

Paris, Bessarabia – Part 1

Paris in Bessarabien:
Chronik der Gemeinden Paris und Neu-Paris in Bessarabien,
Arthur Suckut, self-published, 1986, 320 pages.

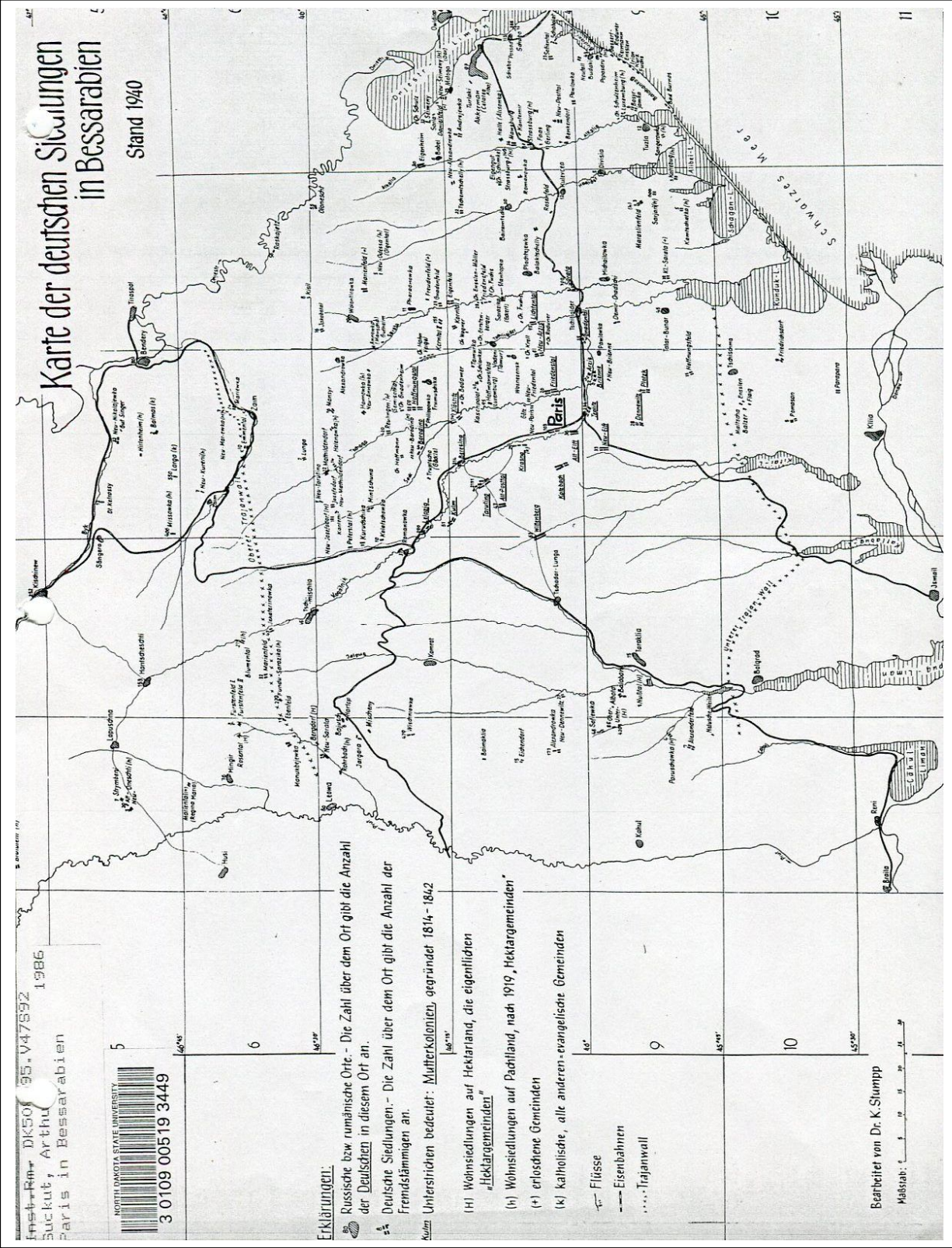
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Date Translated: July, 2019

Information in square brackets [] is that provided by the translator. This book has 321 pages of information. So as to not overload a digitized copy of this book, the translation will be made in parts. The translation below is pages 05-50 of Arthur Suckut's book.

[Translation Begins]

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Erklärungen:
 (H) Russische bzw rumänische Orte. - Die Zahl über dem Ort gibt die Anzahl der Deutschen in diesem Ort an.
 (K) Deutsche Siedlungen. - Die Zahl über dem Ort gibt die Anzahl der Fremdsprachigen an.

(k) Mutterkolonien, gegründet 1814 - 1842
 (H) Wohnsiedlungen auf Hekariand, die eigentlichen "Hektargemeinden"
 (h) Wohnsiedlungen auf Pachland, nach 1919, Hektargemeinden
 (+) erloschene Gemeinden
 (k) katholische, alle anderen-evangelische Gemeinden

— Flüsse
 — Eisenbahnen
 ... Trajanwall

Bearbeitet von Dr. K. Slunpp
 Maßstab: 1 : 100 000

Preface

Great preparations had been made for the celebrations of the centenary of the brother colonies in Bessarabia. Then the First World War broke out. The celebrations did not take place. In the winter of 1916/17, there was an unimaginable danger that the German population would be deported to Siberia in Russian freight cars, death by freezing for many. Then came the “Snow Miracle of God”: Pray that your flight does not happen in winter! Wagon-loads of individuals are acquainted with this miracle. Snow drifts as high as a man paralyzed all traffic for weeks. With the outbreak of the Russian Revolution and immediately afterwards, the “Iron Curtain” came down at the Dnjestr River. We were saved.

The same process happened again. Now the celebrations were to take place for the 125th and the 100th anniversary of the existence of the villages. Preparations were being made. Then the Second World War broke out. The celebrations did not take place. As a result of a treaty between the German Reich and the Soviet Union, we were given the right to go to Germany in the autumn of 1940, “back home to the Reich.” Saved again?! There was no future in the beloved steppe home! It had to be decided at short notice. Violently emotional scenes of farewell from the village, from the church, from the cemetery cut deep into the inner life. We only came to our senses afterwards.

The Second World War went “to the bitter end” for Germany, it was a total end! The people of our ethnic group, located in the then east of Germany, had to flee in the middle of winter (!!!). Many died. The great hand of God saved us! The whole event also affected the municipality of Paris. After 1945, books appeared as a “journey into the past” about our home-villages in Bessarabia. The history of Paris and its “daughter” Neu-Paris now join them. The people of Paris themselves placed the emphasis on the first syllable, i.e. Paris. With a deep love for the work that has been produced, the retired teacher Arthur Suckut—a son of his home village—has put a great deal of time and effort into it, despite physical weakness and illness. Also involving great responsibility is the effort put out by the “Paris Homeland Committee” (*Heimatausschuß Paris*). The work has succeeded well due to the conscientious source research and the examination of all achievable data—often only by way of the testimony of those from the old homeland who are still alive. Luther’s words “with seriousness want to be Christians” gave the drafting of the reports the same approach. The intellectual and spiritual life of the former Paris gave the mellowness and the spice to the creativeness and progress of the community. Here and there, a healthy sense of humor flashes through. It also belongs there.

What remains? The kingdom and the power and the glory. The kingdoms of the world have become our Lord and His Christ. In the power of the Holy Spirit, immediately after the formation of the village of Paris, believing people have suffered abuses by those in authority. The glory of God in the face of our Savior Jesus Christ, which has become a reality in the life of the many from the community of Paris who have died, wants and will shine today with the generation born afterwards.

May the book find a well deserved reception—not only by today’s dear people of Paris!

E. Hommel, pastor in retirement

Foreword

Paris Colony, the adopted home of our ancestors, was one of the oldest and largest German communities in Bessarabia.

The question that has been addressed to us for decades is probably justified as to why we do not yet have our own history. This has many reasons and is not so easy to answer. According to the current state of knowledge, which has been drawn up in a long and laborious work, a lot can be said, but it cannot be an excuse, even less an apology—far be it from me! However, there are a number of things that should illuminate and make the special situation more understandable. Whether experts of our homeland research will be satisfied with this is to be left to be seen. I will be grateful from the heart to anyone who has better and more precise things to share..

Although many of the people from Paris attended secondary schools, were pastors, teachers, notaries, lawyers, etc., but they usually did not return to their own village to work there. So we were mostly dependent on teachers and notaries who were “foreigners,” also not people from Paris. They often left after a few years, new ones came in their place. Very few of them married in the village and then stayed; they never quite felt like people of Paris, also because of the Platt-German language in the community. In addition, they were not really accepted as “skilled,” even if they were farmers afterwards and took a lively part in the events in the community. Some were even leading in many respects. Is it any wonder that no one in the village was able to find or was willing to write a history? For the sake of truth it must also be said that in the end we were not interested in this, even less genuine appreciation. The very strictly conservative attitude of faith did this to them, not to write or even to publish a “worldly thing.” The fact that nothing could have happened on this issue to this day, however, was also due to the resettlement and dispersal in all directions, unlike any other village from the old homeland. Only in a few exceptional cases do several families now live together in one place or in the immediate surroundings. It is so here in the Federal Republic of Germany, as well as in the German Democratic Republic, where a good third of our people stayed after the Flight of 1945. Others again were looking for a new home abroad. We are not able to bring our people together like other places, such as *Lichtental*, where my wife comes from. They have gathered here in Swabia and meet again and again for their home meetings or annual meetings. In this way, they could easily form different groups or out-of-the-way groups to perceive the concerns of their compatriots. They have also had a home book for many years (1969). This was precisely the great advantage of having people who had learned from their own ranks who could do something for their home community. They had several descriptions of their village already in *Lichtental* and were able to build on it in the creation of the new book. We did not, nor do we have all that.

Even in all the Bessarabian homeland literature, as well as here after 1945, there is very little to be found about Paris. And what can be found is often limited only to statistical information, to data of an event, described in a few lines. Of course, this now again has to do with the people Paris themselves, because no one has reported often and exhaustively—this, with the exceptions, is still the case today. We admit that this is typically the “Style of the Paris person!”

Nevertheless, I would like to mention some who have already done “preliminary work.” even though almost everything has been lost. Teacher *Andreas Kehrer* was the first to work on it at

the turn of the century and published some pages of it in 1909 in the “Odessa Calendar” (*Odessaer Kalender*). His daughter *Emma Kehrer*, a long-time teacher and organist in Paris, continued, but despite all the diligence and all the effort, after her death a few years ago, nothing could be found. *Immanuel Suckut*, at home and after the war, and our last notary *Michael Borck* also worked on a home book. Only something by *Immanuel Suckut* has remained. Unfortunately, in the middle of work, he died due to an unfortunate fall. When the Assistance Committee (*Hilfskomitee*) in Hanover published the “Homeland Book of the Bessarabia Germans” (*Heimatbuch der Bessarabiendeutschen*) in 1966, the preparatory work of *Immanuel Suckut* and other Paris colleagues (*Mitarbeiter*) was incorporated. Our compatriot Professor *Rudolf Weiß* (father *Gottfried*), who was still in Leipzig at the time, had taken over the fair copy (*Reinschrift*).

Later, when he lived in Backnang, he visited me; then some more visits followed. He told me a lot about our home, entrusted me with a special story for the history and allowed me to freely take useful articles from all his works. Then he gave me a thin portfolio with some pages and said sadly and bitterly about them: “This is Paris!” He gave me the task of writing a history on his behalf and on behalf of all the people of Paris. Soon after, he died—now I could not ask anything more!

For 1966, our neighboring municipality of Alt-Elft, which had been founded at the same time as us in 1816, had planned the 150th anniversary and invited Paris to participate, also to plan together the history for both communities because we were a “twin community” (*Doppelgemeinde*) separated only by the railway line and the Kogálnik River. But the Paris “front-ranking men” (*Vordermänner*) did not accept the well-intentioned invitation. After two years, Alt-Elft had its history, written by *Otto Lehmann*, a former mayor (*Bürgermeister*) of the municipality. Knowing each other well, he offered to me to copy from his book what also applied for our village. Thanks to *Otto Lehmann*! My visits and requests to our “front-ranking men” and still living knowledgeable leaders had little success at all; yet they went about it and wrote down what they still knew. There are at least a few of them mentioned from whom I was able to get a lot of help.

Our long-time teacher *Albert Eckert* has written down some things and left it to me. He had also made many photographs at home, but they were largely lost during the Flight. However, many of our people still found good pictures from different times and from different angles, so that we can present beautiful and interesting pictures. *Theodor Franz*, our last mayor (*Primar*), together with some people, drew the area map. Others helped to eliminate and correct the errors that still occurred. *Alfred Ölke* and some others drew up the plan for Neu-Paris and sketched it. Both places are already drawn, the good man does not even want to be named! So a long list could follow here of everything, the quarters and food provided during the many trips and meetings to work together. Several times, Mrs. *Ilse Braumann-Allmer* accompanied me and helped me. My brother *Reinhold* is also in the ranks of those who have done a lot and are still doing so to this day. *Ottomar Eichelberg* was and is a good assistant. I received a lot from him, in writing and by word of mouth. So also from *Elfriede Qualen-Idler* and her mother *Hulda Idler born Weiß* (father *Christian*).

Mr. *Christian Fieß* from the Bessarabian Homeland Museum (*bessarabischen Heimatmuseum*) has contributed a lot to the success of our book, also the gentlemen *Friedrich Ernst* and *Hugo Häfner* (from Friedenstal and Eichendorf) contributed their part, even further good helpful tips and hints. We also were allowed to take from their publication essays what we lack for our own documents. Thank you very much to all of you!

I also found quite productive material in the following places:

- Institute for Foreign Relations in Stuttgart (*Institut für Auslandsbeziehung in Stuttgart*)
- Genealogical Branch Library in Stuttgart (*Genealogische Zweigbibliothek in Stuttgart*)
- Federal Archives (*Bundesarchiv*) in Koblenz and other similar archives.

Everywhere there were helpful staff who tried everything to get on with this rather difficult work. Here, too, a heartfelt thank you to everyone!

If I have mistakenly forgotten this or that person, I apologize and bear with me. I also ask on behalf of our book, if it has not turned out as many expect. Making a history almost out of nowhere after such a long time cannot be described in a few words. Nevertheless, I wish our history to have a good reception with everyone!

Perhaps from my personal point of view, my long-term, sometimes very serious illness, combined with several surgeries, even to heart surgery, may still be hinted at. It is therefore only to be inferred that often and sometimes for quite a long time everything had to be set aside; it often seemed as if there was and should not be a history of Paris!

I would like to thank all those who patiently shared these difficult years with me—and my family—of this long drawn out project. Many of them encouraged me not to give up and prayed that I would recover and, with God and their help, was able to complete the work that had begun. My greatest thanks will come if this book is well received, as well as readers who will be happy, in memory, to be in Paris again.

Waiblingen-Hegnach, in April of 1986

Arthur Suckut

Bessarabia — Adopted Home of Our Ancestors

Introduction

When we arrived in and around Dresden in October 1940 in the then Resettlement situation, we were considered by the local population as foreigners who looked like Germans and could also speak the German mother tongue (though not that of Saxony), for they kept asking the same question: "Where is this 'Better-Arabia' (*Besser-Arabien*) from which you come? Are you 'Better Arabs' because you are of German descent and have therefore been resettled in Germany?" Some of them, who thought they were well versed in geography and history, even knew that we had the name because our former homeland had long been known to the Arabs and had been called "Besser-Arabia" while not knowing in particular that it was the steppe land.

Despite this huge amount of knowledge we confused them by sometimes speaking Romanian, sometimes Russian, but above all our Platt dialect; this was beyond their understanding and their knowledge, now we were foreigners, even if in a qualified sense to be “Better Arabs” (*Bessere Araber*).

Even some older people of Paris who were in German captivity during the First World War already spoke about this: German and Arab—how is this supposed to fit together! Even those who had studied in Germany or had attended the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin were able to report similar experiences. What is it all about, this “Besser-Arabia?” A brief look back can help to get to know our former homeland, the country of Bessarabia.

