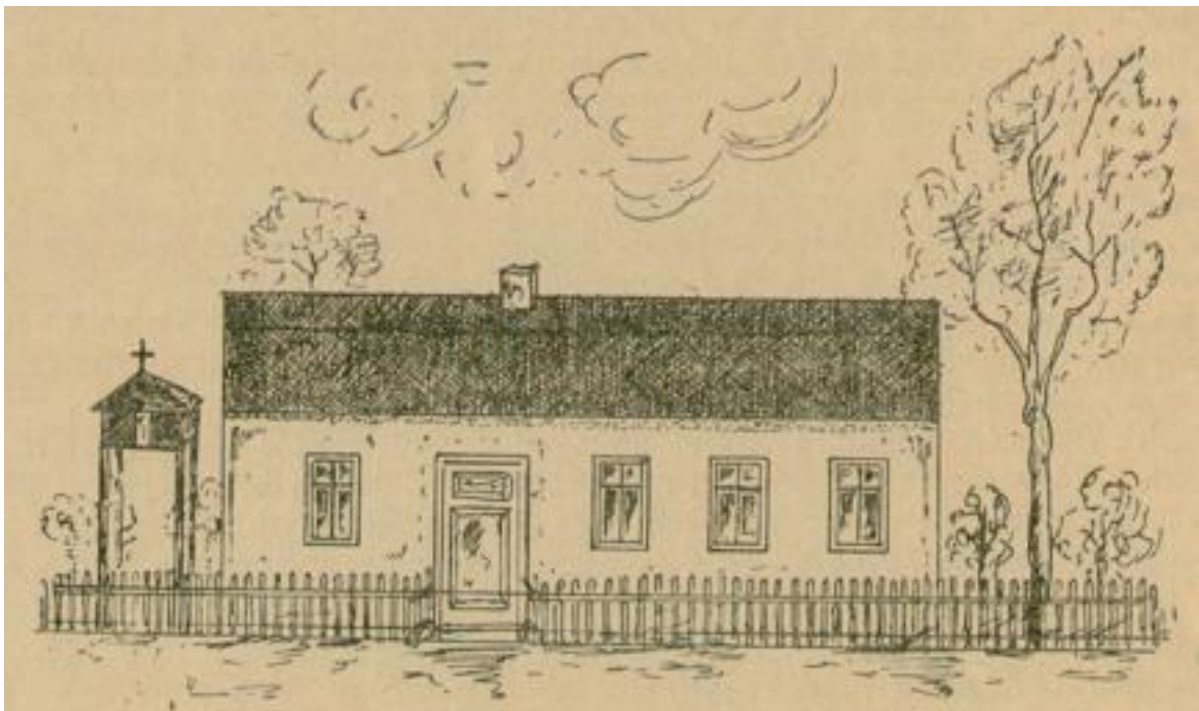
“I do not know where the people can be better placed than where they find themselves in Tschokorow? It has not gone good for them for the year, that was the penalty for running away from Jakobsonthal. Now the path of this people is demolished; now they do not have peace anymore until they become completely impoverished, then they will again become orderly and industrious.” (From *Die Deutschen in der Dobrudscha—The Germans in Dobrudscha*, by P. Traeger).

The phrase “It has not gone good for them for the year “ indicates that the people of Tschukurow must have already settled in the year 1857, or better said, that their village was considered as established already from the year 1857. According to this statement, we can assume almost with certainty that they had to have come into this area already at least in 1856.

2) Eduard Neumeister tells in his Parish Report that the people of Tschukurow had participated in his Pentecost worship service in Atmadscha in 1857. (see H. Petri). Still another document which indicates for me the accuracy of the founding year as 1856.