Location and Size

Just as almost everything in the enormous empire of the Soviet Union is very large, so Bessarabia is also a relatively large country, almost everywhere bordered by water. In the south, it is the *Danube River*, moving almost horizontally toward the *Black Sea*, with the *Kilia Tributary (Kilia-Arm)* being the most upper of the three estuaries of the great Danube delta. Then the northeast, flowing into the coast of the sea, directly connected are some lakes (*Limame/Seen*), which are at the same time reception basins of some steppe rivers, all coming from a northerly direction. In the east, the *Dnjestr River* forms the natural border. Its source is in the ancient Carpathians and flows, with much meandering, in a southeasterly direction, into an estuary (*Liman*) with the same name, which joins up to the Black Sea, about 50 km [31 miles] from Odessa. The western border is formed by the *Pruth River*, also from the Carpathians and flows into the Danube between Galatz and Reni. Only the northern border of the country, where the Dnjestr and Pruth are about 55 km [34 miles] apart, runs the land border with Bukovina (*Buchenland*). While the width up here is quite narrow, it is about 200 km [124 miles] wide in the south of the country, so on average a good 100 km [62 miles] wide. The length is a good 450 km [280 miles], which corresponds to half the length of the Federal Republic of Germany from Lake Constance to Denmark. To put it in another way: from Lake Constance to Kassel, or from Kassel to Flensburg.

The country's area content is just under 44,450 km² [17,162 sq. miles], which is only about 4,000 km² [1,544 sq. miles] smaller than the State of Lower Saxony.

History and Name

Every good historical work provides information about the millennia-old past of Bessarabia. It was above all a suitable transit country of many people and tribes from the vastness of Russia. The southern part was particularly suitable for this, since it provided food to humans and animals. According to current knowledge, the *Scythians*, an Indo-European folk, were the first settlers in South Bessarabia. From them come the well-known “burial mounds” (*Kanonenhügel*), in the technical language called *Kurgane*. As excavations showed, they were tombs of the Scythian ruling families. Already in the 8th Century BC, they had moved back and forth there as nomads until they were succeeded by the *Getae (Geten)* [Thracian tribes] in the 2th century BC. They were able to stay there until the 3rd Century AD, until they had to give way to the *Getae*.

Over the centuries, the *Huns*, who used it as a transit country on their way to Western Europe, followed by the *Avars*, *Bulgarians* and other Slavic tribes.

In the 7th century, the *Bessen* seized the land, after which the land was named. They, too, soon had to give way to others who, one after the other, were driven out, such as the *Chechnyans* (*Petschnegen*), the *Cumans* and *Poloves*. In the 13th Century AD, the wild *Mongolian hordes* laid waste the country as they passed through, during which time, in the 14th Century, there was talk of a *Moldovan principality* for the first time. Not long after, the *Turks* followed and occupied the southern part of the country. Russia waged several wars with them for the southern part of the Russian Empire, north of the Black Sea. However, it was not until 1812 that the whole of Bessarabia fell to Russia, but after the annexation of the *Crimean War* and the *Peace Treaty of Paris in 1856*, it had to cede the southwestern part back to Moldova. After another *Turkish War in 1877/78*, the *Berlin Peace Treaty of 13 July 1878*, the tip lost in 1856 was given back to the Russian Empire. Now the whole country belonged to the Tsarist empire until the First World War. From 1918-1940, it was connected to Romania, then on 28 June, 1940, again occupied by the Russians. Bessarabia, belonged to the Romanians during World War II, and since then has been an integral part of the Soviet Union as a *Moldovan Republic*; only the southern part, in the former so-called Budschak, belonged to *Ukraine*, the part where most of the former German colonies were, including our home village of Paris. —The name Bessarabia, however, has its origins, according to Hugo Häfner (HK 1983), not from the Bessen, but goes back to the Wallachian *princely family Basarab*, which, under Mirtscha Basarab, was “ruler of the Bessarabian land” from 1348 to 1418. The name Bessarabia has been preserved until our time.

A well-known historian—unfortunately, I am no longer aware of the name and source—once referred to Bessarabia as the “Alsace of Eastern Europe.” One can agree with this and add that over time it was without question a “stormy center of history.” For only a very small portion of these times, it was our home for about 125 years.

Soil Condition and Climate

The country can be divided into three regions. The north fertile, clay-containing soil with a lot of deciduous forest, mainly oak and beech trees. The same with the central part. In both areas, in addition to the forest, good land for agricultural purposes, and also good for vegetable and fruit growing. The elevation here is on average about 400m [1,312 feet] above sea level, along with a fairly pleasant climate, with much more rain than in the southern part of the country, in the so-called Budschak (turkish: *Winkel*), the gently undulating land of the steppe in which the German settlement area lay. According to Johannes Dölker, “Bessarabia, according to soil types, is South Russian’s black soil region. The layer of black earth (*Tschernosem*) varies from 30 cm [11.8 inches] to a thickness of 1.5 meters [4.9 feet] or more. So the soil is a distinct steppe-blackness and is one of the most fertile soils that exists overall.” So it was not due to the bad soil when there were many crop failures. Rather, this was due to the *harsh continental climate*. The *Carpathian Mountain chain* did not let any western rain pass over to us, even the *Podolian elevation* to the northeast of the Dnjestr River let little come to us. Since most of the winds came from the Black Sea or the Ukrainian lowlands, they brought little rain, especially in the early summer, when it was needed most. And it came here and there, then mostly as so-called “strip

rain.” i.e. as with the ruler it has blessed some areas with the desired moisture while others remained dry. Or the rain was cloud-bursting, so that the mass of water flowed quickly and could not soak into the ground. Where it gathered, there were sometimes devastating floods and destructions. The hot steppe winds, often lasting for weeks, did its thing in that the whole growth was stopped, which happened a lot, therefore also robbing the steppe because of the growth of many noxious weeds. While the summer months were often very hot and dry, the winter months could bring “Siberian cold,” which also left its mark and it happened in some years that the winter grain was frozen and had to be re-seeded, although this only occurred in rare cases, it could still thrive or even bear fruit. In the *district of Akkerman*, where most of the German villages were located, the *depressing precipitation* had an average annual rainfall of 365.1 mm [1mm = 0.03937 inches], i.e. about *1 mm of water per day for the year*; this is already close to “drought condition.” We were exposed to such conditions, we could not change that. There was no forest that affected the climate. The still quite modest “forest,” which had arisen here and there in the community, did not yet play a role in this. The South Russian, the continental steppe climate was and remained our “enemy,” which frustrated much well-meaning effort. Yet there were years that yielded such rich harvests that it was hard to know where to go with all the wealth. This variation made up for the differences, important for the survival and moving forward in South Bessarabia. And it went ahead and up. The word went around with us: *the first [generation] experienced death, the second experienced need, only the third experienced sufficient bread*. So it was in the fourth and fifth generation, in the autumn of 1940, that they moved back to where their ancestors had once come from—to Germany, following the call of “Home to the Reich!”

Inhabitants of the Land

The land assigned to the German colonists was almost deserted; only individual shepherds and nomads travelled through the country with their flocks and often did not even know to whom it belonged. The owners were members of the Russian nobility who at some point excelled and earned it for themselves. As a thank you, the respective tsars gave them large pieces of land, which they leased; whether taxed or rented, that was how it was. One lived the good days in the style of that time, often in Paris (France). It was fashion and a sign of education to speak French in higher circles.

But many tribes lived around the allotted German settlement area, if one counts them all, it comes to a good dozen. The Germans lived together with them peacefully, traded with each other, learned from each other, accepted each other and let each other live, each in his own way. Many of these foreigners came to the German colonies, worked there, sometimes as day-to-day laborers, such as in the hoeing season and harvest time, or longer time—often for years—as hired hands and maids, especially among the rich farmers. Others went to work for the craftsmen, sometimes as apprentices. If they had learned and earned well, they went back to their home villages, set up their own business there and were then able to take in others and help them to earn the money for daily support. They met again and again in the markets, traded with each other there as well. The foreigners had such great confidence in the Germans that no contract was written at the time of a transaction, but a person extended the hand to bear witness and said only: “Upon a German’s word!” (*Auf ein deutsches Wort*) This had more value than something written, especially because most of these foreigners were illiterate.

In his book “Bessarabia and its Germanness” (*Bessarabien und sein Deutschtum*), Jakob Becker has carefully listed how many foreigners lived in the respective districts of Bessarabia. Since most Germans lived in the Akkerman District (the official spelling), but also existed in scattered settlements in other districts, we refer to the information on pages 65-68.

Akkerman District:

In this district there are numerous German settlements, which have a completely modern complex as well as a culture corresponding to the current science. These colonies spread out in the center of the district. Today, these purely German villages are already interspersed among the Moldavians in the districts of Kischinew and Tighina. Occasionally Jews also appear, but their number is very small compared to the northern districts.

We find within the

Akkermann District:		Ismail and Cahul District:	
Moldavian	74,943	Moldavian	122,289
Little Russian	40,367	Little Russian	30,648
Jewish	5,988	Jewish	5,336
Great Russian	6,343	Great Russian	6,043
German	43,102	German	831
Bulgarian	38,760	Turkic	27,732
Turkic	13,155	Greek	170
Gypsy	11,584	Other Nationalities	1,470
French	3,370	Bulgarian	24,447
<hr/>		Albanian	1,100
Total	237,612	Czech	311
		Polish	70
		Armenian	184
		<hr/>	
		Total	220,631

According to the statistics compiled in 1915, the Germans that lived in the Bessarabian Districts.

Kischinew	302
Soroca	109
Balti	1,764
Kirschnew Land	662
Orheiu	18
Tighina	5,026
Akkerman	43,102
Ismail	831
<hr/>	
Total	51,814

According to this statistic of 1897, it is assumed that the proportion of the nationalities living in Bessarabia was the following:

Moldavian	47.58%	Turkic	2.88%
Little Russian	19.62%	Polish	0.60%
Jewish	11.79%	Gypsy	0.45%
Great Russian	8.05%	White Russian	0.13%
Bulgarian	5.33%	Other Nationalities	0.46%
German	3.00%		

There is no absolute assessment yet, because several enumerations have political overtones. We bring the most impartial assessment by Eberhart. Accordingly, Bessarabia had the following inhabitants in 1922/23:

Moldavian	1,270,000 souls	or	47.5%
Russian	742,200 souls	or	27.8%
Jewish	314,800 souls	or	11.7%
Bulgarian	142,300 souls	or	5.3%
German	83,00 souls	or	3.1%
Polish	16,000 souls	or	--
Gypsy	12,000 souls	or	--
Armenian	2,900 souls	or	--
Greek	3,800 souls	or	--
Others	85,000 souls	or	--
<hr/>			
Total	2,670,000 souls	or	--

By comparison, Bessarabia is almost equal in size to Estonia: 44,200 km² [17,065 sq. miles] versus 47,550 km² [18,359 sq. miles] and surpasses Latvia in population: 2,670,000 inhabitants versus 2,552,000 in 1922.

It is perfectly clear that the majority were still Moldavians—Romanians—indicating that it is a Romanian country.

Filipescu goes on to write that “in a statistical work on Bessarabia from 1908, the following section can be found: ‘Even today, after a hundred years of Russian rule, it is not the Russian language that is predominant in Bessarabia, but the Moldovan language, because it still has a special attraction for the other nationalities, so that they even renounce their Russian mother tongue and speak Moldovan or Romanian in their families.’”

In the midst of this mixture of people and this fragment of people in Bessarabia, the Germans lived mainly in the districts of Akkerman (Cetatea-Albă), Tighina and Cahul. We actually possess some certain information about the numerical strength of the people of Bessarabia for the year 1897.

It has a population of 2,600,000. The population density is estimated at about 58.5 inhabitants per km². A comparison with other provinces of Romania gives the following picture:

Bukovina	77.8
Bessarabia	58.5
Old Romania	57.2
Transylvania and Banat	50.0

Bessarabia was divided into nine districts. We present their names from north to south, indicating the surface area, the population number, and their density:

District	Surface Area in km ²	Population Number	Population Density
Hotin	3,782	356,000	94
Soroca	4,331	307,000	71
Balti	5,260	294,000	56
Otheiu	4,246	295,000	70
Kischinew	4,181	376,000	90
Tighina	6,333	266,000	42
Cahul	4,482	185,000	41
Akkerman	7,595	347,000	46
Ismail	4,212	174,000	41
Bessarabia:	44,422	2,600,000	58.5

The number of German colonists who immigrated to Bessarabia is assumed to be 8,000-9,000 souls; but it has risen more and more. There were families with 12, 15, 18 and 22 children. Dr. Stumpp gives us the following statistics about the birth rates in the mother colonies:

1859 per 1,000 inhabitants	65.0 births
1897 per 1,000 inhabitants	47.6 births
1912 per 1,000 inhabitants	45.4 births
1933 per 1,000 inhabitants	28.6 births
1938 per 1,000 inhabitants	26.5 births

If the total number of German immigrants in Bessarabia is estimated at 8,000-9,000, it is no longer surprising that this number has multiplied over the course of 125 years, given the above high birth rates.

Another compilation shows us the increase in the number of German souls in certain periods of time (according to Dr. Stumpp):

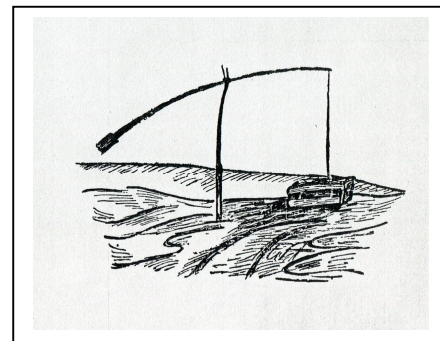
Year	1861	1891	1897	1919	1936
Sum Total	1,026,346	1,641,559	1,935,412	2,361,000	2,863,409
German	33,501	42,681	59,998	79,000	28%
Romanian	692,000	1,089,995	921,256	683,000	52%
Ukrainian	---	223,251	379,341	254,000	11%
Russian	162,256	344,073	158,704	134,000	12.3%
Bulgarian	25,684	102,577	---	---	5.8%
Jewish	91,590	141,175	228,379	267,000	7.2%
Gypsy	18,983	16,415	---	---	0.5%
Others	336	8,208 ¹	85,157 ²	214,000 ³	4.9%
Density	---	36.9	43.5	59.2	---

¹ Individually: 3,283 Armenian, 3,283 Greek, 1,642 Polish and Swiss

² Individually: 36,127 Turkic; 3,806 Polish; 23,224 Others

³ Individually: 147,000 Bulgarian and Turkic; 67,000 Others

When the Bessarabian Germans moved to Germany in 1940, the number had already risen to 88,545 people, who in Galatz still had 4,877 Bessarabian Germans who joined the Romanian army in military service or for other reasons as a result of the Russian invasion that had not stopped in Bessarabia. The figures mentioned allow us to conclude that there is an extraordinary high abundance of children. The abundance of children is mostly due to the lower age of marriage of the Bessarabian Germans. On average, according to Pertsch, the men married at 28 and the women at 24 years and 8 months.



Cause for Emigration

There have been wars for millennia from which the affected folks had to suffer severely. Those who survived the wars had to suffer horribly from the consequences. Wherever possible, whole tribes or clans migrated, the so-called “People Movements,” which in history have been quite few—yes to this day; in the past there were only thousands who were looking for new land, new homeland, new survival opportunities, so in our time there are millions, if one considers, for example, the numbers after the Second World War. In more recent times, these migrations, whether forced or voluntary, have been called “emigrations.” Our ancestors are also numbered among those who once moved from many German regions (*Gauen*) to the east, where they had been promised great possessions and land and above all great freedoms in all areas. This seemed to the oppressed to be a “sign from God” and they made their way in their thousands to what they considered to be the “Promised Land,” and the Tsar as the “Savior from the Antichrist.” The people who wanted to travel increased so much that some German royal lines decided to issue “emigration bans,” e.g. in Hesse and Württemberg. But the kinship relations between the German and Russian ruling families led to the lifting of the bans again through negotiations. Dr. Karl Stumpp describes this time in Germany and Russia very precisely in his 3rd edition standard

work “The Emigration from Germany to Russia in the Years 1763 to 1862” (*Die Auswanderung aus Deutschland nach Rußland in den Jahren 1763 bis 1862*) which, in addition to many documents, maps and pedigrees, mainly describes the countries of origin and places of origin in Germany, along with all the recorded names of the former emigrants to Russia, including those of the first mother colonies of Bessarabia, including the names of the Paris colonists. Dr. Stumpp deals quite exhaustively with the situation in Russia and Germany, shows the various emigration groups, whether they were political, economic or religious (mainly in Württemberg). In a summary of all this, the author writes: "Nowhere was only *one* reason for emigration decisive. Several reasons always worked together, with one the country being the reason, in another a different reason. The precondition for such a mass emigration, however, was not only in the country of *emigration*, but also in the country of *immigration*."

In the Germany of that Time:

1. Political suppression by foreign authorities, but also by one's own government and princes.
2. Army and domestic services in their own country and for foreign forces.
3. Economic hardship, crop failure, years of hunger, lack of land, tax burdens.
4. Strict and often unjust administration.
5. Introduction of innovations in the school and ecclesiastical fields.

In Russia:

1. Possibilities of a free life and possibilities of development.
2. Exemption from military service “forever.”
3. Offer of land, almost unlimited land purchase possibilities, tax exemption.
4. Free municipal administration.
5. Full freedom in matters of religion.

At that time, this was reason enough to turn the corner of the homeland and look for a new, better home in the distance.”

The situation described here in Europe at that time began in the French Revolution. Not only in France, but throughout Europe, it began to get restless. And since Napoleon's rise, when he overpowered and defeated one country after another, and at his discretion, partitioned and distributed it, his violence produced further consequences, the hardship and the accompanying anxiety became enormous. In him one saw the “Antichrist,” from whom it was necessary to be saved; for after all, Napoleon's power was to be experienced everywhere.

At first, many tried to find refuge in Prussia, especially people from Württemberg and Baden. When Prussia was defeated and the “Duchy of Warsaw” (1807) was created at Napoleon's pleasure, security, freedom and livelihoods were no longer guaranteed there either. The Polish nobility and clergy both treated the Germans there, who were mostly evangelical, unfairly and were hostile toward them. They were only hired men and maids, no longer owners; they were considered serfs. It was obvious that they sought the way to freedom in this emergency situation and moved on with joy when the appeal of Tsar Alexander I (1801-1825) reached them. Since he was also known to be a pious and believing man, he was given great trust in his words and promises, and they followed his offer, his call, the call of the “Savior by God's grace.”

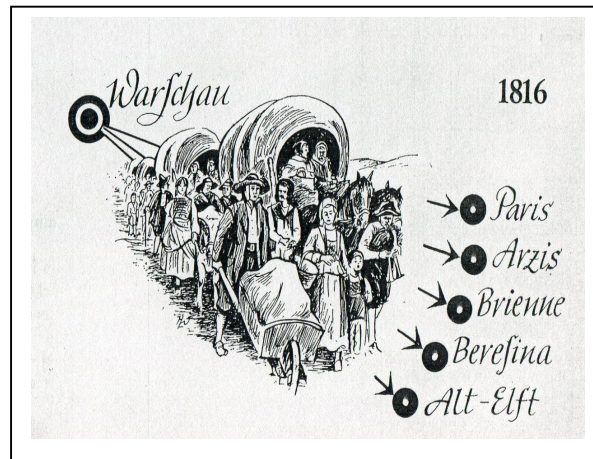
Invitation of the Tsar

Even before Napoleon and his reign of terror were defeated by the united forces, the Russian Tsar Alexander I made an appeal to the Germans in the “Duchy of Warsaw” and called on them to voluntarily immigrate to Bessarabia, actually South Bessarabia, where a large settlement area was available for them. The following privileges (special rights) were attached to the appeal, which were granted to the willing immigrants.

The Privileges (Special Rights)

1. The Russian Government takes the colonists from the Duchy of Warsaw under its special protection and gives them all the rights and conveniences enjoyed by the native born.
2. The colonists are required to preferably improve horticulture, viniculture, and silk farming.
3. They are exempt from all taxes and property taxes for ten years.
4. Each poor family is paid 270 *rubles banko* [1 ruble = 20 cents in 1850] by the crown over ten years; as much as will be required for their initial establishment.
5. Each family is given 60 *Dessjatinen* of land for its personal and hereditary property (60 dessj. = one farm – 65.55 hectares [162 acres]).
6. In addition, all those who do not have food receive for provisions 5 kopeks per day for each soul from the day of their arrival in Russia until the first harvest.
7. Immigrants as well as their descendants are free from military recruitment for all time, as well as from military quartering, except in the case when passage of troops take place.
8. The colonists are free in their religion to build churches, to have their own clergy, and to exercise their religious customs according to their manner.
9. At the end of the ten years, another ten years are allotted during which the subsidies of the crown, which are paid to the colonists, are to be paid back.

Arnold Mammel (*Heimatbuch Klöstitz*, p. 11f) concludes: “This was tempting and encouraged many who, suffering from years of war and in their economic situation, and often even plunged into misery by the loss of their entire possessions, to yearn for a quiet, peaceful country. And that was the general situation of many thousands of German people at the beginning of the 19th century, and many welcomed the enacted invitation with joy and prepared themselves to shortly leave for South Russia.”



Budschak – Settlement Land of the German Colonists

Southern Bessarabia had in its form the appearance of a triangle, an angle (*Winkels*), the section between the Dnjestr River, the Black Sea and the Danube River, then an imaginary line moving from Reni to Bendery; in the Tatar-Turkish language this triangle is called “Budschak.” The settlement area of the German colonists lay in this “angle,” exclusively in the Akkerman District. The map shows the location of the colonies within the Budschak.

Rector in retirement and director of the *Bessarabien Heimatmuseum*, Mr. Christian Fieß, writes in the foreword to the Picture Calendar of 1986 “Bessarabia: Homeland in Picture” (*Bessarabia: Heimat im Bild*) the following about the assigned colonist country in South Bessarabia:

“The settlement of Bessarabia was a major concern for Emperor Alexander I. Three settlement areas have to be distinguished:

1. for German colonists,
2. for Bulgarian colonists,
3. for Russians, crown farmers and landowners.

“We limit ourselves to the German settlement area. It was comprised of 16 land sections with 115,548 dessjatinen 1,943 faden²; together with the land allocated by the emperor to Lindl, there were 131,479 dessjatinen 1,343 faden². The municipalities of Sarata (1822), Gnadental (1830) and Lichtental (1834) were created on the land assigned to Lindl.

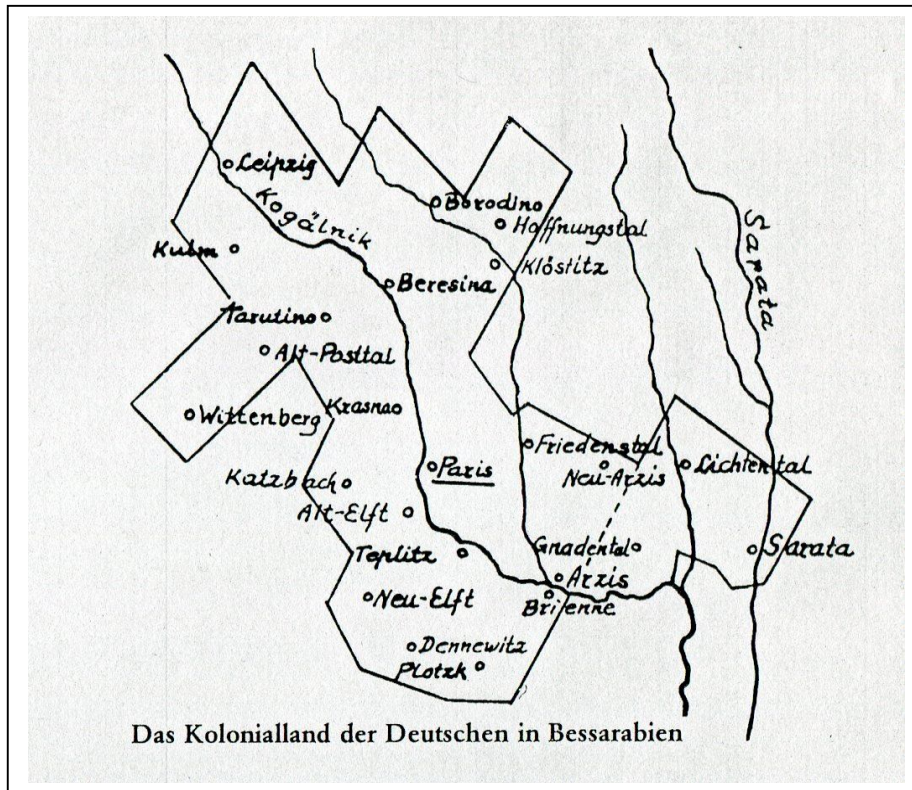
“On 29 November, 1813, Emperor Alexander I issued a manifesto to the Germans in the Duchy of Warsaw for the settlement of Bessarabia, in which the privileges for the immigrants were fixed. At the same time, immigrants were also recruited in southern Germany, especially in Württemberg.

“As early as 1814, the first so-called ‘Warsaw colonists’ had arrived in Bessarabia and the municipalities of Tarutino, Borodino and Krasna were founded. The other immigrants, in the same year, had to be accommodated in Moldavian communities, because the houses intended for them had not yet been built. In total, there were about 9,000 immigrants.

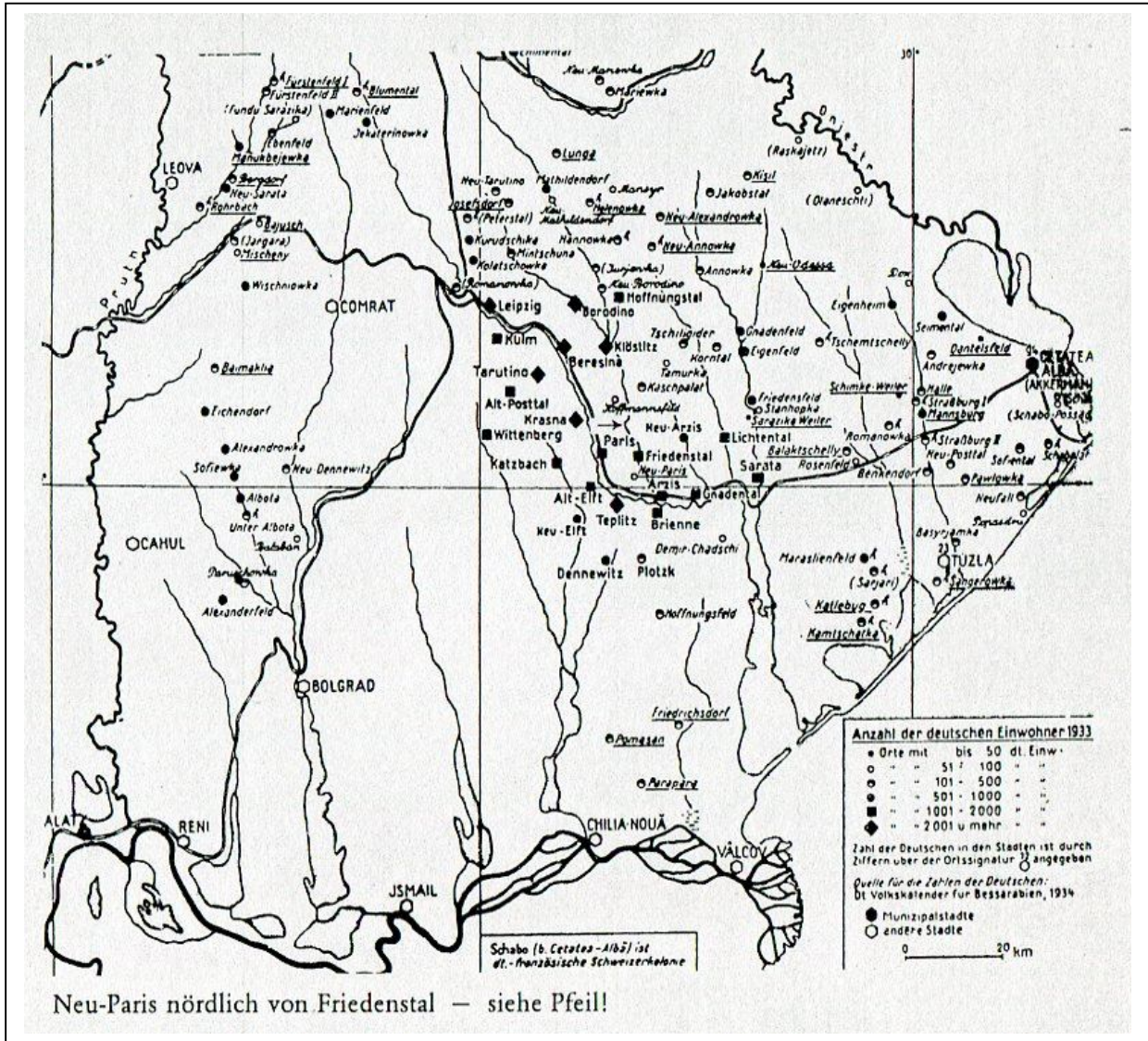
“The settlement area intended for the German immigrants stretched from Leipzig to Sarata, from Borodino to Plotzk; length approximately 75 km [46.6 miles], width approximately 40 km [24.8 miles]. It was situated by the main rivers Kogelnik and Sarata. The colonization continued from 1814 to 1842.

“During this time, a total of 24 mother colonies were founded on the closed colonial land and the Lindl land, and in 1922, the municipality of Schabo with 4,000 ha [9,884 acres] was founded directly on the estuary (*Liman*). The immigrants here were from Switzerland.”

This map sketch shows that the colony of Paris—our home village—is “in the middle” of the assigned colonist country. The fact that this “middle” should later become its significance is discussed elsewhere.



The Colonial Land of the Germans in Bessarabia



Map of the Budschak Region

Where did the People of Paris come from?

Attempt at “Explaining the Footsteps”

According to our settlement history in Bessarabia, in the so-called “Budschak,” it is considered to be by the “Warsaw colonists,” because they moved from there by land to Bessarabia, like many other colonists who had heeded the tsar's call. But this area was only a stopover, maybe a few years or decades, exactly how long no one knows for sure. They were probably on a migration several times through different German countries until they finally landed in Bessarabia, the last stop in their search for a good and permanent place to stay, where they could live in peace. That is what was found in Paris.

Are We Huguenots from France?

As soon as we arrived at the transition camp *Semlin*, near Belgard (Yugoslavia), in the process of our 1940 Resettlement [from Bessarabia], every resettler was questioned. The medical personnel there and the camp authorities were not only astonished at the name Paris (Bessarabia), but even more astonished about our names. Two men from their group were hobby linguists and were familiar with the names. They told us right away ‘You must all head on to Paris (France), because you are French and descendants of the Huguenots.’ We knew nothing about Huguenots. These people named off similar names which they associated with names among the Huguenots: Allmer, Fano, Fercho, Jans, Kison, Konrad, Kroisandt, Reppnack, Salo, Suckut, Wornath—to mention a few. Of course, the spelling of the name has altered, *germanized*; but the lineage came from France—of that they were certain.

Who were the Huguenots?