In the years 1858-1859, the following families came to our community: Jakob Ulbrich; Jakob Dermann; Heinrich Dermann; Balthasar Hofart, (Bavarian). However, most of the residents first came in the next 10 years, which means 1859 to 1869: Andreas Kraus, (Prussian); Kählert, (Prussian); Spitzer, Vesper; Johann Rothe, (today spelled Rod, from the Province of Brandenburg); Hoffmann, (Swiss) (was killed by a tree already right at the beginning); August Frank; Patzer, (was murdered in 1877 at the hand of an unknown); Jakob Rothe, (from the Province of Brandenburg); D. Rothe, (from the Province of Brandenburg); G. Hänsel; D. Nußke; F. Dietrich; M. Fredrich; Chr. Adam, (Prussian); S. Arndt; Johann Kühn; Christleit; G. Fischer, (Swabian), and Schukurski.

The first years brought many trials and tribulations to the newcomers and often they considered leaving this their newly acquired home. In the years 1856 to 1861, 60,000 Tatars were accommodated in Dobrudscha by the Turkish Government. At that time, a lot of purely Tatar settlements were created; but usually these Mongolian followers of Muhammad were pushed into and between the Christian villages, whose residents were forced to give them the best fields and pastures and also to build them houses and stables. 10 Tatar families were also accommodated in Tschukurowa, whom our ancestors had to provide for. Around the year 1864, the Turks colonized Dobrudscha with the Circassians. These had conducted a twenty-year old death-defying struggle against the Russian rulers, but once their destiny was decided in the spring of 1864 and their freedom was lost, they were expelled under threats from Russia (Caucasus). The Turks accepted these people and 20,000 Circassians were settled in the northern part of Dobrudscha. These wild, hostile arrivals were a dangerous plague for our German villages; although none settled in Tschukurowa, they formed their own two villages of Slava and Baschpunar in the immediate vicinity. In 1867, a horde of Albanians showed up and encamped at the spring where the former Tschukurowa had been located. This raw and wild people was not to advance any farther thanks only to the successful efforts of Pastor Bachmeister from Atmadscha and the German legation in Constantinople, persuading the Turkish Government to



Church of 1870 according to an old sketch.

use military force to send the predatory horde on their way. Many of the local Germans, who had already grown fond of their country, did not allow themselves to be driven out of their newly acquired home by the wild tribes. But many indeed did leave and went to Bessarabia.

That was a difficult time, not conducive especially for peaceful work. However, the Tatars good-naturedly established themselves; where they found an empty house, they moved into it and were then no longer able to be removed from it. They even built a prayer house and also a

prayer centre, where from the minaret (*Hodja*), the call to worship went out over the village five times a day to the faithful with these words: Allah ekber, Allah ekber, Alem fena, Haye alel felah, being translated: God is great, God is great, the world is bad, your salvation is only in your enlightenment.

The history of that time not only speaks about the people who left our community, but it also makes mention of those who came to it. Up to the year 1877, the following families settled in our community: Hanstädter. (took up the business of brewing beer); W. Schmidt; G. Brandenburger; Chr. Brandenburger; Winkler; Chr. Seybold, (Swabian); Naß, (Swabian); M. Ruf; Bohrt; Rominger; Johann Lenz; G. Nagel, (Swabian); K. Nael, (Swabian); F. Neitz, (Swabian); G. Walawei, (Swabian); Karl Stumpf, (liquor store operator); K. Arndt; Jakob Lutz; Schwalm; Chr. Dolde; Chr. Pries; widow J. Adam with her sons, (Prussian).

A new period began for Dobrudscha in 1877, coming about primarily after the wars of independence of the Romanian principalities in Romania. But before I proceed with this second period, I want to sketch a picture of our village during the Turkish time.