The Reformation got started in Germany by Dr. Martin Luther in 1517 and spread rapidly. But a Reformation also took place in Western Europe which experienced its own character through *Zwingli* and *Calvin*, the “Reformed” kind as opposed to the “Lutheran” kind. Nevertheless, they were all “Protestants,” as they were called at that time, and demanded freedom of belief according to their conviction. After a brief tolerance, this led to wars that were bloody with many casualties. The Thirty Years’ War, from 1618-1648, was ultimately a “war of faith,” especially in what was then German lands. The “divisions” of that time extend to the present day. The “Reformed” in Switzerland were more or less tolerated. Not so in staunchly Catholic France. Through ever new edicts (= decrees) they were persecuted until *Henry of Navarre* ascended to the throne in 1589 as Henry IV. As a Huguenot, he was well disposed to his fellow believers and on 13 April, 1598, issued the famous “Edict of Nantes,” which was to give them freedom of belief from that point on, despite the fact that he himself had already converted to Catholicism for political reasons in 1593.

But the freedom promised “forever” did not last even a 100 years. When Louis XIV was in power, he abolished the Edict of Nantes on 18 October, 1685, and banned the further practice of the religion of the Reformed under punishment to “body and property.” They had become “free game.” Attempts by some European princes, including the Great Cur-Prince of Brandenburg, Friedrich Wilhelm, to negotiate relief for the Huguenots failed. Their only recourse was to flee abroad. The numbers vary between 200,000 and 400,000. While the rich among them went to England and Holland, the middle class and farmers took flight and found refuge in Switzerland and in German countries, especially in Brandenburg.

Already on 29 October, 1685, only eleven days after the fateful decree in France of Louis XIV, Friedrich Wilhelm, the Great Cur-Prince, passed the “Edict of Potsdam” and promised the persecuted acceptance into his country Brandenburg-Prussia. They came in large numbers and were to some extent received by him in a personal way. They settled all over his country, many in closed settlements, e.g. alone in the Uckermark (near Prenzlau) 18 villages. They were given their own municipal administrations, church administrations and school administrations, and even their own jurisdiction. His successors continued this work, so that over time Huguenots were settled in all Brandenburg-Prussian parts of the country. From the pen of Frederick II, the

Great (1712 to 1786), the following lines come about the Huguenots in his country: “Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes, whereupon at least 400,000 French people left their fatherland. The richest went to England and Holland; the poor, but working class, took flight into Brandenburg; their number came to 20,000. They helped populate our devastated cities and gave us the manufacture capabilities that we lacked...”

As the empire of Frederick II grew ever larger, especially after the three divisions of Poland (1772, 1793 and 1795), he settled from among these Huguenots who came to his country, families in the newly won areas, together with other Germans, who listened to the call of Frederick to make the deserted and devastated, sometimes also destroyed land urbanized and economical. This is at least true of the Netze District, which, still during Friedrich’s time, had fallen to Prussia in 1772.

We can assume that Huguenot descendants migrated further into the territories that fell to Prussia in 1793 and 1795, and from there, about 20 years later, continued on to Bessarabia. It is a great likelihood that these people can be found among the later people of Paris, who were after all already called “colonists” by that time. As well as the Huguenots.

Results of Personal Research

The last information in our partially existing documents is “Poland and Prussia” as a country of origin, without place names! This is at least true of all those who were “real” Prussians. Among a few Swabians, who moved across Poland to Bessarabia with the “Warsaw colonists,” places of origin are sometimes noted. These Swabians, to name but a few, include the names Bader, Franz, Kelm, Klein, Knecht. Here, further investigations could be worthwhile.

If one can speak of “footprints,” it has come out in research that our Parisian names are met up with here and there in France—especially in greater Paris!, in Flanders and Holland, often with the same spelling. The name of my maternal grandfather Breikreutz is called Breetkruiz in Holland, pronounced as in our Parisian Platt, in which most of our names were spoken very differently than written, for example: Pfahl—Paua; Ölke—Ejak; Kraus—Krus; Breikreutz—Breetkris, etc. Our name can sometimes be found in large numbers throughout Friesland, from Holland to Schleswig-Holstein (the Husum poet Theodor Storm was actually called “Sturm;” we even now say “Storm” for Sturm).

Also in Rhineland, from Cologne to Holland, our name shows up here and there (Schmidke, Schmidtke, Klettke, etc.). One can find many in the greater Bremen-Hamburg area. The name Bork/Borch, for example, can be met up with in and around Frankfurt on the River Main. But there are significant traces, especially in the Brandenburg region, including Berlin. They moved further and further east: Neubrandenburg, Neumark, Posen-West Prussia, East Prussia. And everywhere they have adopted and taken “language footprints” with them, which have held up to our time. How often we people of Paris are asked if we are from East Prussia. If we say words that have within it “ei”, e.g. *Heiliger Geist* [Holy Spirit], then it could have been spoken by an East Prussian, it is that similar. Or when the Dutch entertainer Rudi Carell says in the advertisement for milk: “A Dröpke Melk,” then it could just as well have been spoken by a person from Paris.

The clearest practical trace, however, can be found in the entire Netze District. Here I spoke to many people during the war (there where we were resettled), where they spoke like our Parisian dialect. Many of our names have also been at home here. Some of them could still tell that relatives had moved on via Poznan, Kalisch, Lodz, Warsaw to Russia, probably to Bessarabia. There were Parisian names everywhere in the area of Filehne—Schönlanke—Schneidemühl and other places. From the area of Lodz—Petrikau—Pabianice—Lask, etc., I met people during the war with our names; they, too, had similar things to say as did those from the Netze District.

After the resettlement in Warthegau 1941/42, many of our Paris people came into the *Scharnikau* District and the neighboring *Eichenbrück* District. Here is told the following story, by a descendant of Emil Ziebart, who wanted to visit his brother Willi during a holiday, who was resettled in *Mühlingen, Scharnikau District*. Already at *Rogasen*, where he had to transfer, he heard in the side compartment of the train our dialect being spoken and went over, assuming it to be his compatriots. How surprised he was that they were not people from Paris but pure Poles or else Polish ethnic Germans. They told him that that is the way they always talk; that it was their dialect.

Once in Mühlingen, he searched for his brother. He knew the same sounds again coming from a courtyard and thought that these were real people from Paris. But far from it: Again it was locals, whether Poland or ethnic Germans—in his bewilderment, he did not ask about it any further. In any case, we have here the clear confirmation that for a long time the residence of the later Parisian colonists must have been the residence of the later Parisian colonists. This “language footprint” was also confirmed to me by the head of the “Research Centre for Folklore in Bremen and Lower Saxony,” Alfred Cammann, OStR i.R., residing in Bremen. He has conducted extensive studies, including among fellow Paris folks, and from a letter from a working-class teacher reported that he spoke almost the same dialect as the Paris people. Mr. Cammann is a recognized and esteemed researcher in our student organization with local affiliations (*Landsmannschaft*). We have also worked together for years and even today exchange letters at times.

In our dialect, however, there is another change that is to be addressed here. We have as a vocabulary many ending in “o” or also “ei.” Also here it was possible to find a footprint. When our people in earlier times pronounced *sagen* (to say)—*seggen*, so it was later pronounced *seggo*. So many more examples could be cited. Where, then, is this change in the dialect from? The explanation is—so I found after much searching—with the language influence of the Jews, the “Yiddish,” mainly from the time (maybe 1800-1814), when our ancestors lived in the area of Kalisch-Lodz. Many Jews were native here; Lodz had among its inhabitants (1800 to 1850) up to 50% as Jews. They were the business people and manufacturers, they dominated in all areas, including culture and language. The Jews—especially in Yiddish—have many of these very endings with “o” and “ei.” In general, our ancestors from there took quite a few words and terms to Bessarabia. I myself have talked to Jews, even in Yiddish dialect; this was moreover also found in Bessarabia. When we people of Paris said “Tato” (*Vater*=father) or “Mamo” (*Mutter*=mother), it is the same in Yiddish; but if they said “Voto” or “Moto,” then it referred to the old, the grandparents. We said it the same way in Paris. There I also heard the word “Groman = *Gemeinde*/congregation, *Gemeindeversammlung*/community assembly—just as we

used it! Of course, the latter is also spoken in the Romanian language. Whether the “Yiddish” language influence had not also come into its own here is going to go too far—it would require a scientific work—if one wanted to pursue everything here and bring more examples. But one thing seems almost certain after all this: all these show “migration paths and language footprints” apply at least to us people from Paris!

These “assumptions” may be accurate: We are Huguenots (partly), the people who passed through Holland, Prussia, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg, Pomerania, Neumark, East Prussia, Netze District, etc., then through Kalisch—Lotz—Warsaw as ethnic and linguistic “mixtures” on the way into the Steppe of South Bessarabia. A pastor from East Prussia, with whom I was on a study course during the war, told me, because of his knowledge of church records, that our name was also numerous there. He mentioned names like Broneske, Bork, Borch, Reppnach, Suckut and other names; we practically went through the list of our Parisian names, and he recognized almost everyone from his East Prussian homeland.

I would really like to pursue “information of names” here, but this book would have to be a few hundred pages in scope, and that is not possible. Perhaps it will stimulate the younger generation, by way of scientific studies, to pursue this theme in a thesis (dissertation).

When the Bessarabian-German literature refers to the origin of the people in Paris, or so with Dr. Albert Eckert, both are not wrong, their information is correct; only the origin, which is even further back, is open there, and not “questioned.” We Parisians are just like a “people scattered by the wind.” Our documents (church books, family trees, entry certificates, kinship sheets, etc.) do not provide more, so we cannot say any more. With a few exceptions, the final station is always “Poland,” “Prussia,” which at the time of their emigration to Bessarabia was the same in terms of geographical history.

Founding of the Paris Colony

Introduction

In the “Heimat Kalendar 1966 of the Bessarabian Germans,” looking back to the year 1816, in which five colonies were founded—Paris with them, good introductions are available about our settlement history. They are very helpful in illuminating the situation at that time and for a better understanding. In the text about the five communities, the following is mentioned:

“We have been of the opinion for many years that the emigrations of our ancestors were on the move for years from the original home of Germany as it was presented to us in our calendars concerning the founding years. According to that, the first migration got on the road in 1814 and more migrations followed in 1815, 1816 and so on. Since we have been aware of the municipal reports published by Dr. Georg Leibbrandt on behalf of the Welfare Committee in Odessa in 1848, we know that the founders of our twelve oldest communities all set out in 1814 to reach Bessarabia, but only Tarutino, Borodino and Krasna could be laid out in this year, the founders of Kulm, Klöstitz, Leipzig and Wittenburg had to spend a winter among the Moldavians, who live in central Bessarabia, while the immigrants intended for the further villages had to spend two winters in Moldavian villages as servants and laborers until the land for their settlement

could be freed from the previous renters. Thus it turns out that the founders of the municipalities of *Alt-Arzis*, *Alt-Elft (Fere-Champenoise)*, *Brienne*, *Beresina* and *Paris* had already moved on from their first adopted home in Western Prussia or the Duchy of Warsaw in 1814, but could only plot their villages in Bessarabia in 1816. It was these five municipalities that were able to celebrate the 150th anniversary of their founding in Bessarabia in this year. Their descendants, today not only scattered over the whole of Germany, but often also living abroad, should have the opportunity, if it is not possible for them to come together for a celebration, to become familiar with the changing fortunes of their home community.”

Location and Establishment of the Village

If you take the average between Alt-Paris and Neu-Paris (the daughter municipality which was founded in 1910, we were situated at 46^o 4' north latitude and 29^o 20' east longitude. In other words, our community was located at the longitude of Geneva, which, because of its international importance, is probably known to all. Soil conditions, plant life and wildlife, as well as the climate, are, of course, incomparable to Geneva and its surroundings; for as far as the two areas are separated from each other, so also is the climatic difference.

Paris was located on the eastern bank of the steppe river Kogälnik, which flows here in a north-south direction, and 20m [1 meter = 3.28 feet] above sea level (*NN*). The whole valley had a width of 3.5-4 km [1 km = 0.6214 miles] and was quite flat, bordered on both sides by mountain slopes which reached a height of up to 100m above sea level, in some places a little more. The mountain country allows for a plateau, crisscrossed with moderate undulating troughs (*Wellentälern*), all in a north-south direction. Between the river and the eastern side of the mountain lay the village, with a 75m wide, straight road, in line with the north-south direction of the river. The mountain side was more favorable than the valley side, as it would partially flood after heavy rain and after the snowmelt, especially in the central part of the village, where the Kogälnik flowed very close to the village. Here there were several yards in a lower location, which made it difficult for the water to drain, in some there were even smaller ponds in the backyard, covered with reeds (*Schilfrohr*); pleasant for the wildlife, unsuitable for crops because they could not thrive there.

Constructed embankments were supposed to protect these low-lying parts in the middle of the village, but this has never quite been achieved. Even until the final time, parts of them remained wet, could not be utilized, neither with crops nor with houses and stables. Reed grew here and there, in which mainly many frogs and other small animals or insects could hold up. Today, these areas would be viewed as bio-diverse (*Biotope*) places to be protected. Since there were a fair number in our area, they were troublesome in the farmyards.

Rows of trees were laid out on both sides right from the start, first one row, later the second was added. At the end of the 1830s, it was the aim to create a third row, which had already happened here and there. If the first row consisted only of the typical steppe tree, the acacia, the other rows were substituted with maple. In some places in the village, berry bushes and gourds were planted between the rows of trees, secured by simple wire fencing. In this way, the over 4km long main road became a truly magnificent street, an avenue that allowed itself to be noticed. No other village in Bessarabia was able to claim such a length and width. If I may say so quite

modestly, some would be amazed if I compared it to the magnificent streets of modern large cities such as the *Kurfürstendamm in Berlin* or the *Champs-Elysees in Paris* (France), our “name-sake.” As for longitude difference, our suffering surpassed them a lot!



View of Lower Village – The long Tiled Roof House belongs to Friedrich Heer



View of Village 1913 – Church without Tower Clock & White Paint
Both done in 1927



Street View of a Bessarabian Village; a foot path was located between the wall and the first row of trees (*Bild-Archiv Heimatmuseum*)

The distances to some neighboring municipalities or important cities were: District town of Akkerman 90km [1 km = 0.6214 miles], state capital Kischinew 100km; both were accessible by a daily train connection after the railway construction in 1913-1915. The next villages were our “duplicate municipalities” of Alt-Elft about 1.5km, Katzbach 8km, Krasna 7km, Tarutino 18km, Beresina 20km, Klöstritz 20km, our daughter municipality Neu-Paris just under 12km, Friedenstal 9km, Arzis and Brienne 18km, Teplitz about 9km (enumerated clockwise). The roads were compact dirt roads so wide that two to three wagons could travel side by side or one pass the other. Only from Krasna to Tarutino was the road paved with stones. All other dirt roads were between 3 and 5m [10-16 feet] wide, overgrown with grass, often ending up with deep ruts; many a person still remembers how, if he did not skillfully approach them, he would flip over the wagon when he drove out of or drove into them, especially in the summer with full grain wagons (*Harbiwagen*); often there was also some breakage to the wagon rack.

Location and Size of the Boundary

The boundary (*Gemarkung*)—we called it landmark (*Feldmark*)—had the appearance of a shifted rectangle, in geometry one would call it a rhomboid. According to testimony of the old folks (we have not found this in writing anywhere) and some comments by Otto Lehmann in the History of Alt-Elft (page 16), the western border marker was roughly the postal road between Alt-Elft and Krasna, so about a few kilometers west of the Kogálnik River, and extended in the

east to the Shaga River, partly beyond, to the so-called “*Schreibersteppe*.” To the north, the boundary markers were from Krasna and Klöstitz, or the *Hoffmannssteppe*, while in the south, Teplitz, also Friedenstal country formed the border. In the north, a deep trench ran from the mountain to the railway line, the “Krasna Trench” (*Krasnaer Graben*), as we called it; on the border with Teplitz there was a similar trench, which we, in the vernacular, called “Wolf’s Terrain” (*Wolfgrund*). Both trenches were covered with an abundance of shrubbery, mainly with wild plums (*Schlehdorn*), herbal hawthorn (*Weißdorn*) and wild cherries (*Wildkirschen*), as well as several varieties of weeds, which we called by the collective name “*Burjan*.” These valleys had many dangers in them. They offered shelter to the gangs of robbers roaming here and there, but above all to the dangerous Steppe wolf, which could become a danger to humans and animals, mainly shepherds and flocks of sheep, and unfortunately it has continued to happen time and again, even into the twenties of this century. The last wolf hunt (handed down by word of mouth) was in the winter of 1922/23 and again on the “*Bulgarendamm*” in the very cold winter of 1928/29, which was followed by one of the greatest crop failures and emergency years in our former homeland.

These “ravines” (*Schluchten*), as we used to say, had another major disadvantage which was very damaging for our country. After strong rainfalls or after the snowmelt, a lot of water came into the valley water-meadows (*Talau*) between the mountain and the river. Because it could not drain quickly enough, this whole area, as a result of evaporation, became “salty, sour and saltpeter or very hot,” so that the cultivatable soil suffered great damage here. Meadow land and grazing land became partially unusable; even as farmland it was not quite right to be used, because nothing wanted to grow there anymore. Several “salt mounds” or “salt lakes” emerged, “which we had no idea what to do with in our time; today they could be used, for example, as artificial manure (*Kunstdünger*), but they did not need that with our black soil. We were not familiar with chemistry and its application in agriculture, fruit and vegetable growing. Only today do we know how healthy we lived; yes, to put it in a modern way, we were *the* alternatives in every way of human existence! We were self-sufficient in all areas of life from cradle to grave.

The size of the designated boundary was enormous, here hard to imagine. The two short side lines were about 8-9km long, the two long ones each a good 12km long, all lines almost as drawn with the ruler. The longest diagonal had an excess of a good 20km—which is large and wide in this steppe country!

After the municipality of Klöstitz, Paris had the largest land area of all the German villages of Bessarabia, about 9,500ha (including New Paris). Only Borodino and Beresina had approximate designated boundaries. The village had this area, although a few years after the settlement the western border had been shortened, so that from then on the border between Paris and Alt-Elft was the Kogálnik River. This affected our village and its inhabitants quite severely; not because of the approximately 500ha [1 hectare = 2.471 acres] of land that was lost at that time, but rather because the greatest part of the good meadows and pastures in the river valley had to be relinquished. A severe set-back for the cattle breeding of the municipality, which had an effect until the Resettlement in 1940.

Arrangement of the Boundary

Throughout the valley, between the village and the river, lay the meadows and pastures, also following the villages ends, both above and below, where wide valleys lay, because the river course here was more westerly. Because even the first generations could not work on and use the whole country, large parts of it were always designated each year as “fallow land” for use by the cattle. So there was no shortage of pastureland, but it was not of great quality, neither did one know about better use nor one have the means and possibilities to do things differently.

The whole Schaga River valley—where Neu-Paris was founded from 1910—was for decades purely the meadow and pasture land of the municipality. Here the richer families of the community, among others the Franzes, Pfahls, Labrenzes, Suckuts, Dallmans had their large herds of cattle, mostly young cattle, which they could then sell quite well and thus came to prosperity. Gottlieb Schimke, who later moved away and founded his “Eigengut Schimke” in 1895/96 and August König (chess king) were busy as traders and became rich because of it. Andreas Labrenz (father of the previous Andreas)—like many in the village—besides his occupation as a farmer also worked as a saddler-maker and with leather, which brought him such great wealth that he was the richest farmer of the village in his time. Because of his former high school education, he was also well versed in legal matters and had good connections because of that, so, before the expropriation in 1915, he was able to “distribute” his land in time and have it deeded to the relatives. So he did not lose as much as many other farmers of that time.

On the land relinquished to Alt-Elft in the Kogälrik River bend (see site map), the folks of Alt-Elft had planted trees for profit and fruit trees amounting to over 1,200 trees, only deciduous trees of various kinds. Our community had worked a similar forest at the place where later the upper herb garden of a Bulgarian was located, which was worked by Theodor Fano; owner was William Pfahl. However, both fruit plants and forest plants came to an end when the construction of the railway line in 1913-1915 was laid from Akkerman to Bassarabiaska (Leipzig) along the place where the river flowed. The ground became hard, “salty and saltpeter,” as we were told, the trees withered and were removed. On the left of the old Kogälrik there still stood only smaller trees, which were next to the fruit growth, where, among other things, turnips, potatoes and vegetables were grown. There can be no talk of a “forest” in Paris; smaller plants, but still quite young, were only found behind the “Bulgarendamm” at the north end and behind the “Weidendamm” at the southern end. During the Romanian period, small forests were laid out by the municipalities, with the help of the schools, behind the church and on the hillsides, including the tree line to the cemetery, and also in Neu-Paris. Again, mainly acacia and maple.

The division of land was regulated in such a way that everyone in the upper village and lower village had their portion on the common land. That had advantages and disadvantages. Benefits in this, because every farmer was allocated “good” and “bad” land as it was found, here and there, all over the countryside. The disadvantage was that the portions were very scattered and one often had to go long distances. Distribution was by way of drawing lots, even with later surveys. A field settlement (*Flurbereinigung*) according to the agricultural reform in Romanian times, as carried out by some municipalities, failed in Paris, because some got the good, the others got less good land. This led to a lot of quarreling at the beginning of the 1920s and many

a municipal assembly resembled a revolution. Only slowly did the situation calm down and it was left as it had been in the past.

The field parcels were given names, some of them can no longer be exactly named because we no longer know their origin. Their names are (the figures indicate how much of it was accounted for by a farm; a whole farm had 60 *Dessiainen* = 65.5ha [162 acres]): Langstücke (12D), Frankreicher (6D), Neue Frankreicher (4D), Schwauken (8D), Kostüschken (8D), Langer Berg (2D), Kurze Stücke (2D), Spanier (1.5D), Neue Stücke I and II with 1 Dessj. each, Unter der Zugabe (2D), Im Tal (2D), Kleestücke (2D), Weise (8D), Weinberge (2.5D), Über dem Damm (1D), Hofplatz (1D), along with sections for vegetable gardens (*baschtan*), herbal plants (*Krautstücke*) and forest (no numbers given). The later land in Neu-Paris was named as follows: Pariser Berg, Kesselloch, Am Schag, Über dem Schag, Weideland und Weinberge; sections for herbal gardens and vegetable gardens lay within these mentioned field names. Numbers are not known everywhere. The field names come from records by Immanuel Suckut, Theodor Franz and Rudolf Weiß. We cannot verify whether all this is all that correct. Because we had two field names with special names, namely, “Frenchmen” (*Frankreicher*) and “Spaniards” (*Spanier*), Paris was mentioned in the Bessarabian vernacular as the largest and richest village—it had the whole of France and Spain!

The First Settlers in the Colony of Paris

Where they may have come from has already been mentioned above. The last stop before the move to Bessarabia was the Duchy of Warsaw (1807-1815). Following the call of the then Russian Tsar Alexander I (1801-1825), they, like many others, set out by land to seek their new home in southern Bessarabia. Because the people of Paris did not have their own guide, like some other communities, but only papers that identified them and gave accommodation and food for them and their animals at established stations, they could not, as originally planned, settle on the land as early as 1814, but had to stay quartered with the Moldavians (Inhabitants of the country of Moldova) for two years, work with them and wait until they were allowed to move on. According to today’s knowledge, this was in the Bendery area and further north on the Dniester River. Among the Moldavians, they had severe periods of need: Hunger, Hardship and Death for many. Their possessions were pretty much used up, and they had to work as day-laborers, as hired hands and maids for daily livelihood. Of course, they also learned a lot here, among other things, crafts and house construction, mostly made of clay (*Patzen*-unburned blocks from a mixture of clay, manure and straw or chaff), with which the Moldavians built their cottages, mostly half in the ground, then some walls, covered with a roof of reeds. As severe as these years were, they benefited greatly as they moved on and settled; for the timber provided for 1814 was rotten or stolen, so the only thing left for them was to stay over in order to avoid the adverse weather and build earthen cottages as they had come to know. This was their beginning in the new homeland: at first death, second the need, third the bread!

The names of the first settlers in the Colony of Paris (see Appendix 2) were developed by Dr. Karl Stumpp, in collaboration with many knowledgeable representatives from the Bessarabian German Community. We worked on it together for several years, lists went back and forth until we thought they could be right. Even then, he wrote in some letters that our village was very difficult to comprehend because there was no documentation and the knowledge was quite

incomplete; in other words, Paris comes up quite short on that information! Together, we also searched a lot for possible origin, for correct spelling, etc. In one instance, we found that the same family name was written four different ways in the same church book for two hundred years. What finally is supposed to be correct? In our particular case, it is likely that several names—mainly those from France and Northern Germany—already experienced a change in the spelling in “Poland,” but at the very least through their immigration to Bessarabia. So he was able to demonstrate to me that his name—Stumpp—had been written differently several times over time. He concluded that people often asked for the names and simply wrote them down how “they” had understood them, more “phonetically” than orthographically.

We ended up with three different name lists for Paris that did not agree in all parts; we had to move on and leave it at that. We provide one of them in the Appendix, namely the one that appeared in Dr. Stumpp’s book on “The Emigration from Germany to Russia in the Years 1763 to 1862.” Hugo Häfner, in collaboration with Mrs. Flora (nee Walter) Heer, has revised and published this list for the municipality of Paris (HK 1986); there is also to be found the enumerated list of Emigrants in Russian and Romanian times, also from the old homeland of Bessarabia. We accept these lists and publish them in Appendix No. 3 and 4. Whoever still has good family records, can then himself make a comparison.

According to Dr. Stumpp, there were exactly 141 families when the community was founded in 1816, making it clearly the largest number in all 25 Mother Colonies in Bessarabia. In a note, Dr. Stumpp writes: “Were present in Poland near Kalisch and Warsaw.”

The settlers were brought to their farms, spread out on the hill-side and the valley-side of the village. Each family received a whole yard (1 *dessjatine* = 1.09 hectares [2.7 acres]). An entire farmyard had a length of 200-220 meters [656-722 feet] and a width of 55 meters [180 feet]. In addition, each family got 60 *dessjatinen* of land of 65 hectares [160 acres]. In addition to these 141 farmyards were added the “municipal spots” for designated churches, schools, town halls, storehouses, and others. In Paris, a section of land was left vacant from Alexander Jesse to Alfred Pomreinke (see location map), as well as some yards (no longer exactly known) in the upper village and lower village for warehouses and shepherd houses, all of which were municipal property. It happened that these farmyards were not to be exchanged, the number of community-owned places had to be preserved. It was only after the turn of the century that this changed. The shepherd yards with houses, stables and fenced in enclosures for animals (*Harmane*) were moved to the end of the village, upper as well as lower, or to the far end of the hill-side to the yards there. That is how we still know it from our time. Only in the upper village, next to Alexander Frieske (see location map), there was a storehouse, shepherd’s house and stables for breeding bulls and breeding stallions. More about the other “municipal yards” at another time.

[Appendix #2 & #3—Immigrants and Emigrants—page 276-277]

93 names of immigrants are quoted from the ratified list by Fl. Walther. In sequence here are: Name, wife (maiden name), when immigrating and coming from where.

01. Bader, Andreas—Maria Weinert, 1816 from Poland
02. Bader, Christian, 1816 from Poland
03. Blaskosken, Maria born Rüb, 1819 from Prussia
04. Bleschke, Friedrich, 1826 from Krasna, Bessarabia—Katharina Zahl, 1823 from Tarutino, Bessarabia
05. Böttcher, Michael—Katharina Schram (Schramm), 1816 from Poland
06. Breitzkreutz, Johann, 1816 from Poland
07. Breitzkreutz, Michael, 1816 from Poland
08. Broneske, Daniel, 1816 from Poland
09. Broneske, Johann, 1816 from Poland
10. Buchholz, Peter originally from Poland, 1825 from Tarutino, Bessarabia
11. Dallmann, Gottfried—Louise Martin, 1816 from Poland
12. Dallmann, Johann—Anna Christine Beßlen, 1816 from Poland
13. Engel, Christoph, 1816 from Poland
14. Fano, Michael—Christina Siewert, 1816 from Poland
15. Fercho, Christina, 1816 from Poland
16. Fercho, Jakob—Anna Karolina Albrecht, 1816 from Poland
17. Flöter, Christoph—Rosina Breitzkreutz, 1816 from Poland
18. Franz, Gottlieb—Anna Mantey, 1816 from Poland
19. Franz, Johann, 1816 from Poland
20. Frieske, Gottlieb, 1816 from Prussia
21. Frieske, Johann, 1816 from Poland
22. Gabert, Michael, 1816 from Poland
23. Jahns, Christoph—Elisabeth Wurnaht, 1816 from Poland
24. Jahns, Johann—Rosina Pomerence, 1816 from Poland
25. Jahns, Johann—Maria Kowalski, 1816 from Poland
26. Janke, Martin—Anna Dohn or Dohe, 1816 from Poland
27. Jans, Andreas, 1816 from Poland
28. Jasmann, Christoph—Eleonore Münz, 1816 from Prussia
29. Jasmann, Gottfried—Susanna Schnabel, 1816 from Poland
30. Jasmann, Paul—Rosina Jahns, 1816 from Poland
31. Jergen, Katharina, 1816 from Poland
32. Jeß, Martin, 1816 from Poland
33. Jeßke, Gottfried, 1816 from Poland
34. Jörke, Andreas, 1816 from Poland
35. Klaut, Mathäus—Susanna Kuhn, 1816 from Poland
36. Klein, Christoph—Louise Broschisky, 1816 from Poland
37. Klein, Gottlieb—Louise Makus, 1816 from Poland
38. Kletke, Michael, 1816 from Poland
39. Knecht, Gottfried—Elisabeth Engel, 1816 from Poland
40. König, Christoph, 1816 from Poland
41. König, Johann, 1816 from Poland
42. König, Michael—Era (Eva) Mantey, 1816 from Poland
43. Konrad, Andreas—Juliana Sudnik, 1816 from Poland
44. Konrad, Dorothea born Steinke, 1816 from Poland
45. Konrad, Karoline born Gelbhaar, 1816 from Poland

46. Kosanke, Johann—Friederika Justawitz, 1816 from Poland
47. Kraus, Michael, 1816 from Poland
48. Krüger, Andreas, 1816 from Poland
49. Kuck, Gottfried, 1831 from Klöstitz, Bessarabia—Anna Jaßmann, 1816 from Poland
50. Kühn, Christoph—Maria Moldenhauer, 1816 from Poland
51. Kühn, Gottlieb—Maria Stoike, 1816 from Poland
52. Kuhn, Andreas, 1816 from Poland
53. Kuhn, Michael—Anna Christina Sukut, 1816 from Poland
54. Kujat, Martin, 1816 from Poland
55. Kujat, Miachel, 1816 from Poland—Rosina Radke, 1820 from Prussia
56. Kulm, Andreas—Rosina Fandrich, 1816 from Poland
57. Kunusch, Christian
58. Labrenz, Peter, 1816 from Poland
59. Makus, Michael—Anna Fercho, 1816 from Poland
60. Martin, Anna born Schulz, 1816 from Poland
61. Martin, Christoph, 1816 from Poland
62. Matz, Gottlieb—Anna Habelmann, 1816 from Poland
63. Mix, Gottfried, 1816 from Prussia
64. Müller, Jakob—Anna Christina Jahns, 1832 from Prussia
65. Münz, Michael, 1816 from Prussia
66. Neumann, Christoph, born Elbing, Prussia
67. Nürnberg, Jakob 1816 from Poland
68. Pomrenke, Gottlieb, 1816 from Poland
69. Radies, Johann—Anna Kälem, 1816 from Poland
70. Radies, Michael, ? from Poland
71. Reinke, Andreas—Rosina Engel, 1816 from Poland
72. Reinke, Christoph—Anna Martin, 1816 from Poland
73. Reppnak, Johann, 1816 from Poland
74. Richter, Christoph, 1816 from Poland
75. Salo, Heinrich, born in Mechlenberg in 1785
76. Salo, Joachim or Jahim—Christina Pomeranke, 1816 from Poland
77. Schmidtke, Gottfried—Rosina Makus, 1816 from Poland
78. Schröder, Johann—Rosina Johns, 1816 from Poland
79. Schröder, Martin—Maria Bergholz, 1816 from Poland
80. Siewert, Johann, 1816 from Poland
81. Sprenger, Gottfried—Christine Netzer, 1816 from Poland
82. Sprenger, Gottlieb, 1816 from Poland
83. Stelter, Gottlieb—Christina Schulz, 1816 from Poland
84. Stelter, Martin, 1816 from Poland
85. Stickel, Gottlieb, 1816 from Poland
86. Stoike, Johann, 1816 from Poland—Anna Schulz
87. Suknik, Christian, 1822 from Prussia
88. Sukut, Gottfried—Dorothea Mantey, 1816 from Poland
89. Sukut, Gottlieb, 1816 from Poland
90. Trübwasser, Christian—Karoline Neumann, 1816 from Poland
91. Weinert, August—Dorothea Konrad, 1816 from Poland

- 92. Wornad, Gottfried—Rosina Martin, 1816 from Poland
- 93. Wurnaht, Johann—Justina Ruschinski, 1816 from Poland

83 emigrants are designated from the list drawn up by Sexton W. Gäßler on 29 March, 1939. In sequence are: Name, when emigrating and to where, number of persons leaving.