The agriculture of the time brought in very little, since there were no grain markets then and so the grain found no market. The wheat had to first be ground in the horse-powered mills. The flour was sold then directly to the towns-people since there were no bakeries at that time yet. Also, farm work was still very primitive and, therefore, it needs to be explained that the farmers made no use of 13th paragraph of the Turkish Regulations which stated that the farmer would be able to acquire so much land he wanted. Cattle-breeding was slightly more profitable because there was sufficient grazing land. Just like in Bessarabia, the communities of the time were administered by a mayor (*Schulz*) and two assistants. These then had the right of dispute mediation, which usually also called upon the pastor of the parish for consultation. If it so happened that a settler was dissatisfied with the judgment of the mayor, then he could call on the higher Turkish Court, which then quickly decided the dispute. There were still no drawn out processes at that time like the present time. The Turkish Court magistrates, all sitting on a carpet with the files before them on their knees, did not drag out the deliberation. Land purchases were also a very easy thing that could be made just as well in a tavern as in a government office; namely, by handing over the note (*Tapie/Zettel*) and the purchase was legally binding, but usually a few *Okka* [1 Oka=1.35 quarts/1.25 liters] of schnapps had to seal the deal (*dran glauben*). With regard to marriage and divorce, they were all yielded to the Church. A divorce has never taken place in Tschukurowa.

It happened in 1877, and Dobrudscha was the scene of great confusion. Dobrudscha was actually spared from the war, but the Tatars and the Circassians resorted to looting. The Germans had to go through some difficult times at that time. I still remember how my mother roused me from sleep one night with the words: "Hurry up and get up, we have to escape; all the villagers have already fled, father has already taken the horses into the forest for safety last night. The Circassians are already in our village, over by the Lenz folks, because they are already hacking away at the chests (*Kästen*)," and really, I heard the noise. We then fled into the Kireschliwa forest where we met the Hänsel family, who themselves were astonished at the courage of my mother. Another time, I remember that once again the whole community fled into the forest because of the marauding Circassians, where they called on the dear Lord God for

protection. As the refugees returned to the village next morning, they found Patzer murdered, except for his dog, faithful to the end beside his dead master; far and wide there was not a soul to be seen. Our people did not believe that Patzer would be murdered by the Circassians, for as much as they were offended by the stealing; more so were they offended about the murder. But we also had some very brave men, like Rod, Baier, Wachenti, who dispatched many a Circassian into a better afterlife. After the Circassians had fled and had left their villages, a robbery took place, the distribution of the things found in their dwellings; even our Tschukurowa folks, who still had a horse and wagon, compensated themselves with the things the Circassians left behind.

If the year of 1878 brought the peace, the Dobrudscha question was still not completely solved. This was reflected particularly in the Regulation of Civil Law. Also among the people of Tschukurowa, some found that their Turkish middle-class (*Bürgerstums*) status was not properly



Johann Adam,
author of this history

recognized. And why was this so? There were no political rights, military duties, school obligations, and other duties prescribed to them. And it was no wonder because many often possessed Austrian passports in the given locations. But that could not be reconciled with the Berlin Treaty; for only Turkish citizens could become Romanian nationals. And yet, as the Manifest of Charles I was announced, all breathed a sigh of relief. The ruler of the Romanians assured the citizens of Dobrudscha: "The most sacred and precious human rights, as there are: life, honor and property are placed under the protection of a constitution, the envy of many other nations." Now followed controlled conditions. At once a commission showed up, took up (*aufnahm*) the *Tapie*-land and collected the *Tapie*-notes. Of course, many gave up only half because there still was no real confidence! And when the authorities requested: Declare more of what you have; then so much will be measured out to you! This

increased the suspicion even more, because one figured that a great war tax would follow from this.

During this time, immigration began again. Up to 1880, the following families came: G. Schulz; A. Brandenburger; M. Birai; K. Mück; K. Fandrich; W. Schmidt, (blacksmith); W. Kitke with his sons; F. Schröder; K. Mehrer, (Swabian); J. Radomski; D. Radke; P. Keßler; Widow Dawitschek.