- 01. Allmer, Johannes, 1930 to Brazil, 6
- 02. Bader, Ferdinand, 1914 to Germany, 1
- 03. Bader, Johannes, 1908 to America, 5
- 04. Bader, Martin, 1902 to Siberia, 4
- 05. Breikrauz, Daniel, 1902 to Siberia, 3
- 06. Breikreuz, Nathanael, 1902 to America, 1
- 07. Breikreuz, Wilhelm, 1920 in Do., 6
- 08. Böss, Reinhold, 1914 to Germany, 1
- 09. Brodehl, ?, ? i. Do., ?
- 10. Broneske, Simon, 1911 to Argentina, 1
- 11. Broneske, Wilhelm, 1901 to America, 1
- 12. Dallmann, Christian, 1901 to America, 9
- 13. Dallmann, Johann, 1903 to America, 4
- 14. Falk, Emmanuel, 1925 to Brazil, 4
- 15. Falk, Ferdinand, 1925 to Brazil, 1
- 16. Fano, Eduard, 1930 to Brazil, 6
- 17. Fano, Johannes, 1930 to Brazil, 5
- 18. Franz, Emmanuel, 1918 to Germany, 7
- 19. Franz, Johann, 1925 to Brazil, 1
- 20. Frieske, Ferdinand, 1925 to Brazil, 1
- 21. Friske, Christoph, 1889 to America, 7
- 22. Gabert, Simon, 1890 i. Do, 5
- 23. Geissler, Eduard, 1930 to America, 1
- 24. Jans, Christoph, 1902 to Siberia, 4
- 25. Jans, Samuel, 1901 to Russia, 7
- 26. Jassmann, Ferdinand, 1898 to America, 6
- 27. Jassmann, Jakob, 1902 to Siberia, 5
- 28. Jörke, Andreas, 1903 to Siberia, 5
- 29. Kelm, Andreas, 1898 to America, 5
- 30. Kelm, Immanuel, 1898 to America, 2
- 31. Klatt, Samuel, 1903 to Russia, 6
- 32. Klein, Ferdinand, 1910 to Russia, 3
- 33. Klein, Robert, 1928 to America, 6
- 34. Klein, Tobias, 1928 to America, 5\
- 35. Klein, Wilhelm, 1903 to Russia, 5
- 36. Klettke, Ferdinand, 1901 to America, 5
- 37. Klettke, Gottlieb, 1901 to America, 5
- 38. Knecht, Simon, 1897 to America, 7
- 39. Knecht, Simon, 1902 to America, 1

40. Knecht, Simon, 1920 i. Do., 3
41. König, Alexander, 1925 to Brazil, 2
42. König, Simon, 1901 to America, 4
43. Konrad, Ferdinand, 1925 to Brazil, 4
44. Kraus, Christian, 1902 to Siberia, 6
45. Krüger, Ferdinand, 1897 to American, 5
46. Kuck, Wilhelm, 1897 to America, 1
47. Kühn, Christian, 1908 to America, 1
48. Kühn, Simon, 1908 to America, 4
49. Kunusch, Ferdinand, 1903 to Russia, 3
50. Kunusch, Michael, 1903 to Russia, 5
51. Labrenz, Christian, 1898 to America, 5
52. Labrenz, Simon, 1907 to America, 1
53. Moritz, Ferdinand, 1903 to Siberia, 3
54. Moritz, Ferdinand, 1903 to Siberia, 2
55. Netzer, Christian, 1908 to America, 2
56. Netzer, Daniel, 1901 to America, 1
57. Netzer, Johannes, 1922 to Germany, 3
58. Pfahl, Wilhelm, 1898 to America, 2
59. Radies, Alexander, 1930 to Brazil, 7
60. Radies, Eduard, 1929 to America, 5
61. Radies, Ferdinand, 1932 i. Do., 3
62. Radies, Immanuel, 1932 i. Do., 5
63. Radies, Johannes, 1930 to America, 8\
64. Reppnak, Johannes, 1929 to America, 4
65. Richter, Christian, 1908 to America, 1
66. Rust, Samuel, 1898 to America, 4
67. Salo, Samuel, 1889 to America, 6
68. Schulz, Johann, 1903 to Russia, 5
69. Sievert, Ferdinand, 1902 to Siberia, 5
70. Sippert, August, 1925 to Brazil, 7
71. Sippert, Daniel, 1902 to Siberia, 3
72. Sippert, Gottfried, 1898 to America, 7
73. Weinert, Friedrich, 1902 to Siberia, 3
74. Weingärtner, Friedrich, 1902 to Siberia, 8
75. Weiss, Ferdinand, 1891 to America, 5
76. Weiss, Simon, 1891 to America, 3
77. Wornath, Daniel, 1925 to Brazil, 5
78. Wornath, Lydia, 1934 to America, 1
79. Wornath, Martin, 1902 to America, 8
80. Wornath, Martin, 1903 to Siberia, 5
81. Wornath, Simon, 1908 to America, 1
82. Wornath, Wilhelm, 1903 to Siberia, 7
83. Xanke, Simon, 1908 to America, 1

[Appendix #4—Families that Emigrated or Died Out—page 278-279]

Since the first names are often not mentioned or were not clearly readable, only the Surnames appear. The times of their stay in Paris may also contain errors, as well as the information—actually, not many!— to where they went. The names cover only Alt-Paris. Some may already be included in the List of Emigrants (Appendix #3). (Without information = unknown).

##	Name, first name	Paris from/to	Went to where?
01.	Bechtle, Wilhelm (secretary)	1890-1892	Island of Crimea
02.	Blischke	1830-1885	
03.	Blaskowski/Blaskosken?	1840-1893	America
04.	Gabert	1842	
05.	Ganske	1842	
06.	Brodehl	1833	
07.	Jeß or Heß		
08.	Kujat	1841	
09.	Kulm	1852	
10.	Haller and Hannemann	1839-1862	Alt-Elft?
11.	Kunsch/Kunisch?	1840-1920	Transylvania/Banat?
12.	Lang	1846	
13.	Meilke	1846	
14.	Mielke	1846	
15.	Moldenhauer	1834-1890	
16.	Müller	1843	
17.	Nickel	1824-1902	
18.	Schröder (Tschritter)*	1846-1903	
19.	Siebert/Siewert/Sievens?		
20.	Siegmund, Wenzel		
21.	Sucknick/Zucknick?	1826	
22.	Staatsmann	1870-1918?	
23.	Stephan (some)	1866	
24.	Teske/Jeßke?	1841	
25.	Triebwasser/Trübwasser?	1816-1918?	
26.	Grabowske (from Klöstitz)	1855	
27.	Groß, Johann (Freudenthal)	1818?	
28.	Hirschhorn (Tarutino)		
29.	Kittler and Mrs. Pöd		
30.	Kosanke, Martin	1816-1893	1893 to America
31.	Kraus/Krause/Krauß?	1840?	
32.	Hartfelder and Mrs. Bork		
33.	Dichoff/Reppnack	1918/1921	to Kulm
34.	Meske, Johann and Mrs. Emma born Broneske	1913-1919	Arzis, became a manufacturer
35.	Ulrich		
36.	Zeller, Ferd. with family		1893 to America

37. Weingärtner	1831-1901?	
38. Wolf and Mrs. Broneske		? to America
39. Weiler (was a secretary?)	1870-1880?	
40. Weinert	1816-1892	to Tarutino
41. Weiß, Simon	1865-1894	to America
42. Weiß, Ferdinand	1867-1894	to America
43. Teske, Samuel	1841-1894	to America
44. Ulrich, Georg (merchant?)	1874-1894	to Tarutino
45. Taschner, Michael (from Krasna)** and Mrs. Karoline Blaskowski	1852-1874	to Tschemtschelle
46. Taschner, Michael (from Krasna)** and Mrs. Justine Meilke	1852-1874	to Tschemtschelle
47. Teske, Christian	1841-1884	to Gnadenfeld
48. Schweitzer, Philipp	1880?	
49. Suckut, Samuel		1887 to America
50. Siewert, Christian	1858-1895	
51. Schimke, Gottlieb & adherents	1844-1895	1895 to Schimke-Gut
52. Beck, Theodor (son of "old Beck")	1848-1911	to Kaschpalat
53. Siegler, Gottfried	????-1924	?
54. Klaudt, ?	1857-1927	to Beresina?
55. Münz, Ferdinand	1852-1890	to America
56. Kuck, Johann	1866-1892	to America
57. Kuhn, Christoph	1852-1888	to America
58. Kosanke, Ferdinand (1816?)	1862-1895	to America

Unfortunately, this information cannot be complete; in addition, there were also considerably more people who have migrated or become extinct.

* Teacher Reinhold Tschritter from Alt-Elft told me after his own research that Schröder in Paris is identical to Tschritter in Alt-Elf, only pronunciation and spelling were different.

** Here there were two mixed marriages between Catholics from Krasna (they were probably employed as hired men in Paris) and Protestants from Paris. No further instances have come to light.

Paris - Colony Name

The colony did not immediately have this resounding and proud name at the time of its founding. The colonist territory had been divided by numbers, and our village was given the name "Steppe Nr. 10"; this name was only temporary, and soon the village was called "Alexüswerth" (according to Rudolf Weiß there was already the indication that this community should at some time obtain a special place in the South Bessarabian colonist area). After the victory of the united forces over Napoleon, the first mother colonies were given historical names, named after battle places in Russia, Germany, France and elsewhere. Some were place names, others were river names, e.g. Beresina and Katzbach; our municipality was called Paris, after the great

famous Paris in France. The people of Paris, France hardly knew that they had a “godchild” (*Patenkind*) in the vastness of the South Russian Steppe!

Plan without Fulfillment

The Tsarist government probably wanted to express this name (as Rudolf Weiss personally told me, as it is also noted in his report about our village in the “Home Book of the Bessarabian Germans”), that this community, which is about “in the middle” of the colonist territory, should play a special role. Rudolf Weiss knew that the two municipalities of Paris and Alt-Elft, which were only separated by the river and the later the railway line, wanted to be united into a “twin municipality.” The broad valley at the lower village, toward Teplitz and Arzis, was to become a cultural and economic centre. Among other things, a high school, cultural house, market place with corresponding buildings for shops, factories and so forth were planned. In addition, a large railway station with all the important facilities for passenger and goods traffic. And why did it not happen? Rudolf Weiss already knew from his grandfather and from his father (both called Gottfried) that the representative of the two municipalities—first our Paris?—, rejected this from their conservative and profound attitude; also for fear that the churches could suffer harm as a result, and that the character of men would be corrupted. All the well-intentioned plans of the government did not become a reality, even in the Romanian time, when these plans were taken up again. They went so far as to identify Arzis, Sarata and Tarutino as the market towns and said unequivocally that people would become spoiled there, wanting only to earn and learn, no longer wanting to work, and—many would become godless! Yes, that is how these communities were set up! A “Reich-German” who made visits to Paris (according to R.W.) has expressed himself something like this: “This breed of men, deeply rooted in Lower German Protestantism, more pious than economically progressive, is unbending in things that he has recognized as right. This can also have its good side, and with you here in the foreign land it has been taken to preserve your pure faith and your people; without these ‘principles to stand on,’ your small group would probably have already been consumed in the sea of humanity around you, if not completely disappearing.” Did this man correctly recognize this or somewhat misunderstand it—as one has always repeated it to us people of Paris?

Rudolf Weiss told me how he participated in several community meetings in Paris during that time (early twenties). Things got heated, sometimes more like a revolt than an orderly municipal assembly! It was only when the Senior [district] Mayor (*Oberschulz*) went into his office room, put on his “official medallion,” that it became quiet again and one could talk and negotiate. This medallion of office (in Russian time with the image of the tsar) gave him the power and authority to pronounce and execute punishments on the spot. The raised fists came down quickly and disappeared into the pants pocket!

First Decades after the Formation

Wherever I did research, searched, asked—it was always only broken fragments that could be found and evaluated, much of it no longer legible. It was lamentable, it was discouraging—and I was the one to do it!

But from the discovered “fragments” is what is here to be reproduced, that and an, albeit very modest, insight into the events in our former hometown of Paris. A subdivision of the little material is possible, so I bring it as I found it written; at this point, I apologize for this unscientific approach.

In the Federal Archives in Koblenz, with some good direction, I was able to get hold of the “Parish History of Alt-Elft.” In it, the respective pastors wrote down what they considered valuable, often without annual dates, without names; there is also no information as to the page numbers. Here now, in keywords, is what was to be found there about Paris. The dates begin in 1817 and end with the last summary in 1932.

Specific Events in the Parish

In 1817, illness, hardship and death reigns, that one is unable to bury all the corpses. The municipality of Paris is divided into two halves, one on the hill, the other in the valley. Each side has its own school with a schoolmaster. They are often uneducated, but there is present a natural talent and a Christian way of life. What they cannot accomplish scholastically, that is compensated for by their good conduct and role model. The names of the teachers are a certain Carl Wernich (a Prussian), then his son Ludwig; also a Christian Tusche who serves as schoolmaster. Pastor Schnabel visits the congregation about three or four times a year.

In 1819, the division of Paris (the one on the hill and the one in the valley) was abolished, and there was now only one school for all together. Illness and death (also in 1819) took away so many people that entire families died out (or moved on out of fear).

In 1820, lost preacher Pastor Schnabel (Alt-Elft), congregation orphaned. In 1821, a large plague of locusts, like a large dark cloud in the sky. In 1824, the first school house and prayer house (*Bethaus*) built, there where the church now stands (1905—*author*). The house stood alongside the street. (Around 1900, it was demolished to make way for the new church building of 1903-1905—*author*). In 1826, the schoolhouse and prayer house was actually finally completed, because years of scarcity prevented an earlier completion. Teacher and sexton at that time was a certain Reppnach who could not do much and led a bad way of life; in the absence of another, they were dependent on him. In 1831, in Paris and elsewhere in Bessarabia, cholera reigned—many deaths. In 1838, very necessary church construction (made of stones) began on parish land (this was on the spot next to Jesse's house, it stood there until 1906 and was then demolished—according to the old people; this church already had a tower, a choir loft and organ as well as two bells—*author*). In 1841, a Ludwig Haas replaced Reppnach as schoolmaster, the school is better and more attended.

In 1851, great awakening caused by hardship and hunger! The church gets an organ with six registers. Since the parish could not pay everything alone, part of the costs were passed on to the families (probably more to the richer—*author*). The inside of the church was renovated, the altar and pulpit were redesigned and painted with silver paint, and the choir loft (*Empore*) was also built on one side because of the lack of space, and also painted. The rather imperfect benches were replaced with new ones. The whole church (yard and church) was surrounded by a wall,

within which trees were planted. (On a picture “View from the church tower to the upper village” from 1922/23 some of these trees are still clearly visible—*author*).

On the 19th Sunday after Trinity in the year of the Lord 1851, the first Bible festival of the parish took place in this church by Pastor Ritzke from Klöstitz, who had come there recently. His text was Colossians 3:16-17.

In 1855, a very strong cholera again in Paris, the numbers of the sick and dead are not recorded (probably very many—*author*).

Then there is a new layout of the “Church History” of 29 August, 1847 in Alt-Elft—Fere Champenoise, by Friedrich Jordan, Evangelical R. (religious preacher-?) [Reformed-?] preacher. In the first section dated 1814-1819, he notes: Evangelicals from the Kingdom of Prussia settled here, a few from Württemberg. They probably moved to Prussia/Poland between 1801 and 1804, to the area of Posen, Kalisch, Warsaw (Departments).

In part, the weddings, baptisms, etc. take place among the Catholics in Krasna, because they do not have their own preacher, or because it is the same to them who marries, baptizes them, etc., just as long as it takes place. (Here the plight of the first years becomes quite clear—*author*).

At first, Alt-Elft was known as Steppe Nr. 11, then Michaelsruhm, later Alt-Elft, in contrast to Neu-Elft. Sometime in 1819, it was called Fere-Champenoise in memory of a similar place in France.

Even Paris was at first called “10 Steppe,” then “Alexüswerth,” and then Paris.

In 1859, Pastor Theodor Gottfried Wilhelm Walcker came from Dorpat, was “introduced” (installed into the ministry—*author*), as Pastor Pingoud reports, on 28 October, 1859, on the Day of Saint Simon and Saint Jude—Apostles. In Paris—Platt German-Kaschubisch, the “Brotherhood” (*Bruderthun*) was more quiet (*stiller*) than elsewhere, due to their cautious type of personality.

In this year (already 1849), *Johann Michael Beck* (Old Beck—*author*) was installed in Paris as a teacher and sexton. Now the congregation finally has a trained schoolmaster who will act as a blessing for the children. It is to his credit that the teachers are good, the Brotherhood is good, the families are good, the children are good, and all care for the church and pastor. A good school, in rearing and orderliness of learning. (Our grandparents and parents spoke of this “Old Beck,” the first student of the Werner School in Sarata, in gratitude and respect as a God-blessed man who lived and worked in Paris for decades and also found his eternal rest here.). 1887—on 01 November, 1887, Pastor Johannes Jundt was installed here as the new “*Pastoris*.” He was a religious man and was part of the Brotherhood. With a shepherd from Paris, he met at the shepherd's well, where they held devotion and prayer fellowship. This is how the first meeting was held in Paris.

In 1890, several strong hailstorms in both communities. As a result, from 1890 to 1892, there were big crop failures, along with very many earth hares (*Erdhasen*) [similar to gophers-?],

hamsters, toads, beetles of many varieties, which the hail had spared. The need was so great that it cannot be described. In Paris and Katzbach, typhoid fever and inflammation of the tonsils (*Halsbräune*) (diphtheria) occurred so strongly that there were many deaths. In addition, many of them surrendered to drunkenness in their plight. Only the help of the neighboring communities as well as help from the rest of the country and abroad—so from Germany and America—provided relief and everything became easier and more tolerable.

In these years of hot, arid, and dry times, the people went so far in their distress to uncover their straw roofs, chop up the straw, mixing the residue with flour and bake bread from it. Many of them became ill and died. The animals, to which they also gave this as feed, also became ill and died. The water in the rivers and wells dried up, one had to dig deep in the river bed to find some water here and there, but because of the many frogs and other creeping things that had crept into it, the water tasted so rancid and bad that one could hardly drink it—but, being in need, what else was left to do? There were also "fat years" with good harvests—rich blessings from God!

The hardships of these years also had a good side: 1890-1892 led people away from drinking, towards reflection and renewal in the church, and through revivals also to revive the Brotherhood hours (*Stunden*), the meetings, to a degree that was never the case again in Bessarabia. The gifts were complete rest, order and rearing returning again to the young and old alike. God did not only punish; he also spoke, worked, and blessed. In these years of need, perhaps the most difficult in these communities, both (Paris and Alt Elf) met together in a meadow and decided before God and the assembled congregation to hold a "Solemnly Promised Day of Penance" (*Angelobten Bußtag*) every year which they wanted to celebrated as a holiday. This vow was honored and observed until the resettlement to Germany in 1940. In Russian times, always on 6 May, in Romanian times, after changing time to the new style, always on 19 May. Whether Sunday or working day, it was always held, because for them it was a "holiday!" More about the course of this "Solemnly Promised Day of Penance" later.

Further entries in this "Parish History" are as follows:

In 1896, in *Dennewitz und Paris*, the first brass band (*Bläserchöre/Posaunenchöre*) was organized.

In 1898, the Paris community decided and made plans to build a new church. It is also established to conduct the confirmations separately by gender, because there are too many children and thus rearing and order are susceptible to promiscuity. (Until the thirties of this century, all the confirmation students of the parish—a few hundred children!—were confirmed together, usually always on Palm Sunday. The churches could not accommodate these masses and this brought with it a lot of unrest. This deficiency was recognized and it was decided to conduct the confirmations individually in each community, changing the day each year. The time was from Palm Sunday to Pentecost, then all the congregations were served. —*author's* comment).

In 1899, total, disastrous crop failure, over half of the horned livestock either died or were slaughtered because there was no more food—that was not even enough that people could be satisfied. Mass emigrations to America, Romania (here Dobrudscha and Banat were meant, but also other parts—*author*), in the Caucasus, to Crimea or even as far as Siberia.

1903 starts with the church building in Paris (by the construction of the building site)! Available capital already 18,000 rubles.

1904 is a year of war (Japan War); total crop failure. But even in this need, the people of Paris continued to build the church. As in previous wars of the Russian Empire, many “transport drivers” (*Pogonzifahrer*) had to serve, whereby a Paris colonist died shortly before his return home (it was the father of the well-known tailor Eduard Jans—*author*).

The church building will continue, under the direction of the architect and builder Gottholf Deeg, after the Minister of the Interior has approved the passage by decree No. 1039 of 26 February, 1904, in accordance with Article 761 of the Church Act. On 17 May, the foundation stone was laid with solemn devotion and great participation of the community. The building is constructed in the Gothic style, in red fired brick; the bricks are made above the church square in the hill of clay, where the firing chambers are located.

(*Author's* comment: Probably the architect brought along the brick expert Feodor Gavriluk, who built firing chambers in the clay hill and made the original bricks on the spot and brought them down to the church from there. After completion of the construction—1905 was the dedication—the municipality of Paris, out of gratitude, accepted Gavriluk, although he was Russian, as an equal member of the community, sold to him cheaply a plot of land from the municipal land, where he could build his own large brickworks. This still existed until the Resettlement, since 1934, after the old Gavriluk had died, it belonged to Gottfried Klatt—see local map—who had bought it from the widow. Gottfried Klatt allowed Christian Weiß and his partners to tear down the roofing tile foundry at the back of the property. For this the people of Paris called him “Stupid” {*Däsig*} = same as dumb head {*Dummkopf*}, because of such foolishness!).



The clay hill above the church—the well was rebuilt later



View from the church tower toward the upper village—in the foreground the yards of Rudolf Wornath and Gustav Radies, taken at the beginning of the twenties

1905—on 2 October (Thanksgiving Sunday)—was the dedication of the church by *Provost Assistant (Propstadjunkt) Pastor Steinwand*. The cost was 37,500 rubles [1 ruble = 20 cents in 1850]. The organ by E.F. Walker from Ludwigsburg (Württemberg) cost 2,400 rubles. It was equipped with 2 manuals, 16 foot pedals and 14 registers.

The bells were distributed so that the small one from the old church went to the school tower, the big one became the small bell in the new church. A large bell was bought new. (It was only after 1945 that we learned that our bells came from Bockenem am Harz, from the company of J.F. Weule, Tower Clock Factory and Bell Foundry (*Firma J.F. Weule, Turmuhrenfabrik und Glockengießerei*). Our tower clock is said to have come from here in 1927. This was confirmed by the owner to Theodor Franz, who worked in this place for a number of years, including some of his children—*author*). In the following years, mainly the pastors of the parish were reported, most recently the installation of Pastor Alexander Simsont, who gave his inaugural sermon on 25 September, 1911, the text was Romans 15:29-33.

In 1923, on 29 April, the 22nd Jubilee of Pastor Simsont's service in ministry was celebrated, actually for several days! The report includes:

1. Donation of half a farm by the parish by way of the municipality of Alt-Elft;
2. Lots of visits from near and far, important people and common people, lots of gifts, documents, speeches, poetry and song presentations, etc.
3. The congregation of Paris—the largest in the parish—is especially mentioned:
 - a. Teacher Christian Idler wrote a poem specifically for this purpose, and the
 - b. Sexton-Teacher Johannes Eichelberg set it to music and performed it with a school choir.

The poem and song reads as follows:

*Gegrüßt, beglückwünscht sei der Jubilar,
heut auch von uns, der frohen Kinderschar!
Wir wünschen Glück an diesem schönen Tag,
so gut als Wort und Sang es künden mag,
dem Pastor, unserm Jubelgreis,
wir wünschen dies von Herzen hier mit Fleiß!
Und beten wollen, heil'ger Gott, zu dir
für unsern lieben Pastor alle wir:
Laß niemals ihm, o Gott, ein Leid geschehen,
laß lang ihn noch in uns'rer Mitt' ihn sehn,
bewahr vor Unglück, Krankheit, Not—
in deinem Schutz, so uns wie ihn, o Gott!*

Welcome, congratulations to the celebrant,
today also from us, the happy crowd of children!
We wish you good luck on this beautiful day,
as well as word and song can proclaim,
the pastor, our jubilant lively old man,
we wish this from the heart here with diligence!
And want to pray, holy God, to you
for our dear pastor we all:
Never let a sorrow happen to him, O God,
let him be seen in our midst for a long time,
preserve him from misfortune, illness, hardship—
by your protection, so for us as for him, O God!

At the closing of the festival, after coffee and cake (*Kuchen*), Senior Pastor Haase preached a sermon.



Rations for the poor by the Red Cross in the year of need and famine in 1935

On 12 June, 1927 (*Pentecost Sunday*) the dedication of the new clock took place in Paris, which cost 123,088 lei [Romanian—leu-singler; lei-plural—rate of exchange unknown]. The War Memorial for the Fallen of the World War of 1914-1918 was also dedicated. This cost 19, 940 lei. All this is to the credit of the then Mayor (*Primar*) Friedrich Heer.

At the Synod of 1928 (?), Senior Pastor Haase and Pastor Simsont complained about the German teachers and the school conditions in the congregations. The teachers themselves would push for

“Romanianization” (*Romanisierung*) and pay too little attention to the fact that “the young girls come to school with hair uncombed and sloppily dressed.” It must happen that more female teachers be employed to remedy this grievance, as has already happened in some places. Naturally, not following the “fashion” what the women and young girls of assembly people reject anyway and not let themselves be contaminated by every new spirit.

1929 is a terrible year in all of Bessarabia. Half the village of Paris was starving and getting sick. The total crop failure of 1928 already contributed to this. What was not lost in these two years by drought and other misfortunes, such as pests of every kind (earth hare, grain beetles, etc.), was caused by the frost during the long and severe winter. In Alt-Elft and Paris, there were food kitchens (*Speiseküchen*) (“*Armenküchen*” = kitchens for the poor) to provide a warm noon meal, especially for the starving school children of the poor. Now again there began a great wave of emigration, as almost always in or after big failed harvests and years of need.

In 1932, the “Church History” concludes with a summary and the report of a church visit. As far as Paris is concerned, there are a few sentences listed here, only in keywords:

Paris already has six assemblies where God's word is explained with more or less comprehension. Many residents are indifferent toward one another. This is due to the fact that there have been disputes between the upper and lower village because of a pasture that is only 1 hectare [2.47 acres] in size! Thanks to the church curator (Eduard Suckut) and the “Brotherhood,” there was a reconciliation and the dispute was resolved.

There were also major disputes over the land, so there is a danger that the “Promised Day of Penance” will not be held on 19 May. Here, too, the “Brotherhood” was again the peacemaker, and on the eve of the “Repentance Day” an agreement had been reached. Great blame for these disputes has to do with the new parties which are coming up in Romania and among us.

The Sexton-Teachers in Paris in recent years are as follows:

1902-1912 Andreas Kehrer; 1912-1920 Martin Weiß; 1920-1921 Reinhold Wagner; since 1921 Johannes Eichelberg.

Comment by the *author*: J. Eichelberg had the following successors as Sexton-Teachers from 1928: Immanuel Steudle, Johannes Keller, Otto Steudle and most recently from 1936-1940 Wilhelm Gässler. In the meantime, Gustav Walter and Albert Eckert have helped out; the latter, from Paris, spent two years in Katzbach as a sexton-teacher, from 1932-1934.

In the supplement to the “Parish History,” it is also stated that the year 1856 was a very bad year of hardship and year of hunger, with typhoid and other diseases. In the houses, here and there, “sick bays” (*Lazarette*) were set up, the seriously ill were often “out of their minds” for days; some would get well again and come to their senses, others remain abnormal, most of the sick died, a total of 35 people in Paris. This time of need also brought a blessing with it. A great revival and time of grace arose and many “acts of mercy.” Since that time, there is in Paris a return again to assembly, discipline and order in the community, drunkenness and stealing are noticeably diminishing.

In the context of the church visitation in 1932, it is also pointed out that there are also some Separatists in Paris, but they are very quiet people.

There was also a church renovation (*Kirchenremonte=Renovierung*) in the village which cost 74,886 lei. 31,626 lei were spent on the sexton-teacher's residence. There were also renovations and reconstructions in other congregations of the parish.

Neu-Paris also belongs to Paris as a sister congregation (*Filiale*), called a *Decebal* in Romanian. All in all, it must be said that in Paris and in the sister congregation the teaching of the children is "unsatisfactory!"

This is where the report from the "Parish History of Alt-Elft" ends. I would like to add that I have combined the "keywords" with "more comprehensive sentences" for the sake of better understanding. It is my hope that I will be forgiven for this "intervention."

The list of crop failures, years of hardship, earthquake years, misfortunes, fires and much more could be continued at will which occurred more than enough in every municipality—even so with us. But there were also many profitable harvest years which compensated for the shortage again and again. And our home literature gives a lot of reports, page after page! Further sources are listed in the appendix.

Statistical Data 1827/28

In "Statistical Description of Bessarabia and the So-called Budschak" from the years 1822-1828, a description of the colony of Paris can be found on pages 213 to 214, written in Russian. A shortened excerpt of this can be found in the reprint of the Homeland Museum of the Germans from Bessarabia Registered Society (*Heimatmuseums der Deutschen aus Bessarabien e.V.*)—Writing Series B—Documentation No. 2, on pages 43-44. Of the once 141 families who immigrated, only 133 are still listed here. In the early years of the settlement period, it was common for families to move away or move in, probably for the reason of reuniting with relatives and acquaintances who had been lost contact with during the long period of migration; the failure due to very high death rates in the first years is also conceivable. But let us look at the brief report concerning our home village.

Paris Colony

Lies on the left bank of the Kogălnik River. Numbering in 1827:

From Württemberg	4 male	1 female
From Prussia	43 male	40 female
From Poland	241 male	234 female
Total of 133 Families with	288 male	+ 275 female

Structures:

Houses made of stone	6	Wells made of stone	40
Houses of unfired brick	93	Horses	211

Earthen houses	10	Cattle	782
Dirt floor mills	1	Sheep	497
Orchards and Vineyards	121		

Useable Land:

The Place	47 Dessj.	[1 dessjatine = 2.7 acres]	800 Faden
Vineyard	106 Dessj.	[1 dessjatine = 1.09 hectares]	--Faden
Meadows on Kogälnik and Tschag	1,171 Dessj.		1,343 Faden
Fields and Pasture	5,877 Dessj.		1,620 Faden
Total	{sic} 7,202 Dessj.		{sic} 1,363 Faden

Unuseable Land:

Kogälnik, Tschag and ponds	49 Dessj.		1,487.5 Faden
Roads	37 Dessg.		1,000.0 Faden
Drainage Waterways	25 Dessj.		400.0 Faden
Total	{sic} 112 Dessj.		{sic} 487.5 Faden

Grand Total {sic} 7,413 Dessj. {sic} 1,850.5 Faden

Not much had changed in the next two decades, the well established were repeatedly thrown back by crop failures and other adverse conditions. This affected all areas of community life, whether agricultural, church, school, and so on. An exhaustive account of the state of affairs and living conditions of that time is given in the **Municipal Report of 1848**, as it was prepared in all the colonies at that time.