An enormous amount of Bessarabians came here and some people from Tschukurowa joined them. Together, they founded Tariverde, like the Bessarabians founded Mamuslia in 1892 with the people of Atmadscha, and Karatai in 1921. During these years, many moved to America. In the years 1890 to 1900, the following families also came to us: A. Maier; D. Broneske; K. Geigle; E. Jachmann; J. Wentland (from Volhynia); F. Thieß; G. Fode; K. Kohnle; J. Anhorn; S. Wilske; J. Grachol, (Prussian); J. Kühn, (shoe-maker); Chr. Riese; A. Bohnet. From this group, Theiß, Kohnle and Wilske built the first steammill in Tschukurowa. After 1900, the following immigrants also came: Chr. Seitz; F. Schielke; G. Schmalke; F. Döbler; A. Schollmeier; E. Deeg, (steammill operator, his mill burned down in 1931); J. Kolschewski; G. Kolschewski; F. Häußler; K. Leibelt I; K. Liebelt II; R. Kühn; S. Gunsch; D. Schulz; H. Schulz; Gerling; Spieß; Kroat.

The land was surveyed in 1886: 113 farmers got their Tapie land, if it did not exceed ten hectares, an additional 7.5 hectares of government land. In 1930, the veterans of the World War each received yet an additional 5 hectares. The land is good! Except for 1899, we have not had a total crop failure. Grasshoppers also came up into our forest in 1858. Because of that, Tschukurowa has no future; since the 2,000 hectares of arable land are not sufficient, and the offspring will be forced to always emigrate. Earlier, a lot of wheat was grown; but ever since the governments, by different, little suitable preventive measures and bonuses (*Prämien*), cunningly deceived us (*“hineingefuscht”*), now none is being sown.

As for the war in 1916, it weighed heavily on Tschukurowa. Occupations changed back and forth, and what one left behind, the others dragged away. There was no longer an orderly requisition. So, because of that, hatred for the foreigner flared up high and the following Germans were led away as hostages: F. Blumhagen; Christoph Ponto; F. Kraus; F. Martin; L. Adam; J. Adam; J. Radetzki; M. Berndt; E. Jachmann; S. Arndt; Christian Ruf; Ferdinand Kitke.

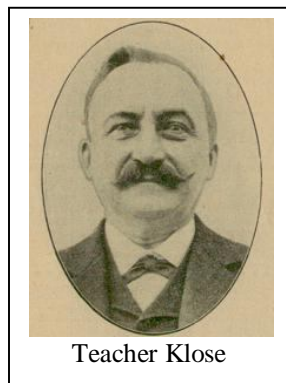


Tschukurowa Prayer House. Built in 1893

Of these, Berndt died in Moldova on 09 April, 1917. The imprisonment lasted 19 months, from 04 September, 1916 to 06 April, 1918. Two soldiers fell: J. Ziehl and G. Arndt, who is still considered missing. During the occupation, we did not come into German, but into Bulgarian territory. But we gladly suffered it because the Germans were much too hard on us. But the German military authorities sent us a brave teacher by the name of Müller. We also received boards from them so as to be able to provide benches again for our plundered Church.

Only with difficulty will the previous prosperity find its way back again. Not in the least the reason being that we do not lack war hyenas (*Kriegshyänen*), people whose pinnacle of wit and

virtue being deceit and cunning. We no longer have community ventures (cooperative); they have come crashing down, except the People's Bank (*Volksbank*), but this is already on its last legs. In the days ahead, we are so far enlightened that everyone keeps his bitterly-earned penny (*Groschen*) [smallest Austrian coin] in his pocket and does not deposit it in a bank.



Teacher Klose

When looking at the current picture of our village, the entire settlement is located along the single, terribly long street. Tschukurowa is just laid out very impractically, but there is nothing that can be done to change that, and also, this street does not have a single cross street (*Quergasse*). The error happened during the time of the surveying in 1886; then one had to lay out the large gardens on the field and keep the valley free for building sites. Today, Tschukurowa is Romanian, together with Glawa and Atmadscha. Atmadscha is again the church parish, to which Tschukurowa is joined. The "*Ocol silvic*" (forestry office) has its headquarters in our village. It is housed in a beautiful building that was destroyed in the last war, but has been restored.