“In 1816, the immigrants settled in Bessarabia on the northern side of the steppe river Kugelnick. The settlers were descendants of Prussian emigrants who were in Poland near Warsaw and Kalisch. With the generous request of His Imperial Majesty Alexander, 141 families settled here, having been given living quarters with the Moldavian people on the Dnjestr River almost two years earlier. On their journey, the immigrants had no guides but documents, which allowed them to receive lodging and travel money while on their way. Most of the settlers had been plunged into want and poverty by the long journey, even though they received travel money. When they arrived at their settlement, President Müller, the *Comtoirs* in Tarutino, showed them the future living places, on which they encountered nothing but some lumber which had been lying for a long time in very bad damp and dry-rot condition. Since the immigrants did not find any houses at their place of settlement, they made a kind of tent, which they covered with grass or reed, in which they lived until autumn. For the winter, however, they made some houses of clay, others earthen stalls in which they lived until 1818. Gradually, more substantial housing replaced the above-mentioned poor huts, to which stables were added in later times, so that now every landlord had a proper yard. The settlers were each paid ten rubles silver (*B.A.*) [1 ruble silver = 75 cents in 1850] as assistance for the construction of the houses. To reclaim the steppe, each family got a wagon, a plow, spades and a hoe, and also other tools: scythe, sickle, hatchet, hammer and the like.

“The soil is very firm and so the reclamation of it did not go as well as the new settlers thought; because 6 to 8 oxen had to be harnessed to the plow; for each family, if it took over a whole

farm, 2 oxen and 1 cow were given; otherwise, if two families shared the same farm, then they had to share the cattle that would be given; as a result, several farmers were forced to harness together. The soil was very sustainable as new land, but because of a lack of funds (except for some farmers) they could buy only a little seed, so they could not gain the benefit of the land.

“The settlers had no crown debts to pay in the first years, and could easily work their way out of their poor condition if they had planted vineyards and orchards; but since the vines and tree seedlings were not so easy to obtain, they could not take advantage of the situation in this respect either.

“On the arrival of the settlers, the steppe was occupied for a few more years by landowners who had significant herds of cattle, which was not the case with the new-comers, hence those were the ones who received the greatest benefits.

“Actually, the land of this colony contains saltpeter, therefore heated, and in the absence of rain not good for the prosperity of plants, especially of grain. The most important kinds of trees for the soil of this colony are: acacia, elm, apple, pear and cherry trees.

“There are no forests here, because the recent forest area cannot yet be given this name.

“As for stones, already often the most detailed search has been made, but so far not the slightest trace has been discovered; therefore, the colonists of the neighboring colonies have to buy and fetch their needed stones. When the colony was established, it was given the name of Alecksüßwerth, which did not last long, in that the Minister of the Interior changed the name to Paris; in remembrance of the turn for the better; by the decisive victory of the Battle of Leipzig, after which even Paris [France] was conquered in 1814 and the pressing hardship under which almost all of Europe languished was lifted.

“As for the particular location of this colony, it is 80 south of the district city (*Kreisstadt*) of Akkerman, 120 west of the provincial city (*Gubernialstadt*) of Kischenew, and is located in the valley on the northern side of the steppe-river Kugelnick, which meanders down Moldavia, and with its various bends now here, now there, wanders past the colony.

“The opposite side is a rather steep hill which starts right behind where the trees stand, which is mostly planted with grapevines.

“Along the length of the hill, running from north to south, the colony is laid out in 2 rows, and consists of 121 farmyards, which (except for some farmyards) are modestly built on. The prayer house is located in the western row, built with the resources of the congregation, similar to a church, to one side the municipal town hall (*Kanzlelei*) and behind it the provision storehouse. From here, straight across the street, the newly built schoolhouse, which attracts the attention of strangers because of its beauty and size.

“During the time of cholera, which came out of Persia in 1831, moving over the Caucasus to Russia, and especially in south Russia, bringing its terror, also to this locality, as well as to several German Bessarabian colonies, in which 49 souls were carried off by it.

“The first earthquake, which occurred before midnight in the autumn of 1825, was so noticeable in this colony that the sleeping people woke up, left their beds, and rushed out of the house. The second earthquake, which took place in 1830, was less noticeable; but the third earthquake in 1838 surpassed both the former in strength, so that the violent shaking of the earth caused walking to be similar to that of a stumbling drunkard.

“Not much can be said about the particular prosperity of the community, because there were hindering causes which could not be disputed, e.g. the colonists applied themselves to the breeding of cattle, so often livestock epidemics nullify their accounts, they applied themselves to the growing of grain, nullify their accounts as a result of a lack of rain, often appearing locusts and resulting crop failures, their most beautiful hopes failed several times; yes, there are even farmers who have already had to buy a considerable amount of bread for their families. Nevertheless, for some years now, through the goodness and the blessing of God, as well as through greater diligence and better ordering of the fields and gardens, the prosperity of the community members has improved considerably, which has also improved considerably with more respectable dwellings.”

Paris Colony, 06 May, 1848

Mayor: Dallmann.

Assistants (*Beisizer*): Jörke (?), Schimke.

Church School Teacher: Dieno (noted by *author*)

Something about the names of those that signed or drafted this report. *Dallmann* only calls himself “mayor” (*Schulz*) here because Paris (until 1871!) was still part of the administrative district (*Wolost*) of Klöstitz, which had a “senior mayor” (*Oberschulz*) at that time. By 1872 it was also the case in Paris: the “senior mayor” was the administrative district chairman (*Wolostvorsteher*) (*Gebiet*=district), the “mayor” (*Schulz*) was the chairman of the “village administration” (*Dorfverwaltung*); from 1872 until the end of the First World War, Paris was both district administration and village administration, with all its facilities, including its own “court of justice.” Assistant *Jörge* and *Schimke* were deputies of the mayor (*Schulzen/Bürgermeister*), re-elected every three years, that is, confirmed in office again. The *Schimke* mentioned here is the father of the later very well-known *Gottlieb Schimke*, for years senior mayor of the municipality (*Wolost*), until he left in 1894/95 and established his own village “*Eigengut Schimke*” near *Mannsburg*. He followed his kinship, so that a small, wealthy village arose there, which existed until 1940 and had a good reputation. More about that later.

Note by the *author* about *Church-School Teacher Dieno*: He is not mentioned in the parish history, but must have been in that position soon after the departure of “*Reppnack*.” In the early days—in smaller congregations up to the last time—the church-school teachers, who were later called sexton-teachers or “lector-sexton-teachers” because they were allowed to represent the pastor in all except confirmations and marriages, especially in the Sunday “reading services” (*Lese-Gottesdiensten*), and at the same time also serving at the town hall—which we called the *Kanzlei*, because they were knowledgeable in how to write and usually also mastered the official language. At that time, however—until the abolition of the Welfare Committee (*Fürsorgekomitee*) in 1871—all correspondence with the officials took place in German. This

was part of the “eternal privileges” of the Russian Crown (*Krone*) (by “Crown” one generally understood it to mean the state, the government).

It is not known how long this Dieno had been in the community; one can assume that he was only relieved by the first “*Werner School Teacher*” *Michael Johann Beck*, known as “Old Beck.” Beck came to Paris in 1849, married Caroline born Richter (the grandmother of teacher Johannes Eichelberg; we are related to this line of Richters because my Suckut grandmother is also a born Richter) and remained in Paris until his death in 1902. In 1890, he gave up his teaching position to his successor from Lichtental, *Christian Unterseher* (called “Unakika” by us), who remained in Paris until 1902. This municipal report is also quite informative. Good and bad are listed, even only 121 farms, already less from 1827/28. The reason for this is not mentioned so one can only guess. The so-called prayer house “similar to a church,” became the further expanded church on the large municipal square between the clubhouse (*Vereinshaus*) and Alexander Jesse’s place. It was the first stone church of the parish, built in the 30s (1839) of the last century and stood until after the construction of the new church in 1905.

In the same square as the church, called prayer house, stood the town hall and the storehouse (*Magazin*) with community shop (*Gemeindeladen*) and other facilities.

The school on the opposite side, which is also mentioned here, is already the schoolhouse that we know from our time. In the course of the year it was enlarged, rebuilt, other room configurations were carried out (1906) and the teachers’ residences were built, first the house of the headmaster in the middle of the courtyard, then the sexton-teacher’s residence. However, no exact data could be found about this. All we know is that the school conducted two-classes until 1906, when it was rebuilt. The large room then the administrative (*Königs*) place and the room for teaching was until then the teacher’s apartment. The other two large class rooms were divided by a wall, so that five class rooms were created. More about the school and the teachers elsewhere.

Extracts from the History of 1909

In order to round off the short reports from our municipality in the first decades after its founding, we also bring the excerpt from a written history by teacher Andreas Kehrer (see foreword), who worked at our school from 1902-1912; unfortunately, he then suddenly died. The history he wrote has never been entirely published, nor has any of it been preserved, except for this excerpt, which appeared in 1909 in the “Odessa Home Calendar” (*Odessaer Heimatkalender*). It is quite remarkable that there is also talk of 121 farmers, as already in the municipal report of 1848. Did our community have no growth, did it not become larger as did other communities? According to Rudolf Weiss, (he and his father Gottfried once checked this and searched in town hall documents, also in the church books), the reason lies in that Paris, due to the location—village location and layout as well as the market location—development was no longer possible, since the offered plans had only experienced rejection, so that the people took to the road to other areas, that is, to new settlements, or they simply emigrated. Already, as a result, Paris lost a lot of good, healthy substance and not been able to make any more plans in its development, even though it was such a big place, intended for big tasks. Unfortunately, everything took a different course, the community stepped into the shadows of the neighboring communities, especially the market towns, and never again could catch up, in which the others

moved ahead of them more and more. It is very regrettable, but for the sake of openness it has to be said, even if it is not easy for me, as the writer of these lines, to be able to do so. But now to the excerpt:

Paris in Bessarabia is one of the colonies which was founded at the beginning of the last century. In 1813, the government of Russia published a decree calling on the Germans in Poland to emigrate to the new Bessarabia and be occupied with agriculture, wine growing and silk farming. The colonists were promised many essential incentives, including exemption from taxation for 10 years, exemption from recruitment and military quartering, free allocation of 60 *dessjatinen* of land as hereditary property and, probably the most enticing, free exercise of religious. Along with many others, the ancestors of our Paris people, from the area of Warsaw and Kalisch—the dialect of our people is Platt—also made their way on a distant journey. Arriving in Bessarabia, the good people could not be immediately brought to the land that was intended for them because, as in Russia at that time, the preparatory work (surveying, acquisition of timber, etc.) was not yet completed. For a whole year, our good Germans had to patiently submit to their fate among the Moldavians, where quarters were taken. Finally, in 1816, our Paris people were given their land at the same time as the colonies of Fere-Champenoise, Beresina, Arcis and Brienne. Located in the Kugelnik (also Kujalnik) Valley, with the same name as the river, the colony stretches from north to south in a length of 2½ *verst* [1 *verst* = 1.06 km or .66 miles], with its 121 farms at 57 *dessjatinen* [62 hectares; 154 acres] each, and makes a rather nice, peaceful impression from the hill (*Berg*). The village presents only one street with two rows of houses, which, by the way, are built of stones, quite well furnished for the most part. It may not have been so beautiful to our old forefathers (ancestors) when they looked down on their village from the same hill, which at that time had only earth huts, that now is covered with abundant vineyards. Almost exclusively farmers, our people did not take to the trades, so that not at once is the local need satisfied in this respect and we have to get a lot from outside the community. But one might say that a branch of craftsmanship is monopolized by our Paris people. I am referring to the fork-making trade (*Gabelmacherhandwerk*) in which they, the people of Paris, take the first place in Bessarabia. Thousands of forks are sold with great acclaim all year at our nearest markets in Arcis and Tarutino, 16 and 17 *verst* [17 and 18 km; 10.5 and 11.2 miles] from Paris respectively. But our forks also find good sales far beyond the Bessarabian *Gouvernement*. If we look at Paris in this way, two things attract attention: firstly, the magnificent church and facing it a beautiful district town hall; secondly, the more than modest school, which calls to the new generation as a reproachful monument from ancient times: “Remember your children!” We hope that Paris, in addition to a beautiful town hall and a magnificent church, will also get a model school. In time it will be so. We do have an establishment that can make it easier for us to build schools, which, since 1898, thanks to the initiative of the then district clerk A. Erdmann and several resolute men from the community, have been building a community shop with great tact. Over the course of ten years, this shop has brought us a net profit of some 10,000 rubles with sales of over 20,000 rubles. In the years 1904 and 1905, we built our church, which, apart from compulsory labor and straw deliveries, cost us 37,000 rubles. For this construction our shop supplied 8,000 rubles; nevertheless, the same shop already has a capital of 2,410 rubles at its disposal. Our village forms a *volost* for itself, is located in the Akkermann District, 87 *verst* from the district city, neighboring colonies are: Fere-Champenoise (Alt-Elft), Teplitz, Friedenstal, Krasna. The land ownership of Paris is distributed as follows: in the village (farmyards) 78 *dessjatinen*, vineyards 325 *dessjatinen*, plantation (*Plantage*) 16 *dessjatinen*,

garden 40 *dessjatinen*, pasture 2,150 *dessjatinen*, hay field 242 *dessjatinen*, arable land 4,123 *dessjatinen*, i.e. a total of 6,974 *dessjatinen*. In addition, 177 *dessjatinen* are still reckoned as joint possessions, i.e. not included in the possession of the farmyard, which results in a total possession of 7,141 *dessjatinen*. The arable farming is coming along much better, according to Grandfather Weise, in view of the very improved arable plants and harvest machinery in the last three decades. Putting together this and that, one can only relate it precisely as a timid attempt. Fodder grasses are planted only by individuals and to a very small extent. Beekeeping has only become more important in recent years. Trail blazer in this district is our teacher, Mr. Heer. His excellent beehive with a stock of 52 serves as a pattern for every local beginner. Mr. Heer is always ready to help with his knowledge those seeking advice. Fruit growing has also picked up a bit in recent years. It would immediately become more prominent if we had a railroad (*Bahn*). Livestock farming is not actually significantly pursued here, although we have a fairly large livestock population. We have: 855 horses, 1,380 head of horned cattle, 2,664 head of sheep, 300 pigs. With horses, one notices that the owner is interested in them: at least they are mostly well fed. However, cattle are kept very cheaply, i.e. poorly. Breed? None, unless one wants to consider our Moldavian cattle as breed cattle. Viniculture is making progress, but unfortunately we are our best consumers, so the profit from growing grapes is very problematic. Paris will also have a steam mill from this year on. Since 1905, a fired tile factory has been working here with good success, which makes roofing tiles and building bricks. —Our village has its own Orphan Fund with a turnover of about 88,000 rubles. We had a net profit of 452 rubles from this institution (*Einrichtung*) last year. Since 1859, our local population has hardly increased. Then we had 1,349 souls and today—1,422, with the female gender predominant by 14 souls. The low propagation is evidently simply due to the continuing emigration; after all, in almost all the new colonies of Bessarabia, we have one or more persons from Paris; then we meet Paris folks in Cherson, Taurida, Ekaterinoslaw, the Caucasus, Siberia and more so in America, both in the United States and Canada. If everyone lived here, we would have a population of over 4,000 souls (at the beginning of the colony there were just over 500 souls). Our school, which has 283 children in two classes, one teacher each, is in urgent need of transformation; because our future lies in the youth. May our community think about this quite seriously.

[Translation Ends]

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