As early as 1870, the people of Tschukurowa purchased a small courtyard for a church from Johann Maier for 7 Oka [1 oka=ca. 2.8 pounds] of beans. Had they given 14 Oka of beans at that time, they would have gotten a larger farmstead and the sexton would also be pleased today that he would be able to have cows. So, our church does not have yard space. In the same year, a small church was built which had a 2 room sexton residence attached to it. The structure, as was customary, was made out of wood and clay and covered with cane, the tower, also made of wood, stands off to the side. However, in 1893, this little church was torn down without having even a single Lei in the building fund for the construction of a new church. In its place, there then arose a stone church which is covered with black sheet metal. Construction costs came to 3,000 francs, of which the community came up with only 1,000, our former sexton-teacher G. Klose got the rest through collections. However, a "character sketch" concerning it was then made public in which two families especially were portrayed very badly. Our church was already in need of a thorough repair in 1927. After the community came up with a building fund of 110,000 lei through community seeding, the church was repaired in the same year. 5 hectares of land belonged to the church which the highly commendable government allotted to it in 1886. Until the war in 1916, we belonged to the Prussian State Church; but in 1925 we joined ourselves, like all other Evangelical co-religionists in Romania, to the Transylvanian (*siebenbürgischen*) State Church of the Augsburg Confession. Only Paragraph 18 of the Church Regulations was not accepted by us, according to which the pastor was to be called for the duration of his life. On 21 May, 1925, on the occasion of our merger with the Transylvanian State Church, Bishop Teutsch visited us, accompanied by Dean Honigberger from Bucharest, Dr. Klein from Jassy, and Pastor Buchenhaller. On this occasion, our present Pastor H. Zimmerling was also installed into his office. Up to today, our congregation has been served by the following pastors from the Atmadscha Parish: Bonekämper¹ (1849-1859); Kühn (1859-1862); Rode (1863-1864); Lakner (1864-1865); Bachmeister (1867-1872); Dörschlag (1872-1874); Matzke from Galatz (1887); Pritzsche (1888-1893); Wengel from Braila (1894); Meier from Braila (1895); Kloß (1899); Kalies (1906); Darsow² (1910); Feist (1914); Erasmus (1916); R. Zimmerling (1923-1925); H. Zimmerling (1925 until today).

¹ Hans Petri says in his works: “Evangelical Diaspora in Romania”, that Bonekämper, out of no longer fairly clear grounds (*aus nicht mehr recht durchsichtigen Gründen*), was removed from his office at his previous congregation (Rohrbach, Cherson) and forced to leave the village within three days. Now, the fault is certainly not on the part of the congregation, which was not in a position to provide such an ultimatum. The concerns were something like this:: Bonekämper did not have an higher education and was also not placed into his office by any church authority, therefore, he was expelled from Rohrbach by the German-Russian church authority, and, in addition, because he was also a big Enthusiast (*Schwärmer*) and often brought his parishioners into spiritual confusion (*Seelenverwirrung*). The latter was confirmed to me by his contemporaries.

² Darsow was a pastor with a very modern way of looking at things (*Einstellung*), who often interwove into his sermons the thoughts of our German classical scholars and also the wisdom of Buddha. It was therefore no surprise that he had to mention in his farewell speech: “We did not understand each other.” However, he was a friend of the peasant people and of the entire expatriate German culture. While many pastors complain about their parishioners, his reports are full of praise about them.

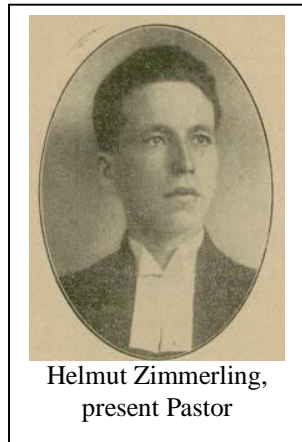


Tschukurowa Prayer House. Restored 1927

With regard to the ecclesiastical life of our community, the following can be said: In the 1890s, the Odessa hymnal that was brought along from Bessarabia was used here, later it was replaced by the one from Brandenburg; up to the year 1928, we celebrated Easter according to old style

[calendar], now we celebrate it together with all other fellow-believers according to the new style [calendar].

Besides the Evangelical Lutherans, there are also Baptists living in our community. The first Baptist here was Kowalski; G.J. Derman, M. Wiersch, Maier and some others came after him. They were most numerous in 1893 and were even able to build a meeting house; today, they are numerically weaker again. One cannot say that Evangelical Lutherans living together with Baptists was easy and here also the words are in place that fanaticism is always the inspiration of narrow-mindedness. As a result of this narrow-mindedness, the marriages between Baptists and Evangelical Lutherans were often unhappy. One has become more reasonable today, and allows each one his belief.



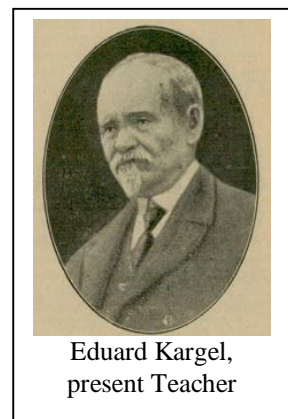
Helmut Zimmerling,
present Pastor

The darkest and saddest chapter in the history of our community is the educational system. Not only because the government has shortened our hours of German lessons, but also because the community no longer has the sacrificial courage to hire a competent specialist for the German language. For us, the teacher and the sexton are always the same person. The following men worked in this office: Mühlbach, (Switzerland) until 1860; Hoffmann¹, (Switzerland) until 1865; Mühlbach, for a second time until 1869; Baustadt, (Germany) until 1870; Held, (Germany) until 1877; Mühlbach, for a third time until 1879; Hennig, (Germany) until 1885; Klose² (Germany) until 1896; Krämer, (Germany) until 1899; Schulz, (Cherson) until 1903; Gräfe, (Germany) until 1907; Badurow, (Germany) until 1910; Wolf, (Germany) until 1915; Müller, (Germany) 1916-1918; Sauter, (Bessarabia) until 1922; Gäßler, (Bessarabia) 1923; Bechert, (Germany) 1924; Kargel, (Volhynia) until today; Joh. Wagner, (Bessarabia) until today.

¹ He was also a wood worker and while felling trees was killed by a falling tree. In his latter days, he joined the Baptists.

² He worked eight years in Tschukurowa for the benefit of the community, and after that eight years at the Evangelical Church in Bucharest and served as organist at the royal court. Today, in retirement, he is living in Quedlinburg, Germany.

In closing, the interesting stories of three of our church items should to be told. In the 1840s, the women's section of the Gustav-Adolf Association gave the people of Jacobsonsthal a red velvet altar cloth. The chief administrator of the Gustav-Adolf Association sent a bell to that village near the town of Braila and King Friedrich Wilhelm IV of Prussia honored them with a beautiful old Bible with the following dedication: "To the Evangelical Church at Jacobsonsthal near Braila Friedrich Wilhelm IV King of Prussia. Charlottenburg, 18th September, 1857." These three pieces are now all located in Tschukurowa. Also, after Pied, Banke, Pepple and others, the last people of Jakobsonsthal, had left their community, and the village of Kataloi was established in Dobrudscha in 1857, these three items came to Dobrudscha and were placed in the Kataloi Church. Since all the people of Kataloi joined the Baptists, our Tschukurowa folks



Eduard Kargel,
present Teacher

claimed these items for themselves, which the previous owners did not want to give up. It was first in 1866 that they came to Tschukurowa after a decision by the Upper Church Council in Berlin and after an order by Blücher and Malinowski from Tultscha. The bell was first housed on a stand, then, in a tower in 1870. But it has not always sounded peace in its community; no, its sounds have also announced fire, turmoil and war. It developed a crack in 1915 and was recast in Bucharest. Besides its troubled past, it has a very nice sound and is also the oldest German bell in Dobrudscha. One can call it the bell in motion (*wandelnde*). We people of Tschukurowa love our bell very much; when it rings, it seems to us as if our fathers, who have long since gone to their eternal home, are talking with us: To me it is as if the fathers are calling me out of the grave's darkness (*Grabes Nacht*)!

[Translation Ends